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(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN QUESTIONS WITH ANSWER

Written questions by Members of the European Parliament and their answers given by a European Union institution

(2013/C 346 E/01)

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(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κρίση και άποροι πολίτες

Οι δυσπραγούντες συμπατριώτες μας αυξάνονται ραγδαία στη Κύπρο λόγω της οικονομικής κρίσης και των αρνητικότατων συνεπειών της.

1. Ποιους μηχανισμούς στήριξης για σίτιση απόρων και ευάλωτων ομάδων διαθέτει η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση;

2. Πώς εντάσσεται μια χώρα στο πρόγραμμα επισιτιστικής βοήθειας υπέρ των απόρων πολιτών σε κάθε χώρα μέλος;

3. Με ποια κριτήρια κατανέμεται η επισιτιστική βοήθεια υπέρ των απόρων πολιτών;

4. Ποια άλλα προγράμματα βοήθειας διαθέτει η ΕΕ για άμεση και πρακτική στήριξη θυμάτων της οικονομικής κρίσης;

5. Ποιες χώρες μέλη της ΕΕ έχουν ήδη ζητήσει τέτοια βοήθεια και την έχουν πάρει;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

1. Εδώ και 25 χρόνια παρέχεται επισιτιστική βοήθεια στους απόρους της ΕΕ μέσω του ευρωπαϊκού προγράμματος επισιτιστικής βοήθειας υπέρ των απόρων.

2. Η συμμετοχή στο πρόγραμμα αυτό είναι εκούσια. Τα κράτη μέλη που επιθυμούν να εφαρμόσουν το μέτρο οφείλουν να ενημερώσουν την Επιτροπή εντός της προθεσμίας που προβλέπεται στους σχετικούς εκτελεστικούς κανόνες.

3. Τα κράτη μέλη διαθέτουν σημαντικό βαθμό ελευθερίας για το σχεδιασμό και την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος διανομής τροφίμων σε εθνικό επίπεδο, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του ορισμού των «απόρων» και του καθορισμού των συναφών κριτηρίων επιλεξιμότητας.

4. Το πρόγραμμα θα λήξει με την ολοκλήρωση του ετήσιου σχεδίου 2013. Για την περίοδο 2014-2020, η Επιτροπή έχει προτείνει τη σύσταση Ταμείου Ευρωπαϊκής Βοήθειας προς τους Απόρους, το οποίο θα στηρίζει ειδικότερα εθνικά καθεστώτα παροχής τροφίμων ή βασικών αγαθών προς τους αστέγους, καθώς και συνοδευτικά μέτρα για την κοινωνική τους ενσωμάτωση.

5. Το 2013, 19 κράτη μέλη συμμετέχουν στο πρόγραμμα επισιτιστικής βοήθειας υπέρ των απόρων. Η κατανομή ανά χώρα εμφαίνεται στο παράρτημα Ι του εκτελεστικού κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1020/2012 της Επιτροπής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000071/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Economic crisis and destitute citizens

The number of our disadvantaged fellow-citizens in Cyprus is soaring because of the financial crisis and its extremely adverse effects.

1. What support mechanisms are available to the EU to feed needy and vulnerable groups?

2. How can a country be included in the food aid programme for the most deprived citizens in each Member State?

3. What criteria are used to distribute food aid to citizens in need?

4. What other aid programmes does the EU have to provide direct and practical support to victims of the economic crisis?

5. Which EU Member States have already requested — and received — such aid?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

1. For 25 years, the European Food Aid programme for the most deprived persons (MDP) has provided food aid to the most deprived persons in the EU.

2. Participation in the MDP is voluntary. Member States wishing to apply the measure have to inform the Commission by the deadline set in the relevant implementing rules.

3. Member States dispose of significant freedom in planning and implementing the food distribution programme at national level, including also the definition of the 'most deprived persons' and the establishment of the relevant eligibility criteria.

4. The MDP will end with the completion of the 2013 annual plan. For the period 2014-2020, the Commission has proposed the establishment of a Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, which would in particular support national schemes to provide food or basic goods to homeless people and accompanying measures for their social inclusion.

5. In 2013, 19 Member States participate in the MDP. The allocation for each country is indicated in Annex I of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1020/2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000072/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Παράνομη εργασία

Το κύριο χαρακτηριστικό της κυπριακής οικονομίας σήμερα είναι η αντικατάσταση των νόμιμων κύπριων εργαζομένων που καλύπτονται από συλλογικές συμβάσεις, με παράνομους κυρίως εργαζομένους κοινοτικούς και άλλους, οι οποίοι σε πολλές περιπτώσεις δεν καταβάλλουν καν κοινωνικές εισφορές.

Το θέμα είναι ιδιαίτερα σοβαρό γιατί η άνιση μεταχείριση μεταξύ κυπρίων και κοινοτικών ή άλλων παράνομων εργαζομένων, διαμορφώνει ένα νέο εργασιακό περιβάλλον που δημιουργεί εργαζόμενους διαφορετικών ταχυτήτων. Κατ' επέκταση, παρατηρείται αποψίλωση των βασικών ωφελημάτων της Συλλογικής Σύμβασης της Οικονομικής Βιομηχανίας, αύξηση της ανεργίας ανάμεσα στους κύπριους αφού οι πλείστες μεγάλες εταιρείες προβαίνουν σε σημαντικό αριθμό παράνομων απολύσεων κυπρίων εργαζομένων και αντικατάσταση τους με συνεργεία υπεργολάβων που απασχολούν μη κύπριους εργαζομένους υπό καθεστώς αδήλωτης εργασίας.

— Πώς σχολιάζει ο αρμόδιος Επίτροπος για εργασιακά θέματα την κατάσταση αυτή και τι μέτρα προτείνει για την αντιμετώπιση όλων αυτών των προβλημάτων.

— Πιο συγκεκριμένα πώς αντιμετωπίζεται το καθεστώς της αδήλωτης εργασίας στην ΕΕ;

— Είναι εις γνώση της Επιτροπής ότι αρκετοί μη κύπριοι εργαζόμενοι δεν καταβάλλουν κοινωνικές εισφορές προς το κράτος, ενώ στην περίπτωση των τουρκοκυπρίων, αυτοί απολαμβάνουν επιπρόσθετα προνομιούχο πρόσβαση σε ιατροφαρμακευτική βοήθεια, χορηγίες/υποτροφίες σε σπουδές και άλλα ωφελήματα, χωρίς να τηρούν τις υποχρεώσεις τους έναντι της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας εφόσον η τουρκική πλευρά δεν την αναγνωρίζει.

Απάντηση του κ. Andoron εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι η κατάσταση στην αγορά εργασίας στην Κύπρο επιδεινώθηκε και η ανεργία αυξάνεται, ιδίως μεταξύ των νέων. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί στενά την κατάσταση και πρότεινε η κυπριακή κυβέρνηση να λάβει μέτρα για τη βελτίωση των δεξιοτήτων του εργατικού δυναμικού, την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας των νέων και την προώθηση της καινοτομίας στις επιχειρήσεις. Δεν μπορεί, ωστόσο, να επιβεβαιώσει τα συγκεκριμένα σημεία που θέτει η ερώτηση.

Όσον αφορά τους εργαζομένους που προέρχονται από άλλα κράτη μέλη, πρέπει να τηρείται η αρχή της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας. Η αρχή αυτή δίνει σε κάθε πολίτη της ΕΕ το δικαίωμα να μετακινείται ελεύθερα και να διαμένει σε άλλο κράτος μέλος με σκοπό την εργασία και τον προστατεύει από διακρίσεις σε βάρος του όσον αφορά την απασχόληση, την αμοιβή και άλλους όρους εργασίας σε σχέση με τους υπηκόους του εν λόγω κράτους μέλους. Όσον αφορά τους εργαζομένους από τρίτες χώρες, οι όροι και οι προϋποθέσεις της εργασιακής σχέσης πρέπει να σέβονται το εθνικό και το ενωσιακό δίκαιο.

Το πρόγραμμα εργασίας της Επιτροπής για το 2013 προβλέπει τη δημιουργία ευρωπαϊκής πλατφόρμας για την καταπολέμηση της αδήλωτης εργασίας. Αυτό θα επιδιώξει τη βελτίωση της συνεργασίας και της ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών και βέλτιστων πρακτικών σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, ιδίως μεταξύ των φορέων επιβολής της νομοθεσίας, με στόχο την πιο αποτελεσματική και συνεκτική προσέγγιση για την καταπολέμηση της αδήλωτης εργασίας, τόσο εντός των κρατών μελών όσο και σε διασυνοριακό επίπεδο.

Οι ειδικοί κανόνες, βάσει των οποίων οι Τουρκοκύπριοι μπορούν να εξασφαλίζουν την απόκτηση όλων των κοινωνικών δικαιωμάτων όπως οι πολίτες της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της δωρεάν κρατικής υγειονομικής περίθαλψης, των κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών και υποδομών και των εθνικών ασφαλίσεων, δεν εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα της Επιτροπής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000072/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Illegal work

The main feature of Cyprus' economy today is the replacement of legal Cypriot workers covered by collective agreements with workers from the EU and elsewhere, who are mainly illegal and in many cases do not even pay social contributions.

The issue is particularly serious because the unequal treatment of Cypriot and EU and other illegal workers is creating a new working environment that is leading to the emergence of different classes of worker. Thus key benefits of the collective agreement of the financial industry are being axed and unemployment among Cypriots is rising, since most large companies are illegally dismissing a significant number of Cypriot workers and replacing them with teams of subcontractors that employ non-Cypriot employees who are not declared.

How does the Commissioner responsible for employment issues view this situation and what measures is he proposing to address all these problems?

More specifically, what is being done to address the problem of undeclared work in the EU?

Is the Commission aware that many non-Cypriot workers do not pay social security contributions to the state, while in the case of Turkish Cypriots, they also enjoy preferential access to medical assistance, study grants and scholarships and other benefits, without complying with their obligations vis-à-vis the Republic of Cyprus, since the Turkish side does not recognise the Republic?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the worsening labour-market situation in Cyprus, where unemployment is increasing, especially among young people. It is monitoring the situation closely, and has recommended that the Cyprus Government take action to improve the skills of the workforce, address unemployment among young people and stimulate business innovation. It is not, however, in a position to confirm the specific points raised in the question.

As regards workers from other Member States, the principle of freedom of movement must be respected. It gives every EU citizen the right to move freely to another Member State to work and reside there for that purpose, and protects them against discrimination in employment, remuneration and other working conditions in comparison to nationals of that Member State. As far as workers from non-member countries are concerned, the terms and conditions of the employment relationship must respect national and EC law.

The Commission Work Programme for 2013 provides for the establishment of a European platform to fight against undeclared work. It will seek to improve cooperation and exchange information and best practice at EU level, in particular between enforcement bodies, with a view to a more effective and coherent approach to the fight against undeclared work, both within the Member States and at cross-border level.

The special rules whereby Turkish Cypriots can secure entitlements to all social rights as citizens of the Republic of Cyprus, including free State healthcare, social welfare services and facilities and national insurance, fall outside the Commission's competence.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000073/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πάταξη της φοροδιαφυγής

Ποια μέτρα προτείνει η ΕΕ για την πάταξη της φοροδιαφυγής προσώπων υψηλού καθαρού πλούτου και ελεύθερων επαγγελματιών υψηλού εισοδήματος σε χώρες της ΕΕ και στην Ελλάδα;

Πώς διασφαλίζει την έμπρακτη εφαρμογή τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Στις 6 Δεκεμβρίου 2012, η Επιτροπή θέσπισε ένα σχέδιο δράσης ([1]) για να ενισχύσει την καταπολέμηση της φορολογικής απάτης και της φοροδιαφυγής μαζί με δύο συστάσεις για επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό και για μέτρα που προορίζονται να ενθαρρύνουν τις τρίτες χώρες να εφαρμόζουν ελάχιστα πρότυπα χρηστής διακυβέρνησης σε φορολογικά θέματα, το οποίο αντιμετωπίζει ιδίως το θέμα των αποκαλούμενων «φορολογικών παραδείσων». Σκοπός του σχεδίου δράσης είναι να βελτιώσει την αποτελεσματικότητα των μέτρων των κρατών μελών που αποσκοπούν στην προστασία των φορολογικών τους συστημάτων από τη φορολογική απάτη και τη φοροδιαφυγή και την αθέμιτη διάβρωση της φορολογικής βάσης, σύμφωνα με τις καθιερωμένες αρχές της διαφάνειας, της ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών και του θεμιτού φορολογικού ανταγωνισμού. Το σχέδιο δράσης δεν αναφέρεται μόνο σε μέτρα που αποσκοπούν στην καταπολέμηση της φορολογικής απάτης και της φοροδιαφυγής, αλλά και σε μέτρα που αποσκοπούν στην ενίσχυση της φορολογικής συμμόρφωσης. Κατ' ουσίαν, καθορίζει ορισμένα πρακτικά μέτρα τα οποία μπορούν να αποφέρουν συγκεκριμένα αποτελέσματα σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη και στηρίζει ιδίως όσα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να ενισχύσουν την είσπραξη φόρων.

Όσον αφορά το σημείο 10, το σχέδιο δράσης προβλέπει ότι «*στις περιπτώσεις όπου διαπιστώνεται ότι οι ισχύουσες οδηγίες προσφέρουν ευκαιρίες για επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό ή δεν ευνοούν την εφαρμογή κατάλληλων λύσεων επιτρέποντας τη διπλή μη φορολόγηση, η Επιτροπή θα αναλαμβάνει δράση. Επίσης, θα πρέπει να εντατικοποιηθούν οι εργασίες σχετικά με τα ειδικά φορολογικά καθεστώτα που ισχύουν για απόδημους και για εύπορους ιδιώτες, τα οποία επηρεάζουν δυσμενώς τη λειτουργία της εσωτερικής αγοράς και μειώνουν τα συνολικά φορολογικά έσοδα.*».

Για να προωθήσει την αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή του σχεδίου δράσης, η Επιτροπή θα δημιουργήσει μια πλατφόρμα για τη χρηστή φορολογική διακυβέρνηση, η οποία θα απαρτίζεται από εμπειρογνώμονες από τα κράτη μέλη και άλλους ενδιαφερομένους που θα βοηθούν στην εκπόνηση της έκθεσης για την εφαρμογή των δύο συστάσεων και στις τρέχουσες εργασίες της σχετικά με τον επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό και τη χρηστή διακυβέρνηση σε φορολογικά θέματα.

([1]) COM (2012)722 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000073/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Stamping out tax evasion

What measures is the EU proposing to stamp out tax evasion by individuals with a high net wealth and professionals with high incomes in EU Member States such as Greece?

How will it ensure the effective implementation of such measures?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

On 6 December 2012 the Commission adopted an Action Plan ([1]) to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion together with two recommendations on aggressive tax planning and on measures intended to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters, which addresses in particular the issue of so-called 'tax havens'. The aim of the action plan is to improve the effectiveness of Member States' actions to protect their tax systems against tax fraud and tax evasion and unfair tax base erosion, in line with established principles of transparency, information exchange and fair tax competition. The action plan does not only refer to measures aimed at fighting tax fraud and evasion, but also to measures aimed at enhancing tax compliance. In essence, it sets out a number of practical actions which can deliver concrete results to all Member States and lend support in particular to those Member States which need to strengthen tax collection.

Regarding its item 10, the action plan states that 'in cases where existing Directives are found to provide opportunities for aggressive tax planning or prevent appropriate solutions by allowing double non-taxation, the Commission will act. Work should also intensify on special tax regimes for expatriates and for wealthy individuals, which are harmful for the operation of the internal market and reduce overall tax revenues'.

In order to promote the effective implementation of the action plan the Commission will create a Platform for Tax Good Governance composed of experts from Member States and stakeholders to provide assistance in preparing its report on the application of the two recommendations and in its ongoing work on aggressive tax planning and good governance in tax matters.

([1]) COM(2012) 722 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000074/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προγράμματα παροχής βοήθειας στους πολίτες

Υπάρχουν προτάσεις ή γίνονται μήπως σκέψεις για ένα ευρύτερο και πιο ευέλικτο πρόγραμμα που θα εξυπηρετεί άμεσα πρακτικές ανάγκες ευρωπαίων πολιτών που πλήττονται από τις αρνητικές συνέπειες της οικονομικής κρίσης, με στόχο τη διατήρηση της κοινωνικής συνοχής;

Ποιοι είναι οι στόχοι και πώς ενημερώνονται τα κράτη μέλη ώστε να ζητήσουν βοήθεια;

Απάντηση του κ. Andoron εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή πρότεινε τη δημιουργία δύο προγραμμάτων στο πλαίσιο της κοινωνικής συνοχής στην περίοδο 2014-2020 που θα ανταποκρίνονται άμεσα στις πρακτικές ανάγκες των ευρωπαίων πολιτών:

Ένα πρόγραμμα που ήδη υπάρχει είναι το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) για τα άτομα που αντιμετωπίζουν ιδιαίτερες δυσκολίες για να βρουν εργασία, όπως οι γυναίκες, οι νέοι χωρίς απασχόληση ή κατάρτιση, οι ηλικιωμένοι εργαζόμενοι, οι μετανάστες και τα άτομα με αναπηρίες. Για την περίοδο 2014-2020, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή πρότεινε ορισμένες αλλαγές: Το ΕΚΤ θα επικεντρωθεί πολύ περισσότερο στο θέμα της κοινωνικής ένταξης και θα συμβάλλει στην καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας. Θα δοθεί μεγαλύτερη έμφαση στην καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας των νέων και την υποστήριξη των πλέον μειονεκτουσών ομάδων.

Το πακέτο κοινωνικών επενδύσεων, που θα εγκριθεί στις 20 Φεβρουαρίου, θα δίνει στα κράτη μέλη λεπτομερή στοιχεία για τον τρόπο με τον οποίο οι κοινωνικές επενδύσεις μέσω του ΕΚΤ στην κοινωνική οικονομία και την κοινωνική καινοτομία μπορούν να συμβάλουν καλύτερα στην κοινωνική ένταξη και την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας.

Τον Οκτώβριο του 2012 η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή πρότεινε το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Βοήθειας να βοηθήσει τους πιο απόρους στην ΕΕ. Το ταμείο θα στηρίξει τους απόρους παρέχοντάς τους τρόφιμα, ρουχισμό και άλλα βασικά είδη.

Τα δύο ταμεία είναι υπό συζήτηση την περίοδο αυτή στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και στο Συμβούλιο με σκοπό να εγκριθούν. Μετά την έγκρισή τους, θα εκτελεστεί η διάθεση των κονδυλίων των δύο Ταμείων από τα κράτη μέλη.

Επιπλέον, στον τομέα της κοινωνικής συνοχής, το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) θα διαθέσει κονδύλια ιδίως για την κοινωνική υποδομή που περιλαμβάνει την εκπαίδευση, την υγεία, την παιδική φροντίδα, τη στέγαση και άλλες κοινωνικές υποδομές στο πλαίσιο της ολοκληρωμένης βιώσιμης αστικής ανάπτυξης. Η νέα κανονιστική πρόταση για την περίοδο 2014-2020 προβλέπει ορισμένα νέα στοιχεία, όπως η στροφή της φροντίδας στην τοπική κοινότητα και στοχοθετημένες επενδύσεις για την εξάλειψη των διαχωρισμών στα εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000074/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Programmes to provide assistance to citizens

With a view to maintaining social cohesion, have any proposals been made about — or has any consideration been given to — launching a broader and more flexible programme that will directly meet the practical needs of European citizens suffering from the adverse consequences of the economic crisis?

What will the objectives of such a programme be and how will Member States be informed so that they can seek assistance?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The European Commission has proposed to set up two programmes under Social Cohesion in the 2014-2020 period which will directly meet the practical needs of European Citizens:

One already existing program is the European Social Fund (ESF) targeting those people with particular difficulties in finding work, such as women, young people not in employment or training, older workers, migrants and people with disabilities. For the 2014-2020 period the European Commission has proposed some changes: The ESF will much more focus on social inclusion and contribute to combating poverty. A greater emphasis will be on combating youth unemployment and supporting the most disadvantaged groups.

The Social Investment Package, to be adopted on 20 February, is going to provide MS with detailed indications how social investments through the ESF in the social economy and social innovation can better contribute to social inclusion and combating poverty.

In October 2012 the European Commission proposed the European Aid Fund to help the most deprived in the EU. The Fund would support with providing food and clothing and other essential goods to the most deprived people.

Both Funds are now in the European Parliament and the Council for discussion and adoption. Once adopted, both Funds will be implemented by the MS.

In addition, in the field of Social Cohesion the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is allocated especially to social infrastructure comprising education, health, childcare, housing and other social infrastructure to integrated sustainable urban development. The new regulatory proposal for 2014-2020 foresees some new elements, such as a shift to community based care and targeted investments on desegregation of educational facilities.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000075/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προκλητικές τουρκικές δηλώσεις

Ο τούρκος Υπουργός, αρμόδιος για Ευρωπαϊκά Θέματα, κ. Μπαγίς, δήλωσε, αναφερόμενος βεβαίως στο ψευδοκράτος, ότι «το κράτος της Β. Κύπρου είναι έτοιμο να βοηθήσει το Νότο. Η Ελληνοκυπριακή Διοίκηση μπορεί να πάρει δάνειο από το Βορρά, όπως ακριβώς παίρνουν ηλεκτρικό ρεύμα και νερό όταν το χρειάζονται».

Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία για δεκαετίες παρείχε δωρεάν ηλεκτρικό ρεύμα στους Τ/Κ, ακόμη και μετά την τουρκική εισβολή στο παράνομο ψευδοκράτος, ενώ όταν η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία χρειάστηκε ρεύμα για λίγο χρονικό διάστημα — λόγω της καταστροφής στο Μαρί — το ακριβοπλήρωσε στους Τ/Κ;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Μαρτίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει πλήρη επίγνωση των δυσκολιών προμήθειας ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας στην Κύπρο.

Αυτός είναι ο λόγος για τον οποίο η Επιτροπή, στην έκθεσή της του 2011 για την Πράσινη Γραμμή, εξέφρασε την ικανοποίησή της για τη συμφωνία μεταξύ των προέδρων του Κυπριακού Εμπορικού και Βιομηχανικού Επιμελητηρίου και του Τουρκοκυπριακού Εμπορικού Επιμελητηρίου για την προμήθεια ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας από τις περιοχές που τελούν υπό τον έλεγχο της κυβέρνησης σε αυτές που δεν τελούν υπό τον έλεγχό της, μετά την λυπηρή έκρηξη στη ναυτική βάση στο Μαρί, τον Ιούλιο του 2011.

Η εν λόγω συμφωνία πρέπει να θεωρηθεί ως ένα πολύ καλό μέτρο οικοδόμησης εμπιστοσύνης μεταξύ των δύο κοινοτήτων στην Κύπρο και ως παράδειγμα για περαιτέρω μέτρα οικοδόμησης εμπιστοσύνης που πρέπει να υιοθετηθούν στο μέλλον, προκειμένου να προωθηθεί η διαδικασία επανένωσης και συμφιλίωσης της Ελληνοκυπριακής και της Τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000075/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Provocative statements by Turkey

The Turkish Minister for European Affairs, Mr Egemen Bağış, referring to the pseudo-state (Northern Cyprus), has remarked that 'the state of Northern Cyprus is prepared to help the South. The Greek Cypriot administration can get a loan from the North, just as they get electricity and water when they need it.'

Is the Commission aware that the Republic of Cyprus for decades provided free electricity to the Turkish Cypriots, even after the Turkish invasion of what is now the illegal pseudo-state, but when the Republic of Cyprus needed power for a short period of time — because of the disaster in Mari — it had to pay the Turkish Cypriots dearly for it?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the difficulties in supplying electricity to Cyprus.

That explains why in its 2011 Green Line report, the Commission welcomed the agreement between the Presidents of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and the Turkish-Cypriot Chamber of Commerce for the supply of electricity from the non-government controlled to the government-controlled areas, following the regrettable explosion at the naval base of Mari in July 2011.

This agreement has to be considered as a very good confidence building measure between the two communities living in Cyprus, and as an example for further confidence building measures to be adopted in the future, in order to promote the process of reunification and reconciliation between the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000076/13
to the Commission
Giles Chichester (ECR)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Open access policies

The Commission has set as a target that 60 % of articles deriving from publicly funded research should be freely available under open access by 2016. Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn has also stated that this will be the general principle applied to research funded through the Horizon 2020 framework programme.

In their implementation of the recommendations made by Dame Janet Finch on expanding access to scientific research findings, the Research Councils of the UK (RCUK) have agreed that all peer-reviewed papers based on RCUK-funded research must be published on an open access basis from April 2013.

Can the Commission give Parliament an update on the implementation of open access by the other EU Member States and on how it plans to ensure that these policies converge speedily towards the model adopted by the United Kingdom?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The European Commission is indeed committed to making open access to scientific publications a general principle of Horizon 2020 and has also recommended that Member States take a similar approach to the results of research funded under their national programmes. The Commission has therefore asked them to designate a National Point of Reference (NPR) to act as interlocutor on open access related issues in order to engage in a process of exchange of best practices and lessons learned. The process of nominating these NPRs is ongoing.

The Commission recognises that there are several ways of arriving at open access, since different Member States and stakeholders have different situations and needs. It therefore does not offer exclusive support to one way of implementing open access but rather supports both the so called 'green' approach (self-archiving, i.e. deposition in repositories) and the 'gold' way (immediate publication in open access journals). The Commission believes that both routes are valid and complementary approaches for open access to be effective, fair, affordable, competitive and sustainable for researchers and innovative businesses.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000077/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Bee health and the European Food Safety Authority's new guidance document

The European Food Safety Authority is reviewing data requirements for testing the safety of plant protection products with regard to bees. The protection of bees from pesticides is of utmost importance, alongside ensuring that farmers have access to an adequate toolbox to protect their crops from pests, weeds and diseases, enabling them to meet the challenges of feeding an increasing population and to protect natural resources (including land). In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, testing requirements for pesticides must be updated in the light of current scientific knowledge, including as regards chronic and sub-lethal effects on bees.

1. How will the Commission ensure that the guidance document for testing the safety of plant protection products with regard to bees is comprehensive, pragmatic and proportionate, and that the feedback sent by relevant stakeholders, such as beekeepers, farmers, industry and Member States, is taken into account so that the document is both practical and workable?

2. How will the Commission ensure that the limited available resources for bee testing and research are focused on the factors which are considered by an increasing academic consensus to be largely responsible for causing poor bee health, including the Varroa parasite, diseases, lack of forage and beekeeping practices?

3. How will the Commission ensure that any further testing requirements, if proposed by EFSA, do not have the effect of undermining innovation in respect of plant protection products in Europe because of technical delays resulting from limited capacity to conduct additional bee testing?

4. Given the high level of public concern over honey bees and the importance of plant protection products for agricultural productivity, does the Commission intend to carry out an impact assessment and make it available to Parliament before the adoption of the guidance document?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), as requested by the Commission, is reviewing the risk assessment scheme for plant protection products as regards their impact on bees.

The data requirements for active substances and for plant protection products are laid down in Commission Regulations (EU) No 544/2011 and 545/2011. New data requirements received a favourable opinion of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health in July 2012 and are currently under the scrutiny of the European Parliament and the Council. The new requirements, once adopted, will become applicable in January 2014.

1. The Commission requested EFSA to develop a guidance document on the risk assessment of plant protection products to bees, and is sure that EFSA will carefully examine all comments received before finalising the guidance document.

2. The Commission is funding several research projects to define the role of varroa, viruses and pesticides on bee decline. The Bee Doc project ([1]) is tackling the 3 issues and a new call for proposal is dedicated to the resistance to varroa. Cleanhive ([2]) and the recent Swarmonitor ([3]) aim at improving beekeeping practices. The COLOSS ([4]) COST action is a network of researchers and stakeholders joining forces of participants in national research programmes. In total the EU budget for bee health research amounts to approximately 15 million Euros.

3. As described above, data requirements for pesticide dossiers are adopted by the Commission and not by EFSA.

4. The guidance document under preparation by EFSA is not legally binding. It aims to provide guidance for the correct implementation of the relevant Community legislation. No Commission impact assessment is being prepared for the guidance.

([1]) http://www.bee-doc.eu/.
([2]) http://cleanhive.cric-projects.com/index.html
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13325905.
([4]) http://www.coloss.org/.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000078/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εκφοβισμός

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα ευρήματα δύο ερευνών που δημοσιεύτηκαν στο Περιοδικό Παιδιατρικής, ένα στα δέκα παιδιά και ένας στους τρείς εφήβους αντιστοίχως, που έχουν τροφικές αλλεργίες ή είναι υπέρβαροι είναι πολύ πιο πιθανό να πέσουν θύματα εκφοβισμού από τους συμμαθητές τους.

Ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να συστήσει η ΕΕ στα κράτη μέλη, ιδίως στο κατώφλι του 2013, «Ευρωπαϊκό Έτος των Πολιτών», με στόχο την ευαισθητοποίηση του κοινού σχετικά με το φαινόμενο του εκφοβισμού, το οποίο συχνά οδηγεί στην κατάθλιψη, ή ακόμη και σε αυτοκτονίες, και επηρεάζει την καθημερινή ζωή των νέων ευρωπαίων πολιτών καθώς και των οικογενειών τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει πολύ καλά το θέμα του στιγματισμού των παχύσαρκων νέων. Ωστόσο, οι δράσεις που στοχεύουν στην αύξηση της ευαισθητοποίησης για το πρόβλημα του εκφοβισμού, εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών.

Τα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου για την «Ευρωπαϊκή συμφωνία για την ψυχική υγεία και την ευεξία: αποτελέσματα και μελλοντικές δράσεις», του Ιουνίου 2011, προσκαλούν τα κράτη μέλη, μεταξύ άλλων, να «ενισχύσουν την προαγωγή της ψυχικής υγείας των παιδιών και των νέων, υποστηρίζοντας θετικές γονικές δεξιότητες, ολιστικές σχολικές προσεγγίσεις για τη μείωση του εκφοβισμού και την αύξηση των κοινωνικών και συναισθηματικών ικανοτήτων, καθώς και υποστηρίζοντας τις οικογένειες όπου ένας εκ των δύο γονέων πάσχει από ψυχική διαταραχή».

Στο πεδίο της εκπαίδευσης, η σύσταση ([1]) του 2006 για τις βασικές δεξιότητες, της οποίας το «Ευρωπαϊκό πλαίσιο για τις βασικές δεξιότητες» λειτουργεί ως οδηγός για τις εθνικές μεταρρυθμίσεις των προγραμμάτων σπουδών και των διδακτικών πρακτικών, δίνει ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στην έννοια της δημοκρατίας, της ανοχής και του σεβασμού. Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τα κράτη μέλη στις προσπάθειες τους να εκπαιδεύσουν τους νέους να αναπτύξουν δεξιότητες εποικοδομητικής συμμετοχής στην κοινωνία και να αντιληφθούν έννοιες όπως, η δημοκρατία, η ανοχή και ο σεβασμός για τη διαφορετικότητα και τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, μεταξύ άλλων και μέσω του προγράμματος διά βίου μάθησης και του υποπρογράμματός του, Comenius, για την σχολική εκπαίδευση, το οποίο έχει ήδη χρηματοδοτήσει αρκετά σχέδια για το εν λόγω ζήτημα.

([1]) Σύσταση 2006/962/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 18ης Δεκεμβρίου 2006, για τις βασικές δεξιότητες της διά βίου μάθησης, ΕΕ L 394 της 30.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000078/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Bullying

According to the recent findings of two studies published in the *Journal of Paediatrics*, 1 in 10 children, and 1 in 3 teenagers, who have food allergies or are overweight are vulnerable to being bullied by their peers.

What action does the EU recommend to Member States, especially at the dawn of 2013 (the European Year of Citizens), in order to raise awareness of bullying, which is often linked to depression and even suicide and affects the daily lives of young European citizens and their families?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the stigmatisation of obese young people. Actions to raise awareness about bullying, however, fall under the responsibility of Member States.

Council Conclusions on 'The European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being: results and future action' of June 2011 invited Member States, inter alia, to 'strengthen mental health promotion of children and young people by supporting positive parenting skills, holistic school approaches to reduce bullying and to increase social and emotional competences as well as supporting families where a parent has a mental disorder'.

In the field of Education, the 2006 Recommendation ([1]) on key competences, whose 'European Framework of Key Competences' serves as a guide for national reforms of curricula and teaching practice, lays strong emphasis on democracy, tolerance and respect. The Commission supports Member States in their efforts to educate young people for constructive citizenship, democracy, tolerance and respect for diversity and human rights, including through the Lifelong Learning Programme and its sub-programme for school education, Comenius, which has already funded several projects on this theme.

([1]) Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ L 394, 30.12.2006.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000079/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η Τουρκία και το Συμβούλιο Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών

Ο τούρκος πρωθυπουργός Ταγίπ Ερντογάν εμφανίστηκε ανήσυχος λόγω της αιματοχυσίας στη Συρία, εξέφρασε την απογοήτευσή του και καταλόγισε στο Συμβούλιο Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών απραξία για τον τερματισμό του πολέμου στη Συρία.

Ο τούρκος πρωθυπουργός είπε ότι «ο ΟΗΕ είναι σήμερα ανίσχυρος όπως ήταν πριν από είκοσι χρόνια όταν παρακολουθούσε τη σφαγή χιλιάδων ανθρώπων στα Βαλκάνια, στη Βοσνία και τη Σρεμπρένιτσα», προσθέτοντας ότι η Συρία θα καταγραφεί στην ιστορία ως μια αποτυχία του ΟΗΕ, όπως έγινε στη Βοσνία τη δεκαετία του '90.

Ερωτάται, κατά συνέπεια, η Επιτροπή:

— Σκοπεύει η ΕΕ να υπενθυμίσει στον κ. Ερντογάν την περίπτωση της Κύπρου και τα πολυάριθμα ψηφίσματα του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για το θέμα, τα οποία ουδέποτε εφάρμοσε η Τουρκία, και να του ζητήσει να αποσύρει αμέσως τα τουρκικά στρατεύματα από την Κύπρο και να εργαστεί για την επίτευξη μόνιμης λύσης στο κυπριακό ζήτημα, επιδεικνύοντας, τόσο ο ίδιος όσο και η χώρα του, πλήρη σεβασμό για τον ΟΗΕ;

— Είναι έτοιμη η ΕΕ να δηλώσει δημόσια στον κ. Ερντογάν ότι «ο ΟΗΕ είναι σήμερα ανίσχυρος όπως ήταν πριν από τριάντα εννέα χρόνια όταν παρακολουθούσε την τουρκική εισβολή κατά του κυπριακού λαού», προσθέτοντας ότι «η Τουρκία θα καταγραφεί στην ιστορία ως μια αποτυχία του ΟΗΕ, όπως έγινε στην Κύπρο το 1974»;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή επαναλαμβάνει σε διάφορα βήματα την ανάγκη συμβολής της Τουρκίας στην εξεύρεση συνολικής λύσης του Κυπριακού. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην έκθεση προόδου για την Τουρκία του 2012, όπου υπογραμμίζεται, όπως τονίζεται στο διαπραγματευτικό πλαίσιο και στις δηλώσεις του Συμβουλίου, ότι αναμένεται από την Τουρκία να στηρίξει ενεργά τις διαπραγματεύσεις για τη δίκαιη, συνολική και βιώσιμη διευθέτηση του κυπριακού ζητήματος εντός του πλαισίου των Ηνωμένων Εθνών (ΗΕ), σύμφωνα με τα σχετικά ψηφίσματα του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των ΗΕ και βάσει των θεμελιωδών αρχών της ΕΕ. Η ουσιαστική δέσμευση και συμβολή της Τουρκίας στην εξεύρεση μιας συνολικής λύσης είναι κρίσιμης σημασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000079/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Turkey and the UN Security Council

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, appearing worried about the bloodshed in Syria, has expressed his disappointment and criticised the UN Security Council for failing to take action to stop Syria's war.

He said that 'the UN is as helpless today as it was 20 years ago when it watched the massacre of hundreds of thousands of people in the Balkans, Bosnia and Srebrenica', adding that Syria would go down in history as a UN failure much like in Bosnia in the 1990s.

I therefore ask the Commission:

— Does the EU intend to remind Mr Erdogan of the case of Cyprus and the numerous UN Security Council resolutions on the subject, which have never been implemented by Turkey, and to ask him to immediately withdraw the Turkish army from the island and work towards a permanent solution to the Cyprus problem, with both himself and his country showing full respect for the UN?

— Is the EU ready to state publicly to Mr Erdogan that 'the UN is as helpless today as it was 39 years ago when it watched the Turkish invasion against the people of Cyprus', adding that 'Turkey will go down in history as a UN failure much like in Cyprus in 1974'?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The Commission reiterates at various instances the need for Turkey to contribute to an overall solution of the Cyprus issue. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the 2012 Progress Report on Turkey, which underlines that, as emphasised in the negotiating framework and in Council declarations, Turkey is expected to actively support the negotiations aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus issue within the United Nations (UN) framework, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles on which the EU is founded. Turkey's commitment and contribution in concrete terms to such a comprehensive settlement is crucial.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000080/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Situazione della «Repubblica Turca di Cipro Nord»

Il 15 novembre 1983 la Turchia dichiarava la costituzione della «Repubblica Turca di Cipro Nord».

Da quel momento, la Repubblica di Cipro è divisa. I ciprioti protestano da ormai 29 anni per la riunificazione dello Stato, mentre la Turchia non intende rinunciare alla sovranità sulla parte nord del Paese, assumendo che si tratta di una situazione ormai consolidata, soprattutto per quanto riguarda i turchi residenti nella «Repubblica Turca di Cipro Nord» da prima della sua costituzione.

— Considerando la candidatura della Turchia a diventare Paese membro dell'Unione;

— considerando che la Turchia è tra i firmatari del Trattato di costituzione della Repubblica di Cipro, sottoscritto il 16 agosto 1960 a Nicosia, ed è uno dei tre garanti per la sicurezza della Repubblica stessa;

— considerando che la cosiddetta «Repubblica Turca di Cipro Nord», dichiarata tale nel 1983, occupa il 37 % del territorio della Repubblica di Cipro dal 1974;

— considerando che il Consiglio di Sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite si è espresso condannando la proclamazione della nuova Repubblica da parte della Turchia, e definendo «illegale» lo Stato turco-cipriota, nelle Risoluzioni 541 e 550, e che le Nazioni Unite hanno invitato esplicitamente la Turchia a ritirare la dichiarazione di sovranità su Cipro Nord e tutti gli Stati sovrani a non riconoscere la sovranità di detta Repubblica;

— considerando che la «Repubblica Turca di Cipro Nord» è formalmente riconosciuta a livello internazionale come Stato indipendente e sovrano solo dalla Turchia;

— considerando che il territorio di Cipro è diviso da 38 anni, con pregiudizi evidenti per i diritti umani dei ciprioti e di tutti i rifugiati, sia greci che turchi,

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. con quale livello di priorità intende sollecitare la Turchia affinché ponga in essere un'implementazione effettiva e totale del Protocollo di Ankara e, qualora la stessa non adempia gli obblighi, intende comminare sanzioni? In caso di risposta affermativa, quali?

2. Intende sollecitare concretamente la Turchia a ritirare il proprio esercito dal territorio cipriota e procedere alla riunificazione di Cipro? In caso di risposta affermativa, come?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(18 febbraio 2013)

Su proposta della Commissione europea, nel dicembre 2006 il Consiglio ha deciso che i negoziati su otto capitoli interessati dalle restrizioni applicate dalla Turchia nei confronti della Repubblica di Cipro non sarebbero stati aperti e che nessun capitolo sarebbe stato provvisoriamente chiuso finché la Commissione non avesse confermato la piena attuazione da parte della Turchia del protocollo aggiuntivo all'accordo di associazione.

La questione sollevata dall'onorevole deputato fa parte del processo volto a trovare una soluzione globale alla questione cipriota concordata tra i leader delle comunità greco-cipriota e turco-cipriota sotto l'egida delle Nazioni Unite. Nella sua comunicazione dell'ottobre 2012 intitolata «Strategia di allargamento e sfide principali per il periodo 2012-2013» ([1]), la Commissione ha sottolineato la necessità di rilanciare i negoziati per concluderli quanto prima, partendo dai progressi realizzati finora, e ha incoraggiato la Turchia a potenziare concretamente il proprio impegno e il proprio contributo ai colloqui.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000080/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Situation of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus'

On 15 November 1983, Turkey declared the establishment of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus'.

Since then, the Republic of Cyprus has been divided. Cypriots have now been protesting for 29 years for the reunification of the state, while Turkey has no intention of relinquishing sovereignty over the northern part of the country, considering the matter to be settled, particularly with regard to Turks living in the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' since it was first established.

— Turkey is a candidate to become an EU Member State.

— Turkey is one of the signatories to the Treaty concerning the Establishment of the Republic of Cyprus, signed on 16 August 1960 in Nicosia, and is one of three guarantors responsible for the security of the republic.

— The so-called 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus', declared as such in 1983, has occupied 37 % of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus since 1974.

— In Resolutions 541 and 550, the United Nations Security Council condemned Turkey's declaration of the new republic and declared the Turkish Cypriot state to be 'legally invalid'. The United Nations also explicitly called on Turkey to retract its declaration of sovereignty over Northern Cyprus and on all sovereign states not to recognise the sovereignty of that republic.

— The 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' is formally recognised as an independent and sovereign state at international level only by Turkey.

— The territory of Cyprus has been divided for 38 years, clearly harming the human rights of Cypriots and all refugees, both Greek and Turkish.

1. How urgently does the Commission intend to call on Turkey to effectively implement the Ankara Protocol in full and, if Turkey does not comply with its obligations, does it intend to impose sanctions? If so, what sanctions?

2. Does it intend specifically to urge Turkey to withdraw its army from Cypriot territory and to reunify Cyprus? If so, how?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

Upon a proposal of the European Commission, the Council in December 2006 decided that negotiations will not be opened on eight chapters related to Turkey's restrictions regarding the Republic of Cyprus and no chapter will be provisionally closed until the Commission confirms that Turkey has fully implemented the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement.

The issue raised by the Honourable Member is part of the process aiming at a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus between the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities under the auspices of the United Nations. In its October 2012 Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013 ([1]), the Commission underlined the necessity to re-launch the negotiations with the aim of reaching a swift conclusion of the talks, building on the progress achieved to date and encouraged Turkey to increase in concrete terms its commitment and contribution to the talks.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000081/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Discriminazioni religiose in Turchia

La proposta della Commissione di Riconciliazione Costituzionale, che doveva presentare la stesura di una nuova Costituzione entro la fine del 2012, non è ancora pronta e probabilmente il partito del Premier Erdogan si farà carico di redigere una nuova proposta. La Commissione è stata bloccata dal mancato accordo tra partiti politici su vari temi, tra cui il diritto alla libertà di coscienza e religione.

— Considerando che la Turchia ha già dimostrato in passato di non rispettare tale fondamentale diritto, come dimostrano varie limitazioni cui è soggetta la Chiesa cattolica a Cipro, già denunciate nella precedente interrogazione E-004341/12;

— considerando che attualmente la Chiesa cattolica manca di riconoscimento giuridico in Turchia e per tale motivo non può, tra le altre limitazioni, dare vita ad associazioni e organizzazioni non governative;

— considerando le dichiarazioni di Nina Shea, membro della Commissione degli Stati Uniti che ha preparato, nel 2011, una relazione sulla libertà religiosa nel mondo, in cui denunciava come il governo turco continuasse a imporre seri limiti alla libertà religiosa o di fede, mettendo così in pericolo l'esistenza e la sopravvivenza delle minoranze religiose in Turchia;

— considerando che le prospettive che la nuova Costituzione porti ad un miglioramento della situazione appaiono flebili,

intende la VP/HR esercitare qualche pressione, dato anche lo status di candidato all'adesione all'Unione europea della Turchia, per evitare tali discriminazioni e limitazioni del diritto di coscienza e religione?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(19 febbraio 2013)

La Turchia, in qualità di paese che sta negoziando l'adesione all'UE, deve garantire effettivamente a tutti i suoi cittadini uguali diritti e libertà, senza distinzione di lingua, razza, colore della pelle, sesso, opinioni politiche, convinzioni filosofiche, appartenenza a una determinata religione o setta e a prescindere da qualsiasi considerazione analoga. Tali diritti e libertà devono essere garantiti in base alla Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo e alla giurisprudenza della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo.

Per quanto riguarda il rispetto della libertà di pensiero, di coscienza e di religione, la Commissione ha ampiamente riferito nella relazione sulla Turchia del 2012 ([1]) e ha concluso che, nonostante il dialogo con le comunità religiose non musulmane sia proseguito, sono stati registrati altri casi di discriminazione verso le minoranze religiose o gli atei. Non è ancora stato istituito un quadro normativo conforme ai requisiti della Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo che garantisca alle comunità religiose non musulmane e alla comunità degli alevi di svolgere le loro attività senza indebite restrizioni. La Commissione ha informato le autorità turche delle sue conclusioni.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000081/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Religious discrimination in Turkey

The proposal of the Constitutional Reconciliation Commission, which was to present a new draft constitution by the end of 2012, is still not ready and Prime Minister Erdogan's party will probably take over the drafting of a new proposal. The Commission has been thwarted by the failure of political parties to agree on several issues, including the right to freedom of conscience and religion.

— Turkey has already shown in the past that it does not respect this fundamental right, as evidenced by the various restrictions imposed on the Catholic Church in Cyprus, which were previously mentioned in Question E-004341/12.

— The Catholic Church is not currently legally recognised in Turkey and that is why it cannot, among the other restrictions, establish associations and non-governmental organisations.

— Nina Shea, a member of the United States Commission which, in 2011, prepared a report on worldwide religious freedom, detailing how the Turkish Government continued to impose serious limitations on freedom of religion or belief, thereby threatening the existence and survival of religious minorities in Turkey, has commented on the situation.

— There is little chance of the new constitution improving the situation.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to apply any pressure, also in view of Turkey's status as a candidate for accession to the EU, to prevent such discrimination and restrictions on the right to freedom of conscience and religion?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

Turkey, as a country negotiating its accession to the EU, needs to guarantee in practice equal rights and freedoms for all its citizens irrespective of their language, race, colour, gender, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any similar considerations. These rights and freedoms need to be guaranteed according to the European Convention of Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

As regards the respect of freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the Commission has extensively reported in its 2012 Progress Report on Turkey ([1]) and concluded that, although the dialogue with the non-Muslim religious communities continued, there were cases of persons professing faith in minority religions or indeed no faith who continued to be discriminated against. A legal framework in line with the ECHR has yet to be established to ensure that all non-Muslim communities and the Alevi community can function without undue constraints. The Commission has shared this conclusion with the Turkish authorities.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000082/13
aan de Commissie
Wim van de Camp (PPE)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Drugshandel vanuit de Antwerpse haven

Uit Nederlandse mediaberichten, waaronder een reportage van Omroep Brabant op 27 december 2012 ([1]), blijkt dat op grote schaal drugs worden doorgevoerd vanuit de haven in Antwerpen naar Nederland.

1. Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van berichten dat vanuit de Antwerpse haven op grote schaal drugs worden doorgevoerd naar Nederland?

2. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van vermeende corruptie, zoals onder medewerkers, in de Antwerpse haven?

3. Heeft de Commissie een overzicht van cijfers over de drugshandel via Europese havens?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven in hoeverre de Belgische en Nederlandse justitie samenwerken op het terrein van drugsbestrijding in havens?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat incidentele- en steekproefcontroles aan de grenzen van de lidstaten moeten plaatsvinden?

6. Ziet de Commissie mogelijkheden om projecten te financieren die drugshandel in zeehavens tegengaan?

7. Hoe ziet de Commissie zijn eigen rol in dit kader, ook bezien vanuit het Stockholmprogramma, inzake justitiële samenwerking?

8. In hoeverre is Europol actief in de bestrijding van deze drugshandel?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(1 maart 2013)

De Commissie verricht geen operationele wetshandhavingsactiviteiten en verzamelt evenmin operationele inlichtingen over criminele activiteiten. De Commissie ondersteunt de grensoverschrijdende wetshandhavingsactiviteiten van de lidstaten, alsook de justitiële samenwerking, door het wetgevingskader te creëren voor dergelijke samenwerking en door de betrokken EU-agentschappen zoals Europol, Eurojust of het Europees Agentschap voor het beheer van de operationele samenwerking aan de buitengrenzen van de lidstaten van de Europese Unie (Frontex), te helpen. De Commissie financiert ook activiteiten voor de institutionele opbouw met het oog op de bestrijding van de drugshandel, bijvoorbeeld in West-Afrika, dat een belangrijk knooppunt is voor de drugshandel langs de zogenaamde cocaïneroute.

Wat de justitiële samenwerking betreft, heeft de Commissie wetgevingsvoorstellen gepresenteerd om het wettelijk kader voor een efficiënte justitiële samenwerking tussen de lidstaten te creëren en voortdurend te verbeteren. Dit omvat niet enkel instrumenten voor wederzijdse erkenning betreffende de hele gerechtelijke procedure, van het verzamelen van bewijzen tot de uitvoering van een definitief vonnis, maar ook het opstellen van gemeenschappelijke minimumnormen betreffende procedurele rechten, om het wederzijds vertrouwen tussen de justitiële autoriteiten van de lidstaten te versterken.

Douanecontroles vinden plaats op basis van een risicoanalyse of steekproeven zoals bepaald in artikel 13 van Verordening (EEG) nr. 2913/92 (gewijzigd bij Verordening (EG) nr. 648/2005). Ter ondersteuning van deze activiteiten en om gelijkwaardige op risicoanalyses gebaseerde controles te garanderen, wisselen de douaneautoriteiten actief risicogerelateerde informatie uit via het elektronisch risicobeheersysteem voor douane. Douanedeskundigen en bestuurders van EU-havens komen regelmatig samen om de beste werkmethoden te ontwikkelen en toe te passen.

([1]) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2OJLDN1mqM.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000082/13
to the Commission
Wim van de Camp (PPE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Drug trafficking through the Port of Antwerp

According to Dutch media reports, including a report by *Omroep Brabant* on 27 December 2012 ([1]), the Port of Antwerp is being used as a transit location for large-scale drug trafficking to the Netherlands.

1. Has the Commission taken note of reports that the Port of Antwerp is being used as a transit location for large-scale drug trafficking to the Netherlands?

2. Is it aware of alleged corruption in the Port of Antwerp, including among its employees?

3. Does it have an overview of figures on drug trafficking through European ports?

4. Can it indicate the extent of cooperation between the Belgian and Dutch judiciary in the fight against drugs in ports?

5. Does it share the opinion that there is a need for spot checks on the Member States' borders?

6. Does it feel that it is possible to finance projects aimed at fighting drug trafficking in sea ports?

7. How does the Commission see its own role in this context, including in the light of the Stockholm Programme, with regard to judicial cooperation?

8. What is the extent of Europol's involvement in the fight against this drug trafficking?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission does not undertake operational law enforcement activities nor does it collect operational intelligence on criminal activities. The Commission supports Member States' law enforcement activities at cross-border level, as well as judicial cooperation activities, by proposing the legislative framework for such cooperation and by supporting the relevant EU agencies such as Europol, Eurojust or the European Agency for the Management of Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex). The Commission also finances institution building activities aimed at combating drug trafficking, for instance in West Africa, which represents an important drug trafficking hub along the so-called cocaine route.

As regards judicial cooperation, the Commission has put forward legislatives proposals to set up and continuously improve the legal framework for effective judicial cooperation between Member States. This not only includes mutual recognition instruments covering the entire judicial procedure — from taking of evidence to the execution of a final sentence, but also the setting up of common minimum standards on procedural rights to strengthen mutual trust between Member States' judicial authorities.

Customs controls take place on the basis of risk analysis or random checks as foreseen in Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 2913/92 (amended by Regulation (EC) No 648/2005). In support of these activities and pursuing the aim of ensuring equivalent risk based controls customs authorities actively exchange and share risk related information through the electronic customs risk management system. Customs experts and managers of EU ports meet regularly to develop and apply best working practices.

([1]) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2OJLDN1mqM.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000083/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Out-of-hospital cardiac arrests

Between November 2007 and December 2011, there were 2 057 reported cases of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in Ireland. Data was available for 1 739 of these. Out of these 1 739 cases, there were only 123 survivors.

What is the Commission doing to reduce the number of people who suffer cardiac arrest?

What is the Commission doing to reduce the fatality rate among those who do suffer a cardiac arrest?

Does the Commission believe it is important to facilitate further research on out-of-hospital cardiac arrests?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The organisation and delivery of healthcare is the responsibility of Member States. To support Member States' action, the Commission is however, addressing the major causes of cardiovascular diseases through its strategies on nutrition, physical activity and its work on tobacco ([1]) and has financed projects under the EU Health programme specifically dealing with their prevention and management, such as EuroHeart I and II, EURHOBOP and SITS EAST ([2]).

The Commission has launched a reflection process on chronic diseases with Member States following up on the Council Conclusions on 'Innovative approaches for chronic diseases in public health and healthcare systems' ([3]). This process should help identify the potential for further added-value action at EU level in support of Member States.

Although the Commission did not support research projects specifically addressing out-of-hospital cardiac arrests through the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), the Commission is devoting EUR 15 million to ongoing research on the major causes underlying sudden cardiac death in adults, i.e., hypertrophic cardiomyopathies and ventricular arrhythmias ([4]). These projects tackle issues such as the genetic determinants of these diseases as well as the development of diagnostic and therapeutic approaches including novel drugs and devices.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/policy/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/118282.pdf
([4]) EUTrigTreat, (Cardiac arrhythmias: from genes to improvement of management of patients http://www.eutrigtreat.com/) BIG-HEART (Bench-to-beside Integrated approach to familial hypertrophic cardiomyopathy: to the HEART of the disease, http://www.big-heart.eu/)

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-000084/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Περιβαλλοντική καταστροφή στα Λιβερά Κερύνειας (Κύπρος)

Ενημερώθηκα από το Δημοτικό συμβούλιο των Λιβερών Κερύνειας, ότι στο χωριό αυτό βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη μια περιβαλλοντική καταστροφή. Παρά το γεγονός ότι η περιοχή αυτή εντάσσεται στο Ευρωπαϊκό οικολογικό δίκτυο «NATURA 2000», ως Τόπος Κοινοτικής Σημασίας, από τον Νοέμβριο του 2012 χρησιμοποιούνται μπουλντόζες για την κατασκευή ασφαλτοστρωμένου δρόμου και για τη σύνδεση της περιοχής με δίκτυο ηλεκτρισμού με απώτερο σκοπό την ανέγερση κατοικιών. Ως αποτέλεσμα, βλάπτεται ανεπανόρθωτα η πλούσια βιοποικιλότητα της περιοχής, και καταστρέφεται μεγάλος αριθμός σπάνιων φυτών και ειδών που απειλούνται με εξαφάνιση (όπως τα είδη tulipa cypria, crocus cyprius, narcissus tazetta, cyclamen cyprium, ophrys kotschyi, ophrys lapetheca, ophrys syriana, epipactis veratrifolia, ophrys elegans and serapias aphroditae).

Δεδομένου ότι τα Λιβερά αποτελούν περιοχή που εντάσσεται στο πλαίσιο του «NATURA 2000», πρέπει να ληφθούν επείγοντα μέτρα, ώστε να τεθεί τέλος σε αυτές τις εγκληματικές δραστηριότητες, οι οποίες έχουν μακροχρόνιες και μη αναστρέψιμες επιπτώσεις στην βιοποικιλότητα της περιοχής.

Λαμβάνοντας δε υπόψη ότι δεν πρόκειται για την πρώτη φορά που η περιοχή γίνεται στόχος τέτοιων εγκληματικών ενεργειών (καταγγελίες καταχωρήθηκαν το 2008 και το 2010), ποια μέτρα σκοπεύει να λάβει η Επιτροπή για να σταματήσει την παράνομη αυτή δραστηριότητα και για να εμποδίσει την επανάληψη τέτοιας μορφής ανθρωπογενών καταστροφών στο μέλλον;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Πρέπει να επισημανθεί ότι, αφού το κεκτημένο της ΕΕ παραμένει υπό αναστολή στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει νομικά μέσα για την επιβολή της συμμόρφωσης με τη σχετική περιβαλλοντική νομοθεσία της ΕΕ σε αυτό το τμήμα του νησιού.

Η Επιτροπή έχει παράσχει τεχνική βοήθεια στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα στο πλαίσιο του χρηματοδοτούμενου από την ΕΕ σχεδίου «Στήριξη προς την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα όσον αφορά τη διαχείριση και την προστασία πιθανών τόπων Natura 2000 στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου». Επτά περιοχές, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των βουνών της Κερύνειας, έχουν προσδιοριστεί και έχουν συνταχθεί σχετικά σχέδια διαχείρισης. Στο πλαίσιο της προετοιμασίας για τη μελλοντική εφαρμογή του κεκτημένου της ΕΕ, η λήψη των απαραίτητων μέτρων διατήρησης εναπόκειται στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα. Εντούτοις, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει μέσο επιβολής της προστασίας του περιβάλλοντος στην εν λόγω τοποθεσία και στη γύρω περιοχή.

Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να εγείρει το ζήτημα ενώπιον της τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας και να ενθαρρύνει τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη να εφαρμόσουν ενδεδειγμένα μέτρα διατήρησης στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000084/13
to the Commission
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Environmental catastrophe in Livera, Kyrenia (Cyprus)

I have been alerted by the municipal council of Livera, in Kyrenia (Cyprus), to an environmental catastrophe which is taking place there. Although this area is part of the Natura 2000 network, as a site of Community importance (SCI), bulldozers have been working since November 2012 to build an asphalt road and to connect the area to the electricity grid with a view to building housing. As a result, the rich biodiversity of the region is being irretrievably damaged and a number of threatened rare plants and species are being destroyed, such as *tulipa cypria*, *crocus cyprius*, *narcissus tazetta*, *cyclamen cyprium*, *ophrys kotschyi*, *ophrys lapetheca*, *ophrys syriana*, *epipactis veratrifolia*, *ophrys elegans* and *serapias aphroditae*.

As Livera is a Natura 2000 site, urgent steps need to be taken to put an end to these criminal actions, which will have a long-lasting and irreversible environmental impact on the biodiversity of the region.

Bearing in mind that this is not the first time this area has suffered from such criminal activities (complaints were registered in 2008 and 2010), what steps does the Commission plan to take to stop this illegal activity and to prevent any further such man-made catastrophes in the future?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

It should be noted that since the EU *acquis* is currently suspended in the northern part of Cyprus, the Commission does not have any legal tool to enforce compliance with the relevant environmental EU legislation in that part of the island.

The Commission has provided technical assistance to the Turkish Cypriot community under the EU funded project 'Support to the Turkish Cypriot community as regards management and protection of potential Natura 2000 sites in the northern part of Cyprus'. Seven areas, including Kyrenia mountains, have been identified and draft management plans were prepared. In preparation for the future application of the EU acquis it is for the Turkish Cypriot Community to take the necessary conservation measures. However, the Commission does not have any legal instrument to enforce environmental protection in the site in question.

Nevertheless, the Commission continues to raise the issue with the Turkish Cypriot community and to encourage interested parties to apply appropriate conservation measures in the northern part of Cyprus.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000085/13
an die Kommission
Esther de Lange (PPE), Peter Liese (PPE) und Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(8. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Vorwarnungsmechanismus für Berufsqualifikationen

Die niederländische Staatsanwaltschaft hat einen niederländischen ehemaligen Neurologen beschuldigt, während der Jahre seiner Tätigkeit in einem niederländischen Krankenhaus schwere Kunstfehler begangen zu haben. Trotz der Tatsache, dass er nicht länger über eine Approbation verfügt, um in den Niederlanden als Arzt tätig zu sein (er hatte seine Approbation zurückgegeben), wurde er in einem Krankenhaus im Nachbarland Deutschland als Arzt eingestellt. Die Mitgliedstaaten dürfen bei anderen Mitgliedstaaten Hintergrundinformationen zur Berufsqualifikation von Angehörigen der Gesundheitsberufe einholen, allerdings besteht bislang keine Verpflichtung, andere Mitgliedstaaten im Falle der Aufhebung einer Approbation oder eines gerichtlichen Berufsverbots zu informieren.

Die Kommission hat im Dezember 2011 ihren Vorschlag zur Änderung der Richtlinie über die Anerkennung von Berufsqualifikationen (KOM(2011)0883), in der die Einführung eines Vorwarnungsmechanismus vorgeschlagen wird (Artikel 56a), vorgelegt. Die zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten wären verpflichtet, den zuständigen Behörden aller anderen Mitgliedstaaten die Personen zu benennen, denen die Ausübung ihres Berufs durch eine Behörde oder durch ein Gericht untersagt wurde.

1. Mit Blick auf die Umsetzung der neuen Richtlinie: Wie gedenkt die Kommission vorzugehen, damit die zuständigen Behörden eines Mitgliedstaats auch tatsächlich die zuständigen Behörden aller anderen Mitgliedstaaten über Personen, denen die Berufsausübung behördlich oder gerichtlich untersagt wurde, informieren? Wie beabsichtigt die Kommission sicherzustellen, dass die anderen Mitgliedstaaten diese Informationen auch rechtzeitig erhalten?

2. Stimmt die Kommission der Auffassung zu, dass eine europaweite schwarze Liste, bei der Aufhebungen von Approbationen und gerichtliche Berufsverbote angemeldet werden, und zwar in Verbindung mit einem automatischen System, damit Personen, denen die Approbation entzogen wurde, in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat keine neue Approbation erhalten können, erforderlich ist? Wäre die Kommission in der Lage und bereit, die Einführung einer derartigen europaweiten schwarzen Liste von Personen, denen die Berufsausübung behördlich oder gerichtlich untersagt wurde, vorzuschlagen?

3. Sieht die Kommission darüber hinaus die Notwendigkeit, die Mitgliedstaaten zum gegenseitigen Informationsaustausch über laufende Verfahren gegen Angehörige der Gesundheitsberufe zu verpflichten?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(6. März 2013)

Nach der Richtlinie 2005/36/EG [1] (nachstehend „Richtlinie") unterrichten sich die zuständigen Behörden des Herkunfts- und des Aufnahmemitgliedstaats gegenseitig über das Vorliegen disziplinarischer oder strafrechtlicher Sanktionen und über sonstige schwerwiegende, genau bestimmte Sachverhalte, die sich auf die Ausübung einer Berufstätigkeit auswirken könnten. Modalitäten und Umfang dieser Zusammenarbeit sind den Mitgliedstaaten überlassen. Bevor eine Zulassung erteilt wird, kann der Aufnahmemitgliedstaat außerdem verlangen, dass Berufsangehörige ihr berufliches Ansehen oder ihren beruflichen Status durch eine Bescheinigung des Herkunftsmitgliedstaats nachweisen.

Im Zusammenhang mit der Modernisierung der Richtlinie hat die Kommission vorgeschlagen, diese allgemeine Pflicht zur Zusammenarbeit durch ein proaktives EU-weites Warnsystem zu ergänzen, das auch für Ärzte gelten würde. Bei diesem System wäre die zuständige Behörde eines Mitgliedstaats verpflichtet, den Namen des Arztes, gegen den im betreffenden Mitgliedstaat von einem nationalen Gericht oder einer nationalen Behörde ein Berufsverbot verhängt wurde, an alle anderen Mitgliedstaaten und an die Kommission weiterzugeben. Das vorgeschlagene Warnsystem würde sich auch auf vorübergehende Berufsverbote erstrecken. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssten die Warnung innerhalb von drei Tagen nach der betreffenden Verbotsentscheidung übermitteln.

[1] Richtlinie 2005/36/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 7. September 2005 über die Anerkennung von Berufsqualifikationen, ABl. L 255 vom 30.9.2005.

Angesichts der unterschiedlichen Datenschutzregelungen und Registrierungssysteme in der EU erstreckt sich der Kommissionsvorschlag nicht auf Fälle, in denen gegen Berufsangehörige eine behördliche Überprüfung eingeleitet, aber noch kein Berufsverbot verhängt wurde. Der Vorschlag sieht auch keine zentral geführte europäische schwarze Liste der mit einem Berufsverbot belegten Personen vor. Die allgemeine Pflicht zur Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten würde in jedem Fall fortbestehen.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000085/13
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE), Peter Liese (PPE) en Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Waarschuwingsmechanisme voor erkenning van beroepskwalificaties

Een Nederlandse ex-neuroloog is door het Nederlandse Openbaar Ministerie aangeklaagd voor het begaan van ernstige medische fouten tijdens de jaren dat hij in een Nederlands ziekenhuis werkte. Ondanks het feit dat hij niet langer bevoegd is om in Nederland als arts te werken omdat hij afstand had gedaan van zijn licentie, werd hij toch aangenomen als arts in ziekenhuizen over de grens in Duitsland. Hoewel lidstaten andere lidstaten mogen vragen naar achtergrondinformatie over beroepskwalificaties van medisch personeel, is er tot op de dag van vandaag geen verplichting om lidstaten automatisch te waarschuwen in het geval van het intrekken van een licentie of bij een veroordeling.

In december 2011 heeft de Commissie een voorstel gedaan voor herziening van de Richtlijn betreffende de erkenning van beroepskwalificaties (COM(2011)0883), waarin zij voorstelt om een waarschuwingsmechanisme in werking te stellen (artikel 56 bis). Bevoegde autoriteiten van lidstaten zouden zodoende verplicht worden gesteld alle andere lidstaten op de hoogte te brengen van personen die van een autoriteit of een rechtbank een verbod hebben gekregen tot uitoefening van hun beroep.

1. Hoe denkt de Commissie, met het oog op de tenuitvoerlegging van deze nieuwe richtlijn, toe te zien op de uitwisseling van informatie door de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaat van herkomst met als doel de bevoegde autoriteiten van alle andere lidstaten in te lichten over personen die van een autoriteit of een rechtbank een verbod hebben gekregen tot uitoefening van hun beroep? Hoe gaat de Commissie ervoor zorgen dat de informatie alle andere lidstaten op tijd bereikt?

2. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat een centrale Europese zwarte lijst nodig is waarin veroordelingen en de intrekking van licenties geregistreerd worden, gecombineerd met een automatisch systeem dat de medische beroepsbeoefenaars wier licentie is ingetrokken zou verhinderen een nieuwe licentie te verkrijgen in een andere lidstaat? Zou de Commissie bereid en in staat zijn tot het voorstellen van de instelling van een centrale Europese zwarte lijst voor personen die van een autoriteit of een rechtbank een verbod hebben gekregen tot uitoefening van hun beroep?

3. Beschouwt de Commissie het daarnaast als noodzakelijk de lidstaten te verplichten elkaar in te lichten over lopende strafprocessen tegen medisch personeel door het uitwisselen van informatie over lopende zaken?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(6 maart 2013)

Krachtens Richtlijn 2005/36/EG ([1]) („de Richtlijn") moeten de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaat van oorsprong en van de ontvangende lidstaat informatie uitwisselen over tuchtrechtelijke maatregelen, strafrechtelijke sancties die genomen zijn en alle andere specifieke ernstige feiten die van invloed kunnen zijn op de uitoefening van beroepswerkzaamheden door een professional. De lidstaten kunnen zelf bepalen hoe deze samenwerking gestalte krijgt en hoe ver deze reikt. Voorts kan de ontvangende lidstaat, vóór hij een professional toestemming verleent om een gereglementeerd beroep uit te oefenen, aan de lidstaat van oorsprong een certificaat vragen dat de goede professionele reputatie of status van de betrokkene bevestigt.

In het kader van de modernisering van de richtlijn heeft de Commissie voorgesteld deze algemene samenwerkingsverplichting aan te vullen met een proactief waarschuwingssysteem voor de hele EU, dat ook zou worden toegepast voor artsen. Dit systeem houdt in dat de bevoegde autoriteit van een lidstaat de naam van een arts die door de nationale rechtbanken of autoriteiten een verbod heeft gekregen om beroepswerkzaamheden uit te oefenen in die lidstaat, zal moeten communiceren naar alle andere lidstaten en naar de Commissie. Het voorgestelde waarschuwingssysteem zou ook werken voor een tijdelijk verbod. De lidstaten zouden de waarschuwing moeten doorgeven binnen drie dagen nadat zij de verbodsbeslissing hebben genomen.

([1]) Richtlijn 2005/36/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 7 september 2005 betreffende de erkenning van beroepskwalificaties, PB L 255 van 30.9.2005.

Gezien de verschillende regelingen voor gegevensbescherming en professionele registratiesystemen in de EU, dekt het voorstel van de Commissie niet de gevallen waar de professional onder toezicht staat van de autoriteiten, maar nog geen beroepsverbod heeft gekregen. Het voorstel voorziet ook niet in de opstelling van een centrale Europese zwarte lijst met professionals die een verbod hebben gekregen. De algemene samenwerkingsverplichting tussen de lidstaten zou in ieder geval van toepassing blijven.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000085/13
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE), Peter Liese (PPE) and Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Alert mechanism for professional qualifications

A Dutch ex-neurologist has been charged by the Dutch public prosecutor with committing serious medical errors during the years he worked in a Dutch hospital. Despite the fact that he is no longer certified to work as a medical doctor in the Netherlands (having renounced his licence), he was employed as a medical doctor by hospitals across the border in Germany. While Member States are entitled to ask other Member States for background information on professional qualifications of medical personnel, to date there is no obligation to automatically notify other Member States in the event of an annulment of licence to practise or a conviction.

In December 2011 the Commission put forward its proposal for a revision of the directive on the recognition of professional qualifications (COM(2011)0883), in which it proposes to introduce an alert mechanism (Article 56a). Competent authorities of Member States would be required to notify the competent authorities of all other Member States about persons who have been banned by an authority or a court from exercising their profession.

1. With a view to implementing the new directive, how does the Commission intend to enforce the exchange of information by the competent authorities of the home Member States so as to warn the competent authorities of all the other Member States about persons who have been banned by an authority or a court from exercising their profession? How will the Commission make sure this information reaches all the other Member States in time?

2. Does the Commission agree that a European central blacklist is needed in which annulments of medical licences and convictions are registered, combined with an automatic system that would prevent those medical professionals whose licence has been annulled from obtaining a new licence in another Member State? Would the Commission be able and willing to propose the introduction of such a European central blacklist of persons who have been banned by an authority or a court from exercising their profession?

3. Furthermore, does the Commission consider it necessary to oblige Member States to inform each other of pending criminal procedures against medical personnel by exchanging information on pending cases?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2013)

Under Directive 2005/36/EC [1] ('the directive'), the competent authorities of the home and the host Member State shall exchange information regarding disciplinary actions, criminal sanctions taken or any other serious specific circumstances which may bear consequences for the pursuit of professional activities by a professional. The modalities and scope of this cooperation are left to the Member States. Moreover, before granting the professional an authorisation to practice, the host Member State may request a certificate from the home Member State confirming his/her good professional reputation or status.

In the context of the modernisation of the directive, the Commission has proposed to supplement this general cooperation obligation with a proactive EU-wide alert system, which would also apply to medical doctors. Under this system, the competent authority of a Member State would have to communicate the name of the doctor banned by national courts or authorities from pursuing the professional activity in that Member State to all the other Member States and the Commission. The proposed alert system would also cover temporary prohibitions. Member States would be required to send the alert within three days from the adoption of the relevant prohibition decision.

In view of the different data protection regimes and professional registration systems in the EU, the Commission's proposal does not cover cases where the professional is under scrutinity by the authorities but not yet prohibited from exercising his/her profession. Furthermore, the proposal does not envisage the drawing up of a European central blacklist of banned professionals. In any event, the general cooperation obligation between Member States would continue to apply.

[1] Directive 2005/36/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000086/13
a la Comisión
María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Expropiación de la empresa Iberdrola por el Gobierno boliviano

El pasado mes de diciembre el Gobierno boliviano decidió expropiar cuatro filiales energéticas controladas por la empresa española Iberdrola. Entre los accionistas afectados se encuentran españoles, argentinos y estadounidenses. Las filiales afectadas prestaban un servicio público de distribución de electricidad y nunca antes habían pertenecido al Estado boliviano. Se trata de la primera vez que el Gobierno boliviano expropia una empresa que fue privada desde su fundación, a diferencia de anteriores nacionalizaciones que el Presidente Evo Morales lleva realizando desde su llegada al poder en 2006.

Nos encontramos ante una nueva nacionalización que tiene como objetivo una empresa española en menos de 8 meses en Bolivia. En mayo de 2012, el Gobierno boliviano expropió la firma Transportadora de Electricidad de la empresa Red Eléctrica, que todavía no ha sido justamente compensada.

En respuesta, el Gobierno de España ha manifestado su determinación para que el proceso de evaluación del valor de las filiales expropiadas se realice con criterios exigentes de objetividad que permitan establecer una justa indemnización a los accionistas afectados.

Teniendo en cuenta que la UE debe exigir firmemente a nuestros socios comerciales el respeto de la seguridad jurídica de las inversiones, ¿de qué manera tiene pensado la Comisión controlar que se cumplan dichas garantías de seguridad jurídica y que se aplique sin dilaciones innecesarias una indemnización justa a sus inversores? Y, en caso de que dichas garantías fuesen objeto de violación por parte del Gobierno boliviano, ¿qué posibles acciones emprendería la Comisión para solucionar dicha situación?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de febrero de 2013)

La expropiación de las cuatro filiales eléctricas explotadas por la empresa española Iberdrola se ajusta a la política del Gobierno boliviano de controlar los activos estratégicos (incluida la generación de electricidad, su transporte y distribución). Según Bolivia, la expropiación llega cuatro meses después de las negociaciones con las empresas en cuestión sobre el precio de la electricidad para las poblaciones rurales.

La Comisión Europea está de acuerdo con el punto de vista de Su Señoría de que el respeto de la seguridad jurídica de las inversiones es de vital importancia. Por consiguiente, el embajador de la UE en Bolivia remitirá al Gobierno boliviano la solicitud de que Iberdrola reciba una compensación rápida, completa y efectiva por las empresas expropiadas. De hecho, el presidente Morales ha confirmado que su administración ofrecerá una compensación financiera a Iberdrola sobre la base de las conclusiones de una evaluación independiente. La Comisión Europea seguirá vigilando de cerca la evolución de este caso y reafirmará su posición cuando y como proceda.

La UE no dispone de ningún convenio bilateral con Bolivia de protección de las inversiones. Por consiguiente, el instrumento jurídico pertinente en caso de expropiación de las filiales eléctricas de Iberdrola, al igual que sucedió antes con otra empresa española (Red Eléctrica), es el convenio bilateral entre España y Bolivia. Aunque en enero de 2012 Bolivia resolvió el convenio bilateral con España, las inversiones efectuadas siguen protegidas por sus disposiciones durante diez años más.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000086/13
to the Commission
María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Expropriation of Iberdrola subsidiaries by the Bolivian government

Last December, the Bolivian government decided to expropriate four electricity subsidiaries operated by the Spanish company Iberdrola. Spanish, Argentinian and American shareholders were among those affected by the takeover. The subsidiary companies in question provided a public electricity distribution services and had never been under Bolivian state ownership before. This is the first time that the Bolivian government has nationalised a company that had been a private entity since its creation, in contrast to previous state takeovers, which President Evo Morales has been ordering since he came to power in 2006.

This is the second time in eight months that a Spanish company has been targeted for state takeover in Bolivia. In May 2012, the Bolivian government expropriated Transportadora de Electricidad, a firm owned by the Red Eléctrica company, and has still not paid adequate compensation.

In response to these actions, the Spanish Government has stated its determination to ensure that valuation of the expropriated subsidiary companies satisfies objectivity criteria, thereby ensuring that fair compensation is secured for the affected shareholders.

Considering that the EU must strongly insist that its trade partners respect the legal certainty of investments, how does the Commission intend to ensure that corresponding guarantees are fulfilled and the investors receive fair compensation without unnecessary delay? If the Bolivian government were found to have breached these guarantees of legal certainty, what action would the Commission take to rectify the situation?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The expropriation of the four electricity subsidiaries operated by the Spanish company Iberdrola is in line with the Bolivian Government's stated policy to control strategic assets (including in electricity generation, transport and distribution). According to Bolivia, the expropriation comes after four months of negotiations with the companies in question on the price of electricity for rural populations.

The European Commission agrees with the Honourable Member's view that the respect for legal certainty of investments is of paramount importance. Consequently, the EU Ambassador to Bolivia conveyed to the Bolivian government the expectation that Iberdrola would receive prompt, full and effective compensation for the expropriated companies. Indeed, President Morales confirmed that his administration would offer financial compensation to Iberdrola on the basis of the conclusions of an independent assessment. The European Commission will continue to closely follow this issue and reaffirm our position as and when appropriate.

The EU does not have a bilateral investment protection treaty (BIT) with Bolivia. Therefore, the relevant legal instrument in the case of the expropriation of the electricity subsidiaries of Iberdrola, just as the one before that involving another Spanish company (Red Eléctrica), is the BIT between Spain and Bolivia. Although in January 2012 Bolivia terminated the BIT with Spain, the past investments remain protected by its provisions for an additional 10 years.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000088/13
aan de Raad
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Opschorting stemrecht Griekenland

Onlangs is er een akkoord gesloten ten aanzien van het uitbetalen van 43 miljard euro aan noodsteun aan Griekenland.

1. Deelt u mijn mening dat, nu Griekenland tientallen miljarden van de Europese belastingbetaler ontvangt, het ongepast is dat Griekenland enige inbreng blijft houden in beraadslagingen binnen de Europese Raad? Zo nee, waarom niet?

2. Bent u bereid om onderzoek te doen naar de mogelijkheden om het stemrecht van Griekenland binnen de Europese Raad op te schorten? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord
(11 maart 2013)

Deelname aan de beraadslagingen en de stemmingen in de Europese Raad en de Raad is een recht van de leden van die instellingen. Dit recht is inherent aan hun status van lidstaat van de Europese Unie, die bijgevolg uitsluitend kan worden beperkt, opgegeven of gewijzigd ingevolge een herziening van de Unieverdragen zelf, en voorts — in het geval van de Raad — overeenkomstig de in artikel 7 van het VEU vastgelegde regels en voorwaarden. Het loutere feit dat een lidstaat in het kader van de huidige stabiliteitsmechanismen financiële bijstand ontvangt, kan onder geen beding tot gevolg hebben dat hij wordt uitgesloten van deelname aan de beraadslagingen van de Europese Raad en de Raad of dat zijn stemrechten worden geschorst.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000088/13
to the Council
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Suspension of Greece's voting rights

An agreement has been concluded recently on an emergency aid package for Greece worth EUR 43 billion.

1. Does the Council agree that, now Greece is receiving tens of billions of EU taxpayers' money, it is inappropriate that Greece should continue to have any say in the European Council's deliberations? If not, why not?

2. Is it prepared to research the possibility of suspending Greece's voting rights within the European Council? If not, why not?

Reply
(11 March 2013)

Participation in the deliberations and voting of the European Council and Council constitutes a right of the members of those Institutions. This right is inherent in their status as Member States of the European Union, that, accordingly, can only be limited, waived or modified through a revision of the EU Treaties themselves or, otherwise (in case of the Council), under the requirements and conditions laid down by Article 7 TEU. The fact that a Member State is beneficiary of financial assistance under the current stability mechanisms does not in itself, under any circumstances, lead to its exclusion from the deliberations of the European Council or of the Council or to the suspension of its voting rights.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000089/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Fragmentación del mercado europeo

El Gobierno de España, a través de la Secretaría de Estado de Comercio Exterior, acaba de publicar los resultados de las encuestas realizadas a los empresarios españoles sobre las dificultades y trabas que advierten en sus relaciones comerciales en el seno de la Unión Europea. Las conclusiones destacan que subsisten muchas trabas administrativas, reglamentaciones diversas y obstáculos que impiden la existencia de un auténtico mercado interior europeo. Por ejemplo, se cita que los grandes supermercados franceses y alemanes exigen que la carne del embutido sea de origen nacional, o que los «pellets» de biomasa han de cumplir en cada Estado miembro una reglamentación distinta.

Me interesa conocer:

1. Si la Comisión es consciente de los múltiples obstáculos que subsisten en el mercado interior europeo;

2. Si ha abierto investigaciones para analizar las exigencias proteccionistas en la comercialización del embutido en Francia y en Alemania;

3. Si no considera conveniente establecer unas reglas básicas sobre los «pellets» de biomasa para evitar las dificultades a la libre circulación de esas mercancías.

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de marzo de 2013)

Los requisitos establecidos por las cadenas de supermercados francesas y alemanas en relación con la carne utilizada para fabricar embutidos no constituyen obstáculos normativos. Tales requisitos parecen deberse a decisiones comerciales.

En cuanto a los *pellets* de biomasa, la Comisión está estudiando si los criterios de sostenibilidad vigentes o previstos a nivel nacional para dichos *pellets* crean obstáculos normativos al correcto funcionamiento del mercado interior y si hacen falta nuevas medidas de la UE.

En general, la Comisión sabe que no se ha completado del todo el mercado interior de los productos. En su programa de trabajo para 2013 ([1]), la Comisión tiene previsto examinar nuevamente el mercado único de los productos, el cual representa el 75 % del comercio dentro de la UE. Como primer paso en este proceso, la Comisión puso en marcha una amplia consulta pública ([2]) sobre esta cuestión a fin de preparar su revisión de la legislación sobre los productos industriales. Lo que se está estudiando es la actualización y la simplificación de las normas sobre la circulación de productos en el mercado interior, además de determinarse las lagunas que siguen obstaculizando la libre circulación. Se prestará especial atención a las barreras que más afectan a las PYME.

Además, la Comisión está centrando sus esfuerzos en la aplicación de las normas sobre el mercado interior de los productos mediante un nuevo Reglamento sobre la vigilancia del mercado de los productos ([3]) propuesto en febrero de 2013 en el marco de un paquete sobre seguridad de los productos y vigilancia del mercado.

([1]) COM(2012) 629 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=6375&lang=es. El plazo finaliza el 17 de abril de 2013.
([3]) COM(2013) 75 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000089/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Fragmentation of the European market

The Spanish Secretary of State for Foreign Trade has just published the results of surveys on the difficulties and obstacles that Spanish businesses encounter in their trade relations with other European Union countries. The conclusions clearly show that there are still many administrative barriers, regulations which vary from country to country and other obstacles that prevent a genuine European internal market from existing. For example, the main French and German supermarket chains require that meat used in sausages is sourced nationally, and biomass pellets must comply with separate regulations in each of the Member States.

1. Is the Commission aware of the numerous remaining obstacles in the European internal market?

2. Has the Commission looked into the protectionist regulations for selling sausage meat that are in place in France and Germany?

3. Would the Commission consider it useful to set basic rules on biomass pellets, in order to break down the barriers that pose difficulties for the free movement of these goods?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2013)

The requirements set by French and German supermarket chains regarding the meat used in sausages do not constitute regulatory barriers. These requirements seem to be the consequence of commercial choices.

As to biomass pellets, the Commission is assessing whether existing or planned national sustainability criteria for biomass pellets create regulatory barriers to the smooth functioning of the internal market, and whether additional EU actions are required.

In general, the Commission is aware that the internal market for products is not yet fully completed. In its Work Programme for 2013 ([1]), the Commission has planned to take a fresh look at the single market for products which makes up 75% of intra-EU trade. As a first step in this proccess, the Commission launched a wide public consultation ([2]) on the matter in order to prepare its review of industrial products legislation. Updating and simplifying the rules for the circulation of products in the single market as well as the identification of gaps still hindering free circulation are issues that are being looked into. Specific attention will be paid to those barriers that mostly hinder SMEs.

Additionally, the Commission is focusing its efforts on enforcement of the internal market for products rules through a new Regulation on market surveillance of products ([3]) proposed in February 2013 within the framework of a Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package.

([1]) COM(2012) 629 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=6375&lang=en deadline is 17 April 2013.
([3]) COM(2013) 75 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000090/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Σεξουαλική κακοποίηση στην Ινδία

Με αφορμή τον ομαδικό βιασμό και την κακοποίηση 23χρονης φοιτήτριας από έξι άνδρες, ενώ επέβαινε σε λεωφορείο στην Ινδία, με αποτέλεσμα το θάνατο της, που δικαιολογημένα προκάλεσε κύμα αγανάκτησης και διαμαρτυριών σε ολόκληρη την Ινδία, ερωτάται η αρμόδια επίτροπος κ. Ashton:

— Πώς μπορεί η ΕΕ να παρέμβει πιέζοντας αποτελεσματικά την Ινδία να τιμωρεί όπως οφείλει, τους δράστες βιασμών και σεξουαλικών επιθέσεων;

— Πώς μπορεί η ΕΕ να συμβάλει στην πάταξη του μισογυνισμού που εξακολουθεί να βασιλεύει σε μια ανδροκρατούμενη χώρα που όχι μόνο καθυστερεί να λάβει μέτρα κατά των επιθέσεων και των βιασμών αλλά αντίθετα επέτρεψε με την αδιαφορία της να υπερδιπλασιαστεί ο αριθμός τους από το 1990 έως το 2008;

— Μπορεί η ΕΕ να τερματίσει τυχόν οικονομική βοήθεια που παρέχει προς τη χώρα ή να επιβάλει οποιασδήποτε μορφής κυρώσεις παρέχοντας εγγύηση για την ασφάλεια των γυναικών;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000168/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Βιασμοί γυναικών στην Ινδία

Με αφορμή την πρόσφατη υπόθεση ομαδικού βιασμού 23χρονης ινδής φοιτήτριας σε αστικό λεωφορείο του Νέου Δελχί, επανήλθε στο προσκήνιο η σκληρή πραγματικότητα που αντιμετωπίζουν καθημερινά οι γυναίκες στην Ινδία, ιδίως στην πρωτεύουσα της χώρας, το Νέο Δελχί, όπου η κατάσταση είναι πολύ χειρότερη, κυρίως λόγω του προβλήματος των βιασμών.

Τα τελευταία δέκα χρόνια, περίπου το 40% όλων των εγκλημάτων κατά γυναικών στην Ινδία σημειώθηκαν στο Νέο Δελχί και ο αριθμός των βιασμών που έχουν καταγραφεί στην πόλη αυτή είναι πολύ υψηλότερος συγκριτικά με άλλες πόλεις. Αν και έχουν υπάρξει περιστατικά με θύματα εξέχουσες προσωπικότητες (όπως η περίπτωση της ελβετίδας πρέσβεως πριν από μερικά χρόνια), ο κύριος όγκος των θυμάτων βιασμού προέρχεται από την κοινωνικά αδύναμη κάστα των Ντάλιτ και περιλαμβάνει πολλά ανήλικα παιδιά.

Τα επίσημα στατιστικά στοιχεία κάνουν λόγο για περίπου 700 υποθέσεις βιασμού στο Νέο Δελχί το 2012· σύμφωνα με τις αρχές όμως, ο πραγματικός αριθμός είναι πολύ υψηλότερος, καθώς η πλειοψηφία των θυμάτων δεν καταγγέλλουν το βιασμό, είτε λόγω έλλειψης εμπιστοσύνης προς την αστυνομία είτε από φόβο για τη ζωή τους.

Παρά την ευαισθητοποίηση του πληθυσμού και τις προσπάθειες των αρχών, δεν φαίνεται να έχει βρεθεί λύση στο πρόβλημα και, μετά το τελευταίο περιστατικό που συγκλόνισε τη χώρα, η κατάσταση βρίσκεται σε έξαρση, με τα ΜΜΕ να κάνουν λόγο για επιδημία τρόμου και πολλούς πολιτικούς να ζητούν αυστηρότερα μέτρα και ποινές για την πάταξη του προβλήματος.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, και υπό το φως της στρατηγικής συνεργασίας μεταξύ ΕΕ και Ινδίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— σκοπεύει να θέσει πιο επιτακτικά το ζήτημα αυτό στις διαπραγματεύσεις με τους ινδούς εταίρους στην επόμενη σύνοδο;

— σκοπεύει να ενισχύσει την κοινωνία των πολιτών και να προωθήσει τον σεβασμό για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών στο πλαίσιο της στρατηγικής συνεργασίας, προκειμένου να αποφευχθούν πιο ακραία κρούσματα αλλά και αντιδράσεις;

Κοινή απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος έχει εγκαινιάσει με τις ινδικές αρχές και την κοινωνία των πολιτών ήδη εδώ και καιρό το διάλογο σχετικά με τη βία και τις διακρίσεις σε βάρος των γυναικών και τα θέματα που σχετίζονται με το γυναικείο φύλο. Το θέμα αυτό κατέχει ειδικότερα εξέχουσα θέση στις τακτικές συνεδριάσεις του διαλόγου για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα μεταξύ της ΕΕ και της Ινδίας.

Τα θέματα των γυναικών έχουν επίσης τοποθετηθεί στο επίκεντρο των δραστηριοτήτων της ΕΕ στον τομέα της αναπτυξιακής συνεργασίας: η εκπαίδευση και τα σχετικά με την υγεία προγράμματα εστιάζονται σε μεγάλο βαθμό στην ευημερία των γυναικών και των κοριτσιών, ενώ πολυάριθμα έργα έχουν βοηθήσει τις οργανώσεις της κοινωνίας των πολιτών να αντιμετωπίσουν θέματα όπως η βία κατά των γυναικών, συμπεριλαμβανομένων της εμπορίας παιδιών και των γάμων ανηλίκων, της ενδοοικογενειακής βίας και του ιού HIV/AIDS. Στόχο υπό εκτέλεση έργου αποτελεί να εκχωρηθούν οι δέουσες εξουσίες στις γυναίκες που διαδραματίζουν ηγετικό ρόλο στα θεσμικά όργανα της τοπικής διακυβέρνησης ώστε να προωθήσουν τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών.

Το 1997, η ΕΕ διέθεσε ποσό 1 εκατομμυρίου ευρώ για τη δημιουργία Ιδρύματος Κατάρτισης των Φύλων στο Νέο Δελχί, το οποίο προσφέρει δυνατότητες ανάπτυξης ικανοτήτων για γυναίκες με ηγετικό ρόλο και κατάρτιση σε θέματα φύλου για ευρύ φάσμα επαγγελματιών, στους οποίους συγκαταλέγονται κυβερνητικά στελέχη και ανώτεροι υπάλληλοι επιβολής του δικαίου. Το εν λόγω Ίδρυμα διαδραματίζει σημαντικό ρόλο στην ευαισθητοποίηση και την κινητοποίηση της των κοινοτήτων βάσης συμβάλλοντας στις προσπάθειες για τον περιορισμό των πράξεων βίας που στρέφονται κατά του γυναικείου φύλου στην Ινδία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000090/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sexual abuse in India

The death of a 23-year-old student who had been assaulted and gang-raped by six men on a bus in India has justifiably provoked a wave of revulsion and protest throughout India.

In view of this:

1. Can Baroness Ashton say what pressure can effectively be brought to bear by the EU on India to ensure that those guilty of rape and sexual abuse receive their just deserts?

2. How can the EU help end persistent misogynous attitudes in a male-dominated country, which is not only slow to act against acts of abuse and rape but, on the contrary, has through its indifference allowed such incidents to proliferate between 1990 and 2008, with the result that their number has now more than doubled?

3. Can the EU withhold funding for India or impose sanctions in a bid to guarantee the safety of women?

Question for written answer E-000168/13
to the Commission
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Rape of women in India

The recent gang-rape of a 23-year-old Indian student on a New Delhi bus has once more focused attention on the harsh realities of everyday life for women in India, particularly in the capital, New Delhi, where the situation is made much worse by the problem of rape in particular.

Over the last 10 years around 40% of all crimes against women in India have occurred in New Delhi where the number of reported rapes is much higher than in other cities. While some of these crimes have claimed prominent victims, for example a Swiss diplomat a few years ago, in most cases those targeted, many of them underage, belong to the Dalit caste (Untouchables) at the lowest level of India's stratified society.

While official figures point to around 700 rapes in New Delhi in 2012, according to the authorities the actual figure is much higher, since most rapes go unreported, either because the victims do not trust the police or because they fear for their lives.

Notwithstanding greater public awareness and increased efforts by the authorities, no solution to the problem is in sight and, following the latest incident which has shaken the country to its roots, the situation is spiralling out of control with the media referring to a wave of terror, while many politicians are calling for tougher action and sterner penalties in a bid to get to grips with problem.

In view of this and in the framework of strategic cooperation between the EU and India:

1. Will the Commission focus on this problem more closely at the next round of talks with its Indian partners?

2. Will it seek to strengthen civil society and uphold the rights of women in the context of strategic cooperation with a view to preventing more extreme acts of this nature and any accompanying backlash?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The HR/VP has engaged the Indian authorities and civil society for some time already on violence and discrimination against women and gender issues. In particular, this topic features prominently in the regular meetings of the Human Rights Dialogue between the EU and India.

Women's issues are also mainstreamed into the EU's development cooperation activities: education and health-related programmes have a strong focus on women and girls' welfare, while numerous projects have helped civil society organisations to address issues such as violence against women, including trafficking and child marriage, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. An ongoing project aims at empowering women leaders from local governance institutions to promote women's rights.

In 1997 the EU contributed EUR 1 million to the establishment of a Gender Training Institute in Delhi which provides capacity building for women leaders and gender training for a wide range of professionals, including government and law enforcement officials. This Institute plays an important role in the sensitisation and mobilisation of grassroots communities to help reduce gender-based violence in India.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000091/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανεξέλεγκτη είδοδος παράνομων τούρκων υπηκόων στις ελεύθερες περιοχές της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας

Παράνομοι τούρκοι υπήκοοι-έποικοι που διαμένουν στις κατεχόμενες περιοχές της Κύπρου εισέρχονται ανεξέλεγκτα στις ελεύθερες περιοχές της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας και συχνά προσπαθούν να ταξιδέψουν με πλαστά διαβατήρια (που αγόρασαν έναντι χιλιάδων ευρώ στην Τουρκία) παρά τις απαγορεύσεις της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας.

Πώς μπορεί η ΕΕ να βοηθήσει την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία ώστε να ασκεί επαρκέστερο έλεγχο σε ολόκληρη τη γραμμή αντιπαράθεσης, με δεδομένη την στρατιωτική αριθμητική υπεροχή των τούρκων στρατιωτικών;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Ο κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 866/2004 της 29ης Απριλίου 2004 ([1]) για το καθεστώς βάσει του άρθρου 2 του Πρωτοκόλλου αριθ. 10 της Πράξης Προσχώρησης αναθέτει στις αρχές της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας την αρμοδιότητα να «διενεργούν ελέγχους σε όλα τα πρόσωπα που διασχίζουν τη γραμμή, με στόχο την καταπολέμηση της παράνομης μετανάστευσης υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών και τον εντοπισμό και την πρόληψη οιασδήποτε απειλής της δημόσιας ασφάλειας και τάξης» (άρθρο 2 παράγραφος 1).

Η Επιτροπή υποβάλλει ετήσια έκθεση για την εφαρμογή του κανονισμού, όπου περιλαμβάνεται το ζήτημα της παράνομης μετανάστευσης διαμέσου της πράσινης γραμμής.

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει καμία απόκριση από τις αρχές της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας σχετικά με το ζήτημα που έθεσε το αξιότιμο μέλος. Το ζήτημα που έθεσε το αξιότιμο μέλος για μία ακόμη φορά υπογραμμίζει την ανάγκη για ταχεία και συνολική διευθέτηση των διαφορών στην Κύπρο μεταξύ των ηγετών της Ελληνοκυπριακής και της Τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας, υπό την αιγίδα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών. Στην ανακοίνωσή της του Οκτωβρίου 2012 σχετικά με τη στρατηγική διεύρυνσης και τις κυριότερες προκλήσεις για το διάστημα 2012-2013 ([2]), η Επιτροπή υπογράμμισε την ανάγκη επανέναρξης των διαπραγματεύσεων, με στόχο την ταχεία ολοκλήρωση των συνομιλιών, αξιοποιώντας την πρόοδο που έχει επιτευχθεί μέχρι σήμερα και ενθάρρυνε την Τουρκία να αυξήσει με συγκεκριμένο τρόπο τη δέσμευση και τη συμβολή της στις συνομιλίες.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 866/2004 του Συμβουλίου της 29ης Απριλίου 2004 για το καθεστώς βάσει του άρθρου 2 του Πρωτοκόλλου αριθ. 10 της Πράξης Προσχώρησης, ΕΕ L 161 της 30.4.2004.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000091/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Uncontrolled entry of illegal Turkish settlers into the free areas of Cyprus

Turkish nationals — illegal settlers residing in the occupied territories of Cyprus — have been avoiding controls to enter the free areas of the Republic of Cyprus, often attempting to travel with false passports (purchased for thousands of euros in Turkey), despite the prohibitions of the Republic of Cyprus.

How can the EU help the Republic of Cyprus exercise more effective controls along the entire length of the line of demarcation, given the numerical superiority of the Turkish forces on the island?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 866/2004 of 29 April 2004 ([1]) on a regime under Article 2 of Protocol 10 to the Act of Accession entrusts the authorities of the Republic of Cyprus with the responsibility to 'carry out checks on all persons crossing the green line with the aim to combat illegal immigration of third-country nationals and to detect and prevent any threat to public security and public policy' (Article 2.1).

The Commission reports each year on the implementation of the regulation, including on the question of irregular migration across the Green Line.

The Commission has not received any representation from the authorities of the Republic of Cyprus on the issue raised by the Honourable Member. The issue raised by the Honourable Member once again underlines the need for a rapid comprehensive settlement in Cyprus between the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities under the auspices of the United Nations. In its October 2012 Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013 ([2]), the Commission underlined the necessity to re-launch the negotiations with the aim of reaching a swift conclusion of the talks, building on the progress achieved to date and encouraged Turkey to increase in concrete terms its commitment and contribution to the talks.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 866/2004 of 29 April 2004 on a regime under Article 2 of Protocol 10 to the Act of Accession, OJ L 161, 30.4.2004.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000092/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τρόικα

Πού λογοδοτεί η τρόικα και ποιος αξιολογεί την ορθότητα και την αποτελεσματικότητα των πολιτικών αυστηρής λιτότητας που επιβάλλει με σκληρούς όρους στην Ελλάδα και στις άλλες χώρες του ευρωπαϊκού Νότου;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Ο όρος «Τρόικα» είναι ένας ανεπίσημος όρος ο οποίος αναφέρεται στον στενό συντονισμό του προγράμματος επιτήρησης μεταξύ του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου (ΔΝΤ), αφενός, και της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής σε στενή συνεργασία με την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα (ΕΚΤ), αφετέρου. Η ομάδα του ΔΝΤ λογοδοτεί στην Εκτελεστική Επιτροπή και, τελικά, στο Συμβούλιο των Διοικητών του ΔΝΤ. Η Επιτροπή ασκεί την εποπτεία των χωρών που έχουν ενταχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προκειμένου να αξιολογήσει τη συμμόρφωση με τις αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου, αφενός, και εξ ονόματος των δανειστών κρατών μελών, αφετέρου. Οι αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου εκδίδονται στο πλαίσιο του συντονισμού των οικονομικών πολιτικών των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ. Επίσης, η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας (ΕΤΧΣ) ή στο μέλλον με τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας (ΕΜΣ) μέσω του οποίου παρέχεται η χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή. Οι αποφάσεις για τις εκταμιεύσεις από το ΕΤΧΣ/ΕΜΣ λαμβάνονται από συμβούλια που αποτελούνται από τους υπουργούς Οικονομικών της ζώνης του ευρώ. Ο αρμόδιος για τις οικονομικές και νομισματικές υποθέσεις και για το ευρώ Αντιπρόεδρος της Επιτροπής συμμετέχει τακτικά στον οικονομικό διάλογο με την Επιτροπή Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου. Επίσης, τα μέλη της τρόικας έχουν εμφανιστεί ενώπιον της αρμόδιας επιτροπής του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, κατόπιν πρόσκλησης από την εν λόγω επιτροπή.

Επιπλέον, τα προγράμματα αποτέλεσαν αντικείμενο διαπραγμάτευσης με κυρίαρχες κυβερνήσεις, οι οποίες είναι πλήρως υπόλογες ενώπιον των εθνικών κοινοβουλίων και των θεσμικών οργάνων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000092/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: The Troika

To which agency is the Troika accountable and who evaluates the soundness and effectiveness of the strict austerity policies it is imposing with harsh conditions on Greece and other southern European countries?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The term 'Troika' is an informal term which refers to the close coordination of programme surveillance between the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the one hand and the European Commission in close cooperation with the European Central Bank (ECB) on the other. The mission of the IMF is accountable to its Executive Board and ultimately to that institution's Board of Governors. The Commission exercises its surveillance of programme countries in order to assess compliance with Council decisions, on the one hand, and on behalf of the Lending Member States, on the other hand. Council decisions are adopted as part of the coordination of the economic policies of the euro area Member States. The Commission also closely cooperates with the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) or in the future through the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) through which financial assistance is provided. Decisions for disbursements by the EFSF/ESM are taken by the boards comprising the Ministers of Finance of the euro area. The Vice-President for economic and monetary affairs and for the Euro regularly participates in the Economic Dialogue with the economic and monetary affairs committee of the European Parliament. Also, members of the Troika have appeared before the competent Committee of the European Parliament at the invitation of that Committee.

Furthermore, programmes have been negotiated with sovereign Governments which are fully accountable before the national parliaments and institutions.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000093/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τρόικα και κοινωνικά δικαιώματα

Έχει το δικαίωμα η Τρόικα να αξιώνει περικοπές επιδομάτων και συντάξεων σε κατηγορίες αναξιοπαθούντων συνανθρώπων μας στις χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου (Ελλάδα, Ισπανία, Πορτογαλία, Κύπρος) κατά παράβαση ευρωπαϊκών αρχών, συλλογικών συμβάσεων και εργασιακών κεκτημένων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Μαρτίου 2013)

Για τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ που έχουν συσσωρεύσει μακροοικονομικές και δημοσιονομικές ανισορροπίες, η αξιόπιστη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση και οι διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις είναι απαραίτητες προϋποθέσεις για την αποκατάσταση της εμπιστοσύνης και την αποκατάσταση της δημοσιονομικής φερεγγυότητας. Εναλλακτικά, αν δεν πραγματοποιηθούν οι προσπάθειες αυτές, θα μπορούσε να προκύψει μια πιο οξεία δημοσιονομική κρίση και πολύ πιο καταστροφικές συνέπειες για τις επενδύσεις και την απασχόληση. Για τον λόγο αυτόν, παρά τις πολύ διαφορετικές καταστάσεις στα κράτη μέλη τα οποία αναφέρει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, οι περισσότερες χώρες που έχουν συσσωρεύσει μακροοικονομικές και δημοσιονομικές ανισορροπίες, ανεξάρτητα από την πιθανή παρουσία προγραμμάτων χρηματοδοτικής συνδρομής, καταβάλλουν συνδυασμένες προσπάθειες για την επαναφορά των δημόσιων οικονομικών σε διατηρήσιμη τροχιά, με ταυτόχρονη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και ενίσχυση της ικανότητας των μισθών να προσαρμόζονται σύμφωνα με τις εξελίξεις όσον αφορά την παραγωγικότητα και την ανεργία. Όταν αναλαμβάνονται οι προσπάθειες αυτές, λαμβάνεται υπόψη ο παράγοντας της δίκαιης μεταχείρισης προκειμένου να μην πλήττονται οι περισσότερο ευάλωτοι και να αποφεύγονται οι δυσμενείς διανεμητικές επιπτώσεις.

Τα μνημόνια συνεννόησης (ΜΣ) που συνδέονται με προγράμματα χρηματοδοτικής συνδρομής είναι αποτέλεσμα συζητήσεων και διαπραγματεύσεων μεταξύ του ενδιαφερόμενου κράτους μέλους, αφενός, και του ΔΝΤ, καθώς και της Επιτροπής, σε συνεργασία με την ΕΚΤ — η οποία ενεργεί εξ ονόματος των κρατών μελών της ευρωζώνης — αφετέρου. Το περιεχόμενο των ΜΣ έχει συμφωνηθεί αμοιβαία και υπογράφεται από τις αρχές των κρατών μελών, υπό την πολιτική τους ευθύνη. Η Επιτροπή αποδίδει τη δέουσα προσοχή προκειμένου να διασφαλίζεται η συνοχή του ΜΣ με το κοινοτικό δίκαιο: τα ΜΣ αναφέρουν ρητά, ότι οι μεταρρυθμίσεις της εργατικής νομοθεσίας πρέπει να υλοποιούνται κατόπιν διαβούλευσης με τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους και τηρώντας τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ ([1]).

([1]) Τα ΜΣ περιλαμβάνουν επίσης τους θεμελιώδεις κανόνες εργασίας της ΔΟΕ (που δεν αποτελούν μέρος της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000093/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: The Troika and social rights

Does the Troika have the right to demand that pay and pension cuts be imposed on less fortunate citizens in southern European countries (Greece, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus), thereby infringing European principles, collective agreements and established labour rights?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2013)

For the EU Member States that accumulated macroeconomic and fiscal imbalances, credible fiscal consolidation and structural reforms are necessary conditions to restore confidence and re-establish fiscal solvency. The alternative to failing to undertake these efforts could result in a more acute fiscal crisis and much more disastrous effects on investment and employment. For this reason, despite the very varied situations of the Member States listed by the Honourable Member, most countries that accumulated macroeconomic and fiscal imbalances, irrespective of a possible presence of financial assistance programmes, have been dovetailing efforts to put public finances on a sustainable track, while improving competitiveness and enhancing the capacity of wages to adjust in line with productivity and unemployment developments. When taking those efforts, equity considerations are taken into account with a view to sparing those who are more vulnerable and to avoiding adverse distributional effects.

The Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) linked to financial assistance programmes are the outcomes of discussions and negotiations between the concerned Member State, on the one hand, and the IMF, and the Commission in liaison with the ECB — acting on behalf of the euro area Member States — on the other hand. The content of the MoU is mutually agreed and signed by Member States authorities, under their political responsibility. The Commission is attentive to ensure the consistency of the MoUs with EC law: the MoUs explicitly state, that reforms of labour legislation should be implemented in consultation with the social partners and in respect of EC laws ([1]).

([1]) The MoU add also ILO core labour standards (which are not part of EC law).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000094/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κρίση και οι χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου

Κομπάζει ειρωνικά ο κ. Μπαγίς ότι «η Κυπριακή οικονομική κρίση ήταν αποτέλεσμα της "ξεροκεφαλιάς" των Ελληνοκυπρίων».

— Μήπως τελικά η ΕΕ εκτιμά ότι η οικονομική κρίση που πλήττει Ισπανία, Πορτογαλία, Ιταλία, Ιρλανδία, είναι απότοκος της «ξεροκεφαλιάς» των κυβερνώντων σε αυτές τις χώρες, ή αποδίδει την κρίση σε άλλα βαθύτερα αίτια;

— Σε ποια αίτια καταλογίζει η ΕΕ την κρίση στις χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου και πώς προτίθεται να στηρίξει όλες αυτές τις χώρες και τους πολίτες τους, έμπρακτα, αμεσότερα, και πιο αποτελεσματικά;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η παγκόσμια χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση το 2008, εξελίχθηκε σε κρίση δημόσιου χρέους στην Ευρώπη και σε κρίση εμπιστοσύνης που απειλεί τη χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα και την ακεραιότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ. Ανεπαρκώς φιλόδοξες δημοσιονομικές πολιτικές σε περιόδους ευνοϊκής οικονομικής συγκυρίας, διάβρωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας πριν από την κρίση, καθώς και αυξανόμενες μακροοικονομικές ανισορροπίες κατέστησαν ορισμένες χώρες περισσότερο ευάλωτες.

Η ΕΕΑ ([1]) της Επιτροπής προβάλλει την ανάγκη για διαφοροποιημένη και ευνοϊκή για την ανάπτυξη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση ([2]), και για μέτρα αποκατάστασης της ομαλής δανειοδότησης της οικονομίας, προώθησης της ανάπτυξης και της ανταγωνιστικότητας, αντιμετώπισης της ανεργίας και των κοινωνικών επιπτώσεων της κρίσης, και εκσυγχρονισμού της δημόσιας διοίκησης. Ορισμένα κράτη μέλη χρειάστηκαν έκτακτη χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή η οποία τους χορηγήθηκε υπό αυστηρές προϋποθέσεις. Η αξιόπιστη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση αποτελεί απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση για την αποκατάσταση της εμπιστοσύνης και της φορολογικής φερεγγυότητας. Για την Ελλάδα θεσπίστηκε δανειακή διευκόλυνση έκτακτης ανάγκης και για την Ιρλανδία και την Πορτογαλία χρησιμοποιήθηκαν το προσωρινό ευρωπαϊκό ταμείο χρηματοοικονομικής σταθερότητας και ο ευρωπαϊκός μηχανισμός χρηματοοικονομικής σταθεροποίησης. Σήμερα, η Ελλάδα, η Ιρλανδία, η Πορτογαλία και η Ρουμανία έχουν ενταχθεί σε προγράμματα χρηματοδοτικής βοήθειας. Τον Οκτώβριο 2012, τέθηκε σε ισχύ ο μόνιμος Ευρωπαϊκός Μηχανισμός Σταθερότητας. Χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή είναι διαθέσιμη και για κράτη μέλη εκτός ζώνης του ευρώ.

Σημειώθηκαν σημαντικά επιτεύγματα ως απόρροια της εφαρμογής μέτρων για την αναχαίτιση της κρίσης που θεσπίστηκαν τόσο σε εθνικό όσο και σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο. Οι προσπάθειες αυτές συμπληρώθηκαν από δράσεις της ΕΚΤ. Για να διασφαλιστεί η οικονομική και κοινωνική ευημερία των ευρωπαίων πολιτών απαιτείται περαιτέρω οικονομική και πολιτική ενοποίηση, όπως ορίζεται στο σχέδιο στρατηγικής της Επιτροπής για μια βαθιά και ουσιαστική ΟΝΕ ([3]).

([1]) Η Επιτροπή καθόρισε τις προτεραιότητές της για το 2013 στην Ετήσια Επισκόπηση της Ανάπτυξης, που δημοσιεύτηκε στις 28 Νοεμβρίου 2012. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf

([2]) Δηλ. διαφοροποίηση της ταχύτητας της εξυγίανσης από χώρα σε χώρα, ανάλογα με τα δημοσιονομικά περιθώριά τους και ένα συνολικό μείγμα μέτρων, τόσο για το σκέλος των εσόδων όσο και των δαπανών, που ευνοεί την ανάπτυξη, με στοχοθετημένα μέτρα για την προστασία των βασικών συνιστωσών της ανάπτυξης.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/archives/2012/11/pdf/blueprint_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000094/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Economic crisis and the countries of southern Europe

Turkey's EU Minister, Egemen Bağış, has commented ironically and arrogantly that the economic crisis in Cyprus was the due to the 'stubbornness' of the Greek Cypriots.

— Does the EU maybe ultimately believe that the economic crisis in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Ireland is due to the 'stubbornness' of the governments of these countries, or does it attribute the crisis to other underlying causes?

— What does the EU believe is the reason for the crisis in the countries of southern Europe and how does it intend to give practical support to all these countries and their citizens in a more direct and effective manner?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The global financial crisis in 2008, turned into a sovereign debt crisis in Europe and into a crisis of confidence threatening the financial stability and integrity of the euro area. Insufficiently ambitious fiscal policies in good times, an erosion of competitiveness ahead of the crisis, as well as growing macroeconomic imbalances made some countries more vulnerable.

The Commission's AGS ([1]) calls for a differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation ([2]), and for measures restoring normal lending to the economy, promoting growth and competitiveness, tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis and modernising public administration. Some Member States needed exceptional financial assistance which was provided under strict conditionality. Credible fiscal consolidation is a necessary condition to restoring confidence and re-establishing fiscal solvency. An emergency loan facility was set up for Greece, and the temporary European Financial Stability Facility and the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism were used for Ireland and Portugal. Currently Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Romania are under financial assistance programmes. In October 2012, the permanent European Stability Mechanism entered into force. Financial assistance is also available to non-euro area Member States.

Much was achieved as a result of the implementation of measures adopted at both national and European levels to contain the crisis. These efforts were complemented by the ECB's actions. Further economic and political integration is needed to ensure economic and social welfare for EU citizens, as set out in the Commission's blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU ([3]).

([1]) The Commission has set out its priorities for 2013 in the Annual Growth Survey, published on 28 November 2012. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf

([2]) i.e. a differentiated speed of consolidation across countries, according to their fiscal space and an overall growth-friendly mix of revenue and expenditure with targeted measures to protect key growth driver.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/archives/2012/11/pdf/blueprint_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000095/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Linda McAvan (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Ukraine — fair trials

I am writing on behalf of a constituent who has raised concerns over the trials in Ukraine of two brothers — Dmitri and Sergei Pavlichenko — who were convicted of the murder of a judge despite eye-witness reports to the contrary, and despite that fact that the evidence presented by the police was criticised by forensic experts. I am told that one of the brothers was forced to confess under torture, while the other refused to confess. Thousands of people in Ukraine have protested against the judge's decision.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this case? Has this issue been raised with the Ukrainian authorities?

2. What steps are being taken in EU-Ukraine talks to promote fair trials and transparent judicial processes?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the cases of Dmitri Pavlichenko and his son Sergei Pavlichenko. The cases are pending consideration by domestic appeal proceedings. They are being followed closely by the EU Delegation in Kiev.

The HR/VP considers the public demonstrations related to these cases as an illustration of the lack of public confidence in the judiciary in Ukraine. Through her more general calls for ensuring fair conduct of trials, the HR/VP has clearly expressed the views of the EU on these and similar cases.

The need for a comprehensive reform of the judiciary in the country to ensure fair, transparent and independent legal processes at the insistence of the EU figures high on the EU-Ukraine agenda as confirmed by the Joint Statement of the 16th EU-Ukraine Summit of 25 February 2013 in Brussels ([1]). In order to facilitate Ukraine's progress on judiciary reform, the EU and Ukraine launched on 6 February 2013 an informal dialogue on judiciary reform matters, with the participation of the experts from the Council of Europe.

Ukraine's determined action and tangible progress on judiciary reform is an important area for creating the circumstances to enable the signing by the EU of the initialled Association Agreement and its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/135667.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000096/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D) and Arlene McCarthy (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Welfare of greyhounds in Ireland

It has been brought to our attention that the practice of breeding and racing greyhounds in Ireland results in thousands of dogs each year either being killed due to injury or as a result of an excess number of dogs, or being abandoned once they have outlived their racing life. Moreover, greyhound breeders, trainers and rearers in Ireland can apply for support from the EU, *inter alia* via rural development funds as a farm diversification activity.

1. Does the Commission believe it is right to subsidise greyhound breeding for racing, particularly when raising animal welfare standards is one of the Common Agriculture Policy's fundamental roles?

2. Would the Commission consider banning greyhound breeding, as an unsustainable practice, from receiving funding under the future Rural Development Fund for 2014-2020?

3. Can the Commission outline the action it intends to take to strengthen animal rights for greyhound dogs?

4. Given that the EU funds Irish greyhound breeding, will the Commission raise concerns with the Irish authorities over the lack of regulations in place to protect the welfare of greyhounds?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable member of the European Parliament that no mention of support for greyhound breeding is made in the Irish Rural Development Programme for 2007-13.

However, due to the shared management principles in place for the implementation of the EU rural development policy the Commission cannot impose outright bans on support for economic sectors. This rule remains in place also for the next programming period 2014-2020.

In the European Union Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2012-2015a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices is foreseen for the year 2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000097/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Turkije gaat door met import van gas uit Iran — ondanks Europese sancties

Turkije trekt zich niets aan van de Europese sancties jegens Iran.

Turkije importeert jaarlijks 8 tot 12 miljard m^3 gas uit Iran. De Turkse minister van energie, Taner Yıldız, heeft gezegd dat Turkije — ondanks de Europese sancties jegens Iran — hier simpelweg mee doorgaat.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Turkey economy minister slams EU sanctions on Iran" ([1]), waarin bovengenoemde uitspraak van de heer Yıldız geciteerd wordt?

2. Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat Turkije zich niets aantrekt van de Europese sancties jegens Iran en de import van gas uit dat land simpelweg voortzet? Verwerpt de Commissie dit?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije zich hiermee, zeker in het kader van de toetredingsonderhandelingen, onconstructief en zelfs on-Europees opstelt? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije, als kandidaat-EU-lidstaat, de Europese sancties ondermijnt? Veroordeelt de Commissie dit? Is de Commissie bereid Turkije hierop aan te spreken? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Welke gevolgen heeft dit voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije? Is de Commissie bereid deze te beëindigen? Zo neen, hoe kan de EU nog over toetreding onderhandelen met Turkije, dat er de voorkeur aan geeft handel te drijven met een land waartegen Europese sancties lopen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(28 februari 2013)

Turkije onderschrijft de wens van de internationale gemeenschap om via onderhandelingen een oplossing te vinden voor de kernwapenkwestie. Turkije heeft met name de inspanningen van de E3+3, onder leiding van de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter, ondersteund door in Istanbul verschillende bijeenkomsten van de E3+3 te organiseren.

Volgens het onderhandelingskader is Turkije in de periode voorafgaand aan de toetreding verplicht om zijn beleid ten aanzien van derde landen en zijn standpunten binnen internationale organisaties geleidelijk af te stemmen op het beleid en de standpunten van de Europese Unie. In dit verband is Turkije ook verplicht zich geleidelijk aan te passen aan het sanctiebeleid van de EU, onder meer wat betreft sancties tegen Iran. Sinds oktober 2012 maakt een verbod op de invoer van gas uit Iran naar de EU inderdaad deel uit van de sancties tegen Iran (Besluit 2012/635/GBVB tot wijziging van Besluit 2010/413/GBVB ([2])). Het is van belang dat de Turkse regering zich geleidelijk aanpast aan de betrokken maatregelen van de EU, opdat deze maximaal effect sorteren.

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter heeft de dialoog met Turkije over het buitenlands beleid geïntensiveerd wat betreft vraagstukken van wederzijds belang, waaronder het Midden-Oosten, Iran en de toepassing van sancties, zoals onder andere beschreven in de conclusies van de Raad van december 2012. Zij gaat ervan uit dat Turkije zich dankzij nauwer en regelmatiger contact en overleg op verschillende niveaus steeds beter zal aanpassen aan het beleid van de EU ten aanzien van Iran, ook wat betreft sancties.

([1]) http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/01/05/281960/turkey-min-slams-eu-sanctions-on-iran/.
([2]) Besluit 2012/635/GBVB van de Raad van 15 oktober 2012 houdende wijziging van Besluit 2010/413/GBVB betreffende beperkende maatregelen tegen Iran (PB L 282 van 16.10.2012, blz. 58).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000097/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Turkey will keep importing gas from Iran — regardless of EU sanctions

Turkey is ignoring the EU sanctions against Iran.

Turkey imports 8-12 billion cubic metres of gas from Iran annually. The Turkish Energy Minister, Taner Yildiz, has said that Turkey will continue to do so, regardless of the EU sanctions against Iran.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'Turkey economy minister slams EU sanctions on Iran' ([1]), quoting the above statement by Mr Yildiz?

2. How does it view the fact that Turkey is ignoring EU sanctions against Iran and is simply continuing to import gas from that country? Does it condemn this?

3. Does it agree that Turkey's stance is unconstructive and even un-European, especially in the light of the accession negotiations? Does the Commission agree that Turkey, as a country seeking accession to the EU, is undermining the EU sanctions? Does it condemn this? Is it prepared to call Turkey to account on this? If not, why not?

4. How will this affect the accession negotiations with Turkey? Is the Commission prepared to terminate them? If not, how can the EU continue to negotiate with Turkey about its accession while Turkey chooses to trade with a country subject to EU sanctions?

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

Turkey supports the international community's commitment towards seeking a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear question. It has in particular supported the efforts by the E3+3, led by the HR/VP, by hosting various meetings of the E3+3 with Iran in Istanbul.

According to the Negotiating Framework, in the period up to accession, Turkey is required to progressively align its policies towards third countries and its positions within international organisations with the policies and positions adopted by the European Union. These requirements also demand a progressive alignment to the policy of EU sanctions, including sanctions against Iran. A ban on the import of gas from Iran to the EU is indeed part of the EU sanctions against Iran since October 2012 (Decision 2012/635/CFSP, amending Decision 2010/413/CFSP ([2])). It is important that Turkish Government progressively aligns with the concerned EU measures, to ensure their maximum effect.

The HR/VP has intensified EU foreign policy dialogue with Turkey on issues of common interest — including the Middle East and Iran and the implementation of EU sanctions — as *inter alia* stated in the Council conclusions of December 2012. In fact, she trusts that closer and more regular contacts and consultations with Turkey at various levels will ensure even closer alignment by Turkey with EU's policies on Iran, including sanctions.

([1]) http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/01/05/281960/turkey-min-slams-eu-sanctions-on-iran/.
([2]) Council Decision 2012/635/CFSP of 15 October 2012 amending Decision 2010/413/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Iran, OJ L 282, 16.10.2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000098/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Beneficios para las pequeñas y medianas empresas de la entrada en vigor de la patente europea

El proceso para la entrada en vigor de una patente única europea ha entrado ya en su recta final y parece que entrará en vigor en la primavera del año 2014 con la participación de 25 de los 27 Estados Miembros de la UE.

La patente única será pues un instrumento fundamental en la profundización del mercado único europeo, ya que permitirá a los emprendedores e innovadores proteger sus derechos de la propiedad intelectual en 25 Estados de la UE a la vez con un solo trámite. Teniendo en cuenta que son las pequeñas y medianas empresas las que se pueden ver más favorecidas por esta medida debido a la rebaja de costes que supone:

1. ¿Podría la Comisión hacer un cálculo aproximado de la cantidad que las pequeñas y medianas empresas se ahorrarán con la patente única europea en los próximos diez años?

2. ¿Tiene la Comisión proyecciones sobre el impacto que puede tener la simplificación de trámites asociada a la patente europea con un mayor número de registros de patentes?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de marzo de 2013)

1. En el marco del sistema actual, cuesta unos 36 000 euros obtener protección mediante patente en el conjunto de Europa. Este coste bajará considerablemente gracias al nuevo sistema: el coste de obtener la protección mediante patente unitaria en 25 Estados miembros será inferior a 5 000 euros después de que termine el período transitorio y menos de 6 500 euros durante el período de transición, lo que redundará en beneficio sobre todo de las PYME. Sin embargo, no es posible facilitar datos fidedignos acerca de cuánto ahorrarán las PYME durante los próximos diez años. Esta cifra dependerá, entre otras cosas, del número de casos en los que las PYME opten por las patentes europeas con efecto unitario en vez de las patentes europeas clásicas, del número de países en los que habrían validado en su defecto la patente europea, la cuantía de las tasas de renovación de la patente europea con efecto unitario (que está aún por determinar) y el plazo de tiempo durante el cual se mantenga la patente europea con efecto unitario y en el que se habría mantenido una patente europea clásica.

2. Puesto que la introducción del sistema de patente unitaria no tiene precedentes en ninguna otra jurisdicción, es difícil predecir su efecto en el número de solicitudes de patentes. La Comisión está convencida de que el nuevo instrumento será atractivo para las empresas innovadoras de Europa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000098/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Benefits of the European patent for small and medium businesses

The process for creating a single European patent has entered its final stages, and the patent looks set to come into force in spring 2014, with 25 out of the 27 Member States having opted in to the system.

The single patent will be an essential instrument for deepening the European single market, since it will make it possible for entrepreneurs and innovators to protect their intellectual property rights simultaneously in 25 EU States through a single procedural step. Considering that small and medium businesses may benefit the most from this system, given the associated reduction in costs:

1. Could the Commission calculate approximately how much small and medium businesses will save over the next 10 years under the single European patent system?

2. Does the Commission have any estimates of the effect that the simplified application procedure could have on the number of patent applications filed?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

1. Under the current system, it costs about EUR 36 000 to obtain patent protection for the whole of Europe. These costs will be considerably reduced under the new system: the cost to obtain unitary patent protection for 25 Member States will be less than EUR 5 000 after the end of the transitional period (less than 6 00 during the transitional period). This will in particular benefit SMEs. Yet it is not possible to provide reliable figures on how much SMEs will save over the next 10 years. Such a figure would *inter alia* depend on the number of cases in which SMEs opt for the European patents with unitary effect (and not classical European patents), the number of countries in which they would have otherwise validated the European patent, the level of renewal fees for a European patent with unitary effect (which is not yet determined) and the time span during which the European patent with unitary effect is kept (and a classical European patent would have been kept).

2. Given that the introduction of the Unitary Patent System is unprecedented in any other jurisdiction, it is difficult to predict its impact on the number of patent applications. The Commission is convinced that the new tool will be attractive for innovative companies in Europe.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000099/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Verwijzing door commissaris Malmström naar studies over immigratie

In een interview in de Franse krant Le Monde van 10 juli 2012 zegt commissaris Malmström onder meer het volgende:

„J'ai le sentiment, et des études le confirment, que le citoyen est souvent plus ouvert que certains politiques. Il réclame davantage d'information et il a le sentiment que certains courants manipulent la réalité. Les mêmes études confirment que l'immigration est d'ailleurs souvent un thème plus important pour les milieux politiques que pour les électeurs."

De ervaring is juist omgekeerd in verschillende lidstaten, waar de gevestigde politiek lange tijd elk debat over het immigratiebeleid heeft willen vermijden. Pas dankzij de electorale opkomst van nieuwe, meestal rechts-nationalistische partijen is er een debat over de gevolgen van het gevoerde immigratiebeleid tot stand gekomen.

De conclusies van de studies waarnaar de commissaris verwijst, zijn dus uiterst verrassend. Kan de commissaris de exacte referenties van deze studies meedelen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(8 maart 2013)

In haar interview met Le Monde verwees commissaris Malmström naar de analyse die recentelijk werd uitgevoerd in het kader van het SOM-project (Support and Opposition to Migration) ([1]), een comparatief project dat gefinancierd werd door het zevende kaderprogramma voor onderzoek en als doel had na te gaan waarom en wanneer potentiële conflicten over migratie gepolitiseerd worden. Daarbij werden zowel bewegingen tegen immigratie als bewegingen tegen racisme onder de loep genomen.

Het project was gericht op de rol van vier types van actoren — staat, politieke partijen, bewegingen en media — in het politiseren of depolitiseren van de kwestie van immigratie in zeven ontvangende landen: Oostenrijk, België, het Verenigd Koninkrijk, Ierland, Nederland, Spanje en Zwitserland.

De conclusie van het project luidt dat landspecifieke factoren de polarisatie en prominente aanwezigheid van migratie beïnvloeden. In alle geanalyseerde landen is migratie gepolitiseerd door een combinatie van politiek leiderschap of initiatief en omstandigheden die het mogelijk maken om de politiek te beïnvloeden. In de meeste landen wordt de politisering van bovenaf gedreven door politieke partijen, terwijl in sommige andere landen het eerder een bottom-up proces is met meer ruimte voor de actoren van het maatschappelijk middenveld en de pers.

De commissaris verwees in het interview ook naar de Eurobarometer over de integratie van migranten (2011), waaruit blijkt dat het onderscheid tussen legale en illegale migranten niet goed wordt begrepen. Deze verwarring heeft waarschijnlijk een invloed op de standpunten van de respondenten. Daarnaast zijn zowel het grote publiek als de migranten het erover eens dat de media verantwoordelijk zijn voor het ontstaan en versterken van negatieve stereotypen ([2]).

([1]) http://www.som-project.eu/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/quali/ql_5969_migrant_en.pdf/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000099/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Reference by Commissioner Malmström to studies of immigration

In an interview in the French newspaper Le Monde of 10 July 2012, Commissioner Malmström said, *inter alia*:

'I feel — and studies confirm this — that members of the public are often more open than certain politicians. They demand more information and they have the feeling that those of certain persuasions are manipulating reality. The same studies confirm, incidentally, that immigration is a subject which is often more important in political circles than to voters.'

Experience suggests quite the opposite in various Member States where for a long time the established political parties sought to avoid any debate on immigration policy. It is only thanks to the electoral success of new, generally right-wing nationalist, parties that a debate on the consequences of the immigration policy pursued has come about.

The conclusions of the studies to which the Commissioner refers are therefore extremely surprising. Can the Commissioner provide exact references to these studies?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2013)

In her interview of *Le Monde*, Commissioner Malmström referred to the analysis recently carried out within the project SOM (Support and Opposition to Migration) ([1]), a comparative project funded by the 7th Research Programme that looked at why and when potential conflicts over migration become politicized, examining both anti-immigration and anti-racist movements.

The project focused on the role of four types of actors — the state, political parties, movements, and the media — in politicizing, or depoliticizing, the issue of immigration in seven receiving countries: Austria, Belgium, Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland.

The project concludes that country specific factors affect polarisation and salience of migration. In all countries analysed, politicisation of migration is a mixture of political leadership or initiative and circumstances that provide opportunities to influence politics. In most of the countries, politicisation is top-down driven by political parties while in some others the process tends to be initiated bottom-up with more room for civil society actors and journalists.

The Commissioner in her interview also referred to the Eurobarometer on migrant integration (2011) which shows a lack of understanding of the distinction between regular and irregular migrants, and it is likely that this confusion has an impact on the views of the respondents. Moreover, both the general public and migrants are of the opinion that the media is responsible for creating and reinforcing negative stereotypes ([2]).

([1]) http://www.som-project.eu/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/quali/ql_5969_migrant_en.pdf/ .

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000100/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Το πρόγραμμα «κατ' οίκον φροντίδας συνταξιούχων»

Θεσμοθετήθηκε πρόσφατα η λειτουργία του «Προγράμματος κατ' οίκον φροντίδας Συνταξιούχων» ([1]) ([2]) που διαχειρίζεται το ΙΚΑ-ΕΤΑΜ, εξέλιξη των μέχρι πρόσφατα συγχρηματοδοτούμενων δράσεων κατ' οίκον βοήθειας. Στο πλαίσιο του ΕΣΠΑ προβλεπόταν μεταβατική περίοδος χρηματοδότησης και λειτουργίας των εν λόγω δράσεων μέχρι να εκπονηθεί θεσμικό, κανονιστικό και διοικητικό πλαίσιο για προώθηση κι εφαρμογή ενός βιώσιμου συστήματος παροχής των υπηρεσιών «Βοήθεια στο σπίτι» ([3]). Ωστόσο, η συμμετοχή των δυνητικά εξυπηρετούμενων στο νέο πρόγραμμα περιορίζεται από σειρά προϋποθέσεων που πρέπει να ισχύουν σωρευτικά και αφορούν σε ηλικία, εισόδημα, πιθανό ποσοστό αναπηρίας και οικογενειακή κατάσταση ([4]). Δεν καλύπτονται ανασφάλιστα άτομα (εκτός υπερήλικων ανασφάλιστων ΟΓΑ). Δεν προβλέπεται προτεραιότητα στα άτομα με τις πιο βαριές αναπηρίες. Εξαιρούνται όσα άτομα λαμβάνουν επίδομα απολύτου αναπηρίας καθώς κι έμμεσα ασφαλισμένα άτομα με αναπηρία ([5]). Οι πόροι είναι πεπερασμένοι. Δεν έχει ξεκινήσει η χορήγηση κινήτρων για δημιουργία Κοινωνικών Συνεταιριστικών Επιχειρήσεων Φροντίδας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Θεωρεί ότι το «πρόγραμμα κατ' οίκον φροντίδας συνταξιούχων» προσφέρει επαρκείς υπηρεσίες στις ομάδες πολιτών που εξυπηρετούνταν από τις μέχρι πρόσφατα συγχρηματοδοτούμενες δράσεις και έχουν ανάγκη σχετικών παροχών;

— Πώς κρίνει τους εφαρμοζόμενους περιορισμούς στη συμμετοχή των δυνητικά εξυπηρετούμενων και τον ορισμό της χαμηλότερης εισοδηματικής κλίμακας που προβλέπεται κάθε φορά για την παροχή του ΕΚΑΣ (που πιθανώς να περιλαμβάνει επίδομα αναπηρίας) ως μέγιστο συνολικό εισόδημα και κριτήριο αποκλεισμού από την εν λόγω παροχή;

— Προτίθεται να συνεργαστεί με τις Ελληνικές Αρχές με σκοπό να εφαρμοσθεί στη χώρα γενικευμένο σύστημα κατ' οίκον βοήθειας ηλικιωμένων κι ατόμων με αναπηρία, ανεξάρτητα από το ασφαλιστικό τους ιστορικό;

— Πώς κρίνει τη συμμετοχή Κοινωνικών Συνεταιριστικών Επιχειρήσεων Φροντίδας στο ισχύον σύστημα; Προτίθεται να προτείνει πλαίσιο κινήτρων για αυτές, με σκοπό την ευρύτερη εφαρμογή του προγράμματος «κατ' οίκον φροντίδας» ([6]);

Απάντηση του κ. Andoron εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η παροχή μακροχρόνιας φροντίδας, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της παροχής υπηρεσιών υποστήριξη σε άτομα που λαμβάνουν φροντίδα στο σπίτι, εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών. Ωστόσο, τα κράτη μέλη συμφώνησαν σε ένα σύνολο νομικά μη δεσμευτικών κοινών στόχων σχετικά με την προσβασιμότητα, την ποιότητα και την οικονομική βιωσιμότητα της μακροχρόνιας περίθαλψης στο πλαίσιο της συνεργασίας τους στην επιτροπή κοινωνικής προστασίας. Στην Ελλάδα, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) υποστήριξε την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος «Βοήθεια στο σπίτι» από το 2000 έως το 2011 μέσω ορισμένων τομεακών και περιφερειακών προγραμμάτων. Κατά την περίοδο εκείνη, το πρόγραμμα ήταν επιλέξιμες για συγχρηματοδότηση από το ΕΚΤ, επειδή θα διευκόλυνε την πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση για τα άτομα που αναζητούσαν εργασία και ιδίως τις γυναίκες. Από την αρχή του 2012, ύστερα από συμφωνία μεταξύ της Επιτροπής και των ελληνικών αρχών, η Ελλάδα ανέπτυξε το εθνικό βιώσιμο πρόγραμμα χωρίς την υποστήριξη του ΕΚΤ. Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να αξιολογήσει την καταλληλότητα αυτού του νέου προγράμματος.

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τα κράτη μέλη στις προσπάθειές τους να προσφέρουν προσιτά, ποιοτικά και βιώσιμα συστήματα μακροχρόνιας φροντίδας. Για τον σκοπό αυτό, η Επιτροπή διοργανώνει κάθε χρόνο αξιολογήσεις από ομοτίμους με τα κράτη μέλη με στόχο την αμοιβαία μάθηση. Η Επιτροπή πρόσφατα συγχρηματοδότησε δύο έργα με τον ΟΟΣΑ, τα οποία μελετούν τη χρηματοδότηση και την ποιότητα της μακροχρόνιας περίθαλψης καθώς και την κατάσταση των φροντιστών ([7]).

([1]) Διατάξεις του άρθρου 138 του Ν. 4052/01.03.2012.
([2]) «Βοήθεια στο Σπίτι» και «Μονάδες Κοινωνικής Μέριμνας».
([3]) Ε.Π. Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού του ΕΣΠΑ 2007-2013.
([4]) http://www.epanad.gov.gr/default.asp?pid=7&la=1, Συστημική παρέμβαση 10.
([5]) http://www.ika.gr/gr/infopages/memos/EG_63_2012.pdf
([6]) Δελτίο τύπου και επιστολή Εθνικής Συνομοσπονδίας Ατόμων με Αναπηρία (ΕΣΑΜΕΑ) http://www.esaea.gr/index.php?module=announce&ANN_id=4090&ANN_user_op=view&ns_news=1&MMN_position=20:20
([7]) ΟΟΣΑ (2011): Χρειάζεστε βοήθεια; Βοήθεια για την παροχή και την πληρωμή μακροχρόνιας φροντίδας· έκδοση για την ποιότητα της μακροχρόνιας περίθαλψης (θα κυκλοφορήσει την άνοιξη του 2013).

Η δέσμη μέτρων για τις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις που εγκρίθηκε στις 20 Φεβρουαρίου 2013 ([8]) περιλαμβάνει έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τη μακροχρόνια περίθαλψη, στο οποίο εξετάζεται το θέμα των υπηρεσιών υποστήριξης για τα άτομα που λαμβάνουν φροντίδα στο σπίτι.

([8]) COM(2013)83 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000100/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: The 'home care for pensioners' programme

The 'Home care for pensioners' programme ([1]) has just been adopted and will be operated by the Unified Insurance Fund for Employees (IKA-ETAM), as a further development of the home help actions co-funded until recently. Provision was made under the NSRF for a transitional period for the funding and operation of these actions until an institutional, regulatory and administrative framework was set up to promote and implement a viable system of providing 'home help' ([2]). However, the participation of potential beneficiaries in the new programme is limited by a number of conditions that should apply cumulatively, related to age, income, percentage disability, and family situation ([3]). No cover is provided for uninsured persons (except very old uninsured persons with the Agricultural Insurance Organisation, OGA). There is no provision for priority to be given to people with the most severe disabilities. Exempt from this provision are persons who receive total disability benefits and indirectly insured persons with disabilities ([4]). Resources are finite. No move has been made to grant incentives for creating Social Care Cooperatives.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Does it consider that the 'home care for pensioners' programme offers adequate services to those groups of citizens who were the beneficiaries of the actions co-funded until recently and need the services in question?

— How does it view the restrictions applied to the participation of potential beneficiaries and the definition of the lower income scale, provided in each case for the provision of the social solidarity benefit (EKAS) (which probably includes the disability allowance), as the maximum overall income and criterion for exclusion from this benefit?

— Does it intend to collaborate with the Greek authorities in order to implement in Greece a generalised system of home help for the elderly and persons with disability, regardless of their insurance history?

— How does it view the involvement of Social Care Cooperatives in the current system? Will it propose a framework for incentives for them, with a view to a wider implementation of the 'home care' programme? ([5])

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

Long-term care provision, including the provision of support services to people cared at home, is a responsibility of Member States. These have, however, agreed a set of legally not binding common objectives on the accessibility, quality and financial sustainability of long-term care in the context of their cooperation in the Social Protection Committee. In Greece, the European Social Fund (ESF) provided support for the implementation of the 'Help at Home' programme from 2000 until 2011 through a number of sectoral and regional programmes. The programme was at the time eligible for co-financing by the ESF because it would facilitate access to employment for jobseekers especially women. As from the beginning of 2012, following an agreement between the Commission and the Greek authorities, Greece developed their national sustainable programme without ESF support. The Commission is not in a position to assess the adequacy of this new programme.

The Commission supports Member States in their efforts to provide accessible, quality and sustainable long-term care systems. To this end, the Commission organises each year peer reviews with Member States allowing for mutual learning. The Commission has recently co-financed two projects with OECD which looked into the financing and quality of long-term care as well as into the situation of carers ([6]).

([1]) 'Home Help' and 'Social Welfare Units'.
([2]) OP Human Resources Development in NSRF 2007-2013.
([3]) http://www.epanad.gov.gr/default.asp?pid=7&la=1, Systemic Intervention No 10.
([4]) http://www.ika.gr/gr/infopages/memos/EG_63_2012.pdf
([5]) Press bulletin and letter of National Confederation for Persons with Disabilities (ΕΣΑΜΕΑ) http://www.esaea.gr/index.php?module=announce&ANN_id=4090&ANN_user_op=view&ns_news=1&MMN
([6]) OECD (2011): Help Wanted? Providing and paying for long-term care; publication on quality in long-term care (to be released in Spring 2013).

The Social Investment Package adopted on 20 February 2013 ([7]) includes a Commission Staff Working Document on long-term care which addresses the question of support services for people cared at home.

([7]) COM(2013) 83 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000101/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τοξικά κοντέινερ στα ευρωπαϊκά λιμάνια — κίνδυνος για την υγεία εργαζομένων και καταναλωτών

Σε πρόσφατο ρεπορτάζ της, η γαλλική εφημερίδα «Le Monde» αναφέρει ότι «τα ευρωπαϊκά λιμάνια έχουν μετατραπεί αθόρυβα σε περιοχές υψηλότατου τοξικού κινδύνου». Πιο συγκεκριμένα, το δημοσίευμα εξηγεί ότι το 15% με 20% από τα εκατομμύρια κοντέινερ που καταφτάνουν κάθε μέρα στις αποβάθρες των λιμανιών της Ευρώπης περιέχουν χημικές ουσίες και τοξικές αναθυμιάσεις που είναι εξαιρετικά επικίνδυνες, καθότι καρκινογόνες και νευροτοξικές, απειλώντας άμεσα την υγεία τόσο των εργαζομένων σε αυτά, όσο και τους ίδιους τους καταναλωτές.

Η παρουσία αναθυμιάσεων οφείλεται αφενός στη χρήση χημικών εντός των κοντέινερ προκειμένου να καταπολεμηθούν τα φαινόμενα της μούχλας και των τρωκτικών, αφετέρου στη χημική σύσταση των ίδιων των προϊόντων, τα οποία απελευθερώνουν τοξικά αέρια και άλλες επιβλαβείς ουσίες. Ιδιαίτερη αναφορά γίνεται στα είδη ρουχισμού που εισάγονται από την Ασία και ιδίως από την Κίνα, τα οποία περιέχουν βενζένιο και τολουένη, δηλαδή υψηλά καρκινογόνες ουσίες.

Σύμφωνα με το εν λόγω δημοσίευμα, η κατάσταση έχει κριθεί τόσο σοβαρή ώστε ήδη οι αρμόδιες αρχές σε Γαλλία, Ολλανδία και Βέλγιο έχουν αναλάβει δράση για την αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου.

Βάσει των παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη για τους εν λόγω κινδύνους που απειλούν την υγεία των ευρωπαίων εργαζομένων και καταναλωτών;

2. Προτίθεται να προβεί σε συστάσεις και συγκεκριμένες ενέργειες για τη διαφύλαξη της υγείας των ευρωπαίων πολιτών ώστε να συνδράμει τις εθνικές αρχές που είναι αρμόδιες για την εποπτεία της αγοράς;

3. Στο πλαίσιο της αναθεώρησης της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ για τη γενική ασφάλεια των προϊόντων, ποιες είναι οι προτεινόμενες βελτιώσεις της λειτουργίας του συστήματος RAPEX έτσι ώστε να αυξηθεί η αποτελεσματικότητά του όσον αφορά τον εντοπισμό επικίνδυνων προϊόντων στην εσωτερική αγορά της ΕΕ;

4. Υπάρχουν πρόσφατα διαθέσιμα στοιχεία από τις στατιστικές του RAPEX αναφορικά με τα ποσοστά κοινοποιήσεων που αφορούν προϊόντα ασιατικής προέλευσης τόσο στην Ελλάδα όσο και στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει το θέμα που θίγει ο κ. βουλευτής. Οι χημικές ουσίες που περιέχονται σε καταναλωτικά προϊόντα ρυθμίζονται από την νομοθεσία της ΕΕ, η οποία επιβάλλεται από τα κράτη μέλη με τη βοήθεια της Επιτροπής, μέσω του συντονισμού και της προώθησης της συνοχής στη διαδικασία αξιολόγησης. Σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό REACH, ένα κράτος μέλος ή η Επιτροπή μπορεί να προτείνει τον περιορισμό μιας ουσίας, εάν θεωρεί ότι θέτει σε κίνδυνο την ανθρώπινη υγεία ή το περιβάλλον, γεγονός που θα πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστεί σε επίπεδο ΕΕ. Μια ειδική διαδικασία επιβολής περιορισμών προβλέπεται σε περιπτώσεις καταναλωτικών ειδών που περιέχουν ουσίες CMR ([1]). Από την 1η Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, ο κανονισμός (ΕΚ) 528/2012 για τη χρήση βιοκτόνων θα ορίζει συγκεκριμένες νέες απαιτήσεις, οι οποίες αφορούν τα αντικείμενα που έχουν υποβληθεί σε κατεργασία με βιοκτόνα.

Ο κίνδυνος που προκύπτει από τα απολυμασμένα κοντέινερ συνιστά αντικείμενο ανησυχίας για τους εργαζομένους που εργάζονται σε αυτά, ιδίως για τους λιμενεργάτες και τους τελωνειακούς υπαλλήλους, οι οποίοι διεξάγουν τους ελέγχους. Ορθές πρακτικές εργασίας για την προστασία των εργαζομένων βρίσκονται υπό συζήτηση στα αντίστοιχα φόρα, με την υποστήριξη των εμπειρογνωμόνων. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να επιστήσει την προσοχή του κ. βουλευτή στην απάντηση της ερώτησης E-2393/10 ([2]).

Τα προϊόντα που περιέχουν χημικές ουσίες έχουν κοινοποιηθεί από τα κράτη μέλη στο σύστημα RAPEX. Στη «Δέσμη μέτρων για την ασφάλεια των προϊόντων και την εποπτεία της αγοράς», η οποία εγκρίθηκε στις 13 Φεβρουαρίου 2013, η Επιτροπή προβλέπει βελτιώσεις στο RAPEX, όπως βελτιωμένη παρακολούθηση των πληροφοριών και καλύτερη διαχείριση των διιστάμενων αξιολογήσεων κινδύνου.

([1]) Καρκινογόνα, μεταλλαξιογόνα και/ή τοξικά για την αναπαραγωγή.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

Το 2012 περίπου το 60% από το σύνολο των κοινοποιήσεων του RAPEX και το 52% των ελληνικών κοινοποιήσεων αφορούσαν προϊόντα από την Ασία, κυρίως κινεζικής προέλευσης. Τα στοιχεία για το 2012 θα δημοσιοποιηθούν τον Μάιο του 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000101/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Toxic containers in European ports — health risk for workers and consumers

In a recent report, the French newspaper *Le Monde* states that European ports have quietly become areas with a very high toxic risk. More specifically, the newspaper explains that between 15% and 20% of the millions of containers that arrive each day on the docks of Europe's ports contain chemicals and toxic gases that are extremely dangerous, since they are carcinogenic and neurotoxic, and pose a direct threat to the health of dockworkers and consumers themselves.

The presence of gas is due both to the use of chemicals in containers to combat mould and rodents and to the chemical composition of the products themselves, which release toxic gases and other harmful substances. Particular reference should be made to clothing imported from Asia, and especially China, which contains benzene and toluene, i.e. highly carcinogenic substances.

According to this report, the situation is deemed so serious that the competent authorities in France, the Netherlands and Belgium have already taken action to address the problem.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of the risks in question that threaten the health of European workers and consumers?

2. Will it make recommendations and take practical steps to safeguard the health of European citizens so as to assist the national authorities responsible for market surveillance?

3. As part of the review of EU legislation on general product safety, what are the proposed improvements to the functioning of the RAPEX system with a view to increasing its effectiveness in identifying dangerous products on the EU's internal market?

4. Are any recent RAPEX data available regarding the percentage of notifications concerning products of Asian origin, both in Greece and in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Member. Chemicals in consumer products are regulated by EU legislation which is enforced by Member States with the assistance of the Commission through coordination and promotion of coherence in the assessment. Under REACH Regulation a Member State or the Commission may propose to restrict a substance, if it considers that it poses a risk to human health or environment which needs to be addressed at EU level. A special restriction procedure is envisaged in case of CMR ([1]) substances in consumer articles. From 1 September 2013, Regulation (EU) 528/2012 on biocidal products will provide for specific new requirements concerning articles treated with biocidal products. It should be noted though that neither benzene nor toluene are biocidal products.

The risk emerging from fumigated containers is of particular concern for the workers dealing with them, notably dockers and customs officials carrying out controls. Best working practices to protect workers are being discussed in the appropriate fora with the support of experts. In this respect I would draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-2393/10 ([2]).

Products containing chemicals are notified by the Member States in the RAPEX system. In the 'Product safety and market surveillance package' that it adopted on 13 February 2013, the Commission envisages improvements to RAPEX such as improved follow-up to information and better handling of divergent risk assessments.

([1]) Carcinogen, Mutagen and/or Reproductive toxicity.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html .

In 2012, about 60% of all RAPEX notifications and 52% of Greek notifications concerned products of Asian, essentially Chinese origin. 2012 figures will be published in May 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000102/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: VAT on equipment purchased by life-saving voluntary organisations

In the UK the volunteer-based Royal National Lifeboat Institution is exempt from payment of VAT on the purchase of equipment. However, volunteer-based mountain rescue teams are required to pay VAT, although they may receive a grant from the government by way of part compensation.

Under EC law, what provisions are available to Member States to relax or adjust the level of VAT payable by life-saving organisations?

Does the Commission have the authority to grant exemptions from VAT requirements for such bodies?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The main piece of VAT legislation under EC law is Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 (the 'VAT Directive'). The VAT Directive provides for a number of particular exemptions from VAT with respect to certain categories of transactions. For example, certain activities which are in the public interest are exempt from VAT pursuant to Article 132 of the VAT Directive. That provision does not, however, provide for an exemption from VAT for every activity performed in the public interest, but only for those which are listed and described in great detail therein. An explicit exemption for mountain rescue services is not provided for in that provision. However, according to Article 132 (1) (p), Member States shall exempt from VAT 'the supply of transport services for sick or injured persons in vehicles specially designed for the purpose, by duly authorised bodies'.

Any economic activity performed by mountain rescue teams which meets the requirements of that provision shall therefore be exempted by the respective Member State. Member States have however some small room for manoeuvre when authorising bodies eligible to supply VAT exempt services, provided that the overall principles of VAT, such as the principle of fiscal neutrality, are duly respected. It is in the competence of the Member States to make sure that the abovementioned EU legislation is duly transposed and applied within their territory. According to the legislative rules of procedure at EU level in the field of VAT, any modification of this legal situation would need the unanimous adoption of a respective legal act by the Council, based on a corresponding proposal of the Commission. The Commission does not have competence to grant VAT exemptions to particular taxable persons.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000103/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Comprehensive strategy for the defence sector

With regard to the Work Programme for 2013, could the Commission give me examples of how, to date, the competitiveness and efficiency of the defence sector have been improved through the consistent and integrated use of EU policies?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

Important actions are already underway to foster the competitiveness and efficiency of the EU defence sector. A key priority for the Commission is the implementation of the 'Defence Package' which consisted of the communication 'A Strategy for a Stronger and more Competitive European Defence Industry' ([1]) and two directives ([2]) on intra-EU transfers of defence-related products and on defence and security procurement.

Directive 2009/81/EC effectively adjusts existing EU public procurement law to the specificities of the defence sector with the aim of fostering greater transparency and openness, make public procurement more efficient and improve market access of European companies in other Member States. Directive 2009/43/EC is designed to facilitate intra-EU transfers of defence products through a new simplified, transparent and harmonised licensing procedure. As these two main Directives have only just been transposed, it is too early to assess their impact. The Commission will review their implementation before 30 June 2016.

In the area of research, the Commission has been pursuing the objective to maximise synergies between the Commission's civil security research programme, the EDA coordinated defence related research, and the space research of the ESA ([3]). The first concrete results on the European Framework Cooperation were achieved in 2011 in the area of the CBRN ([4]) detection.

In view of the impact of the financial crisis and defence budget cuts, the Commission has announced that it will prepare strategy for enhancing the competitiveness of the defence industry. This will take the form of a communication, which has been included in the Work Programme of 2013. It is expected to be finalised by late spring 2013.

([1]) COM(2007) 764.
([2]) Directive 2009/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 simplifying terms and conditions of transfers of defence-related products within the Community; Directive 2009/81/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 on the coordination of procedures for the award of certain works contracts, supply contracts and service contracts by contracting authorities or entities in the fields of defence and security, and amending Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/17/EC.
([3]) European Space Agency.
([4]) Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000104/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: GHG emission reduction targets for 2050

With regard to the work programme for 2013 and the target of an 80-95 % reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 (compared to 1990), could the Commission advise me on how this figure was decided upon?

Does the 1990 figure refer to the 1990 GHG emissions of all 27 current Member States, or just to the total emissions of the EU in 1990, which at that time comprised 12 Member States?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The European Council of 29/30 October 2009 supported the EU objective to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels in the context of necessary reductions for developed countries as a group ([1]) and re-confirmed this support on a number of occasions, as did the Council. Similarly, the European Parliament has confirmed this objective in 2009 and regularly since then ([2]). The greenhouse gas emission reduction target of 80 to 95% is based on the IPCC's 4th Assessment Report ([3]). These are the reductions needed to meet the objective of a maximum temperature rise of 2 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels, as agreed at the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Cancun in 2010.

The figure refers to all developed countries (Annex I countries) and thus also refers to the greenhouse gas emissions of all 27 Member States, irrespective of whether they were a member of the EU in 1990 or not.

([1]) Presidency conclusions 15265/1/09. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/110889.pdf

([2]) European Parliament resolution of 4 February 2009 on '2050: The future begins today — Recommendations for the EU's future integrated policy on climate change' and European Parliament resolution of 15 March 2012 on a Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050.

([3]) See Chapter 13.3.3.3 (Proposals for climate change agreements, box 13.7. Scenario category for greenhouse gas concentration levels of 450 ppmv CO2-eq) of the IPCC's 4th Assessment Report 'Climate Change 2007' of Working Group III: Mitigation of Climate Change. http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/wg3/en/contents.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000105/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Turken vernietigen Grieks-Cypriotisch erfgoed

Turkse bezetters hebben het merendeel van de Grieks-Cyprioten in het noordelijk deel van EU-lidstaat Cyprus verdreven. Bovendien maken de Turken zich schuldig aan het structureel vernietigen van het Cypriotisch cultureel erfgoed aldaar.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de verdrijving resp. onderdrukking van de Grieks-Cyprioten door de Turkse bezetters? Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat dit — nota bene in een EU-lidstaat — plaatsvindt? Veroordeelt de Commissie dit?

2. Is de Commissie bekend met de structurele vernietiging van het Cypriotisch cultureel erfgoed door de Turkse bezetters? Veroordeelt de Commissie dit?

3. Is de Commissie voornemens zich in deze kwestie luid en duidelijk vóór de Grieks-Cyprioten uit te spreken? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de Turkse bezetters niets op Cyprus te zoeken hebben en het eiland direct dienen te verlaten? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(27 februari 2013)

De Commissie betreurt alle schade aan het religieuze en culturele erfgoed in Cyprus en neemt nota van de zorgen van het geachte Parlementslid.

Omdat de Commissie het behoud van het culturele erfgoed in Cyprus van groot belang acht, heeft zij in het kader van het hulpprogramma voor de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap in 2012 voor 2 miljoen euro steun verleend voor activiteiten van het onder beide gemeenschappen ressorterende Technisch Comité voor het culturele erfgoed, dat onder auspiciën van de Verenigde Naties werkt. De Commissie zal in het kader van het hulpprogramma voor 2013 opnieuw voor 2 miljoen euro steun verlenen aan het werk van dit comité van beide gemeenschappen.

De problemen die het geachte Parlementslid aan de orde stelt, onderstrepen eens te meer dat de leiders van de Grieks-Cypriotische en de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap onder auspiciën van de VN snel tot een alomvattende oplossing moeten komen voor de kwestie-Cyprus. De Commissie heeft er in haar mededeling van oktober 2012 over de uitbreidingsstrategie en voornaamste uitdagingen 2012-2013 ([1]) op gewezen dat de onderhandelingen moeten worden hervat om tot een snelle afsluiting van de besprekingen te komen op basis van de al geboekte vooruitgang. Ook heeft de Commissie erop aangedrongen dat Turkije zijn verbintenissen en zijn bijdrage aan de besprekingen in concrete termen uitbreidt.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_nl.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000105/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: The Turks destroying Greek Cypriot heritage

Turkish occupiers have expelled the majority of Greek Cypriots from the northern part of Cyprus, which is an EU Member State. Moreover, the Turks are carrying out the structural destruction of Cypriot cultural heritage there.

1. Is the Commission aware of the expulsion and repression of Greek Cypriots by the Turkish occupiers? How does it view the fact that this is happening in an EU Member State? Does it condemn this?

2. Is the Commission aware of the structural destruction of Cypriot cultural heritage by the Turkish occupiers? Does it condemn this?

3. Does it intend to speak out on this issue, loud and clear, in favour of Greek Cypriots? If not, why not?

4. Does it agree that the Turkish occupiers have no business being in Cyprus and that they must leave the island immediately? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

The Commission deplores any damage to religious and cultural heritage in Cyprus and takes note of the concerns of the Honourable Member.

The Commission attributes great importance to the preservation of cultural heritage in Cyprus. Under the Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community it has provided EUR 2 million in 2012 for the support of activities of the bi-communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage operating under United Nations (UN) auspices. Under the 2013 Aid Programme, the Commission is committed to continue supporting the work of the bi-communal committee with a further contribution of EUR 2 million.

The issues raised by the Honourable Member once again underline the need for a rapid comprehensive settlement in Cyprus between the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities under the auspices of the United Nations. In its October 2012 Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013 ([1]), the Commission underlined the necessity to re-launch the negotiations with the aim of reaching a swift conclusion of the talks, building on the progress achieved to date and encouraged Turkey to increase in concrete terms its commitment and contribution to the talks.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000106/13
aan de Commissie
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Gewichtsfraude bij Ryanair

Volgens de Duitse krant Die Welt heeft Ryanair foutieve informatie doorgegeven over het startgewicht van zijn toestellen. De luchtvaartmaatschappij zou daarmee in Duitsland 17 euro per vlucht aan belastingen besparen, wat op jaarbasis neerkomt op 370 000 euro en indien men dit toepast in de hele EU zou de besparing oplopen tot 50 miljoen euro. Ryanair doet de berichtgeving in de krant af als speculaties. Volgens Die Welt heeft de kwestie geen impact op de veiligheid van de passagiers.

Kan de Commissie in die context antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van deze zaak?

2. Hoe evalueert de Commissie deze kwestie, zowel in het licht van eerlijke concurrentie als van veiligheid?

3. Hoe zal de Commissie deze zaak verder opvolgen? Welke maatregelen overweegt de Commissie terzake te nemen?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(28 februari 2013)

1. De Commissie is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid beschreven situatie. Uit de informatie van het Central Route Charges Office (CRCO) van Eurocontrol, dat namens de Eurocontrol-lidstaten de heffingen int, blijkt dat verschillende luchtvaartmaatschappijen maximale startgewichten (MTOW — maximum take-off weights) hebben opgegeven die in strijd zijn met de geldende regelgeving. In bijlage IV bij Verordening (EG) nr. 1794/2004 ([1]) is beschreven hoe de factor „gewicht" wordt gebruikt voor de berekening van de „en route"-heffingen.

2. De aangifte van MTOW-waarden overeenkomstig bijlage IV van Verordening (EG) nr. 1794/2004 van de Commissie wordt uitsluitend gebruikt voor de berekening van de en route-heffingen. Dit betekent dat de mogelijke aangifte van foutieve waarden in het kader van deze verordening geen impact op de veiligheid heeft.

Binnen de EU dienen de lidstaten erop toe te zien dat het heffingsstelsel volledig en correct wordt toegepast. De Commissie vindt het belangrijk dat de concurrentievoorwaarden voor alle gebruikers van het luchtruim identiek zijn. Zij zal het probleem onder de aandacht van de lidstaten brengen en hen verzoeken erop toe te zien dat aan het CRCO correcte MTOW-waarden worden meegedeeld.

3. De Commissie pleegt overleg met het CRCO van Eurcontrol om een beeld te krijgen van de oorzaken en de omvang van het probleem. Zij heeft vernomen dat het CRCO op dit moment de MTOW-gegevens in de vlootaangiftes van alle maatschappijen analyseert. Het bevoegde comité van Eurocontrol bespreekt in maart het probleem van de door sommige gebruikers te weinig betaalde bedragen. De lidstaten worden verzocht binnen het gemeenschappelijk stelsel van „en route"-heffingen oplossingen te zoeken. Op basis van de resultaten van dit proces zal de Commissie bekijken of verdere maatregelen op EU-niveau nodig zijn.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1794/2006 van de Commissie van 6 december 2006 tot vaststelling van een gemeenschappelijk heffingenstelsel voor luchtvaartnavigatiediensten, PB L 341 van 7.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000106/13
to the Commission
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Ryanair weight fraud

According to the German newspaper *Die Welt*, Ryanair has been providing false information on its aircraft's take-off weight, thus saving EUR 17 per flight in German taxes. This amounts to an annual saving of EUR 370 000. Calculated over the whole of Europe, the saving would amount to EUR 50 million. Ryanair dismisses the *Die Welt* report as speculation. According to the newspaper, this issue has no impact on passenger safety.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem?

2. What is its view on this issue, both with regard to fair competition and to safety?

3. How will it proceed on this issue? What measures is it considering in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the situation described by the Honourable Member. Based on information received from Eurocontrol's Central Route Charges Office (CRCO), which has the responsibility to collect charges on behalf of Eurocontrol's Member States, it seems that several airlines would have declared maximum take-off weights (MTOW) values which are not consistent with the applicable rules. Annex IV of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1794/2006 ([1]) describes how the weight factor value is used with respect to the calculation of route charges.

2. The declaration of MTWO values in accordance with Annex IV of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1794/2006 is solely used for the calculation of route charges. Therefore, there is no impact on safety in respect to the possible declaration of inconsistent values under this regulation.

Within the EU, it is the responsibility of Member States to ensure the full and correct implementation of the charging scheme. For the Commission it is important that a level playing field between airspace users is guaranteed. It will draw the issue to the attention of Member States and invite them to make sure that the correct values of MTOW are communicated to the CRCO.

3. The Commission is in contact with Eurocontrol's CRCO to understand the size of the problem and its cause. The Commission is informed that the CRCO is currently reviewing the fleet declaration of all airlines with respect to provision of MTOW data. The matter of underpayment by certain users is on the agenda of the relevant Committee of Eurocontrol in March. Member States are invited to find a solution within the route charges system. Depending on the outcome of this process, the Commission will assess the need for further action within the EU.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1794/2006 of 6 December 2006 laying down a common charging scheme for air navigation services, OJ L 341, 7.12.2006.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení P-000107/13
Komisi
Richard Falbr (S&D)
(8. ledna 2013)

Předmět: Interpelace ve věci síťového charakteru drážní dopravy

V souvislosti s liberalizací trhu v oblasti služeb v poskytování veřejných služeb v přepravě cestujících veřejnou drážní osobní dopravou v České republice se objevila nejasnost ohledně výkladu pojmu „síťový charakter drážní dopravy".

V České republice došlo při přípravě dokumentace nabídkového řízení na první traťovou linku (Olomouc – Opava – Ostrava) a následném správním řízení před Úřadem pro ochranu hospodářské soutěže ke sporu o rozsah pojmu „síťový charakter drážní dopravy", kdy se objevily dva odborné názory uvádějící rozdílný rozsah tohoto pojmu. Dle jednoho názoru by došlo k narušení síťového charakteru drážní dopravy nad míru přijatelnou pro právní řád až v situaci, kdy by objednatel nedbal síťových podmínek drážní dopravy, nejednal o návaznosti spojů, neřešil problematiku technického zajištění provozního souboru, a není nezbytné, aby objednatel trval na tarifní integraci, která s ohledem na skutečnost, že služby byly poskytovány národním dopravcem, byla zajištěna. Proti tomuto názoru je názor druhý, který v pojmu „síťový charakter drážní dopravy" vidí integraci prvků prostorové, časové a tarifní propojitelnosti, včetně souvisejících technologických operací. Zastánci tohoto názoru, ke kterým také patřím, považují tarifní integraci za nezbytnou součást obsahu pojmu „síťový charakter drážní dopravy".

Jelikož problematika přepravy cestujících po železnici je v souladu s nařízením č. 1370/2007 o veřejných službách v přepravě cestujících po železnici a silnici a o zrušení nařízení Rady (EHS) č. 1191/69 a č. 1107/70 (dále jen „nařízení") podřízena právu EU, domnívám se, že by i pojem „síťový charakter drážní dopravy" měl být vykládán v souladu s právem EU, zejména s úvodními ustanoveními nařízení.

S ohledem na výše uvedené žádám Komisi, aby k této záležitosti zaujala stanovisko a pro odstranění všech pochybností vyložila v souladu s právem EU pojem „síťový charakter drážní dopravy", a to, jaké aspekty musí být zohledněny, aby byl zachován síťový charakter drážní dopravy, zejména zda tarifní integrace je součástí uvedeného pojmu.

Zdvořile Vás tímto žádám o vyjádření se k mnou předložené věci, která je vzhledem k budoucnosti probíhající liberalizace předmětného relevantního trhu v České republice zásadní.

Odpověď pana Kallase jménem Komise
(25. února 2013)

Komise si je plně vědoma toho, že se efektivita železniční dopravy a její atraktivita pro konečné uživatele odvíjí od jejího síťového charakteru. Jednoduše řečeno, uživatel, který se chce dostat z bodu A do bodu D přes body B a C (jako příklad), tak učiní na základě společného posouzení ceny, kvality a spolehlivosti všech tří tras A-B, B-C a C-D. Stejně tak může provozovatel zvýšit efektivitu svých služeb, pokud provozuje trasy A-B, B-C atd. jako součást sítě, nikoli jako samostatné služby. Hospodářskou výkonnost a sociální hodnotu každé jednotlivé trasy tedy nelze posuzovat zcela nezávisle na ostatních. Ve svém nedávném návrhu na změnu nařízení č. 1370/2007 v rámci čtvrtého železničního balíčku Komise vypracovala koncepci sítě a uznala, že služby poskytované jako závazky veřejné služby lze ve veřejných řízeních zadávat v balíčku ve spojení s jinými trasami, včetně interního křížového subvencování. Tuto koncepci sítě Komise rovněž podporuje tím, že od zadávajících orgánů požaduje předložení plánů veřejných služeb, ve kterých orgány definují služby zadávané v rámci propojených závazků veřejných služeb a zdůvodní jejich zadání.

Pojem „síťový charakter drážní dopravy" jako takový však právní předpisy EU nepoužívají, a proto Komise nemůže poskytnout právní definici.

Protože pojem „síťový charakter drážní dopravy" není vymezen v právních předpisech EU, Komise jej bohužel nemůže právně charakterizovat, a to ani pojem „tarifní integrace".

Požadavek na vytvoření společného tarifního režimu však může být závazkem veřejné služby, který definuje čl. 2 písm. e) nebo obecná pravidla v čl. 2 odst. 1, a mohou se na něj tedy vztahovat ustanovení čl. 4 odst. 1 týkající se smlouvy o veřejných službách. Je na posouzení členských států a jejich orgánů, zda tento článek uplatní. Musí tak však učinit v souladu s právními předpisy EU, zejména s nařízením č. 1370/2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000107/13
to the Commission
Richard Falbr (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: The network character of rail transport

With regard to the liberalisation of the market for the provision of public services in the area of public passenger transport by rail in the Czech Republic, some doubts have come to light concerning how to interpret the concept of 'the network character of rail transport'.

A dispute arose in the Czech Republic during the drafting of documentation for the invitation to tender for the first Olomouc–Opava–Ostrava rail link and the subsequent administrative procedure conducted by the Czech Office for the Protection of Competition regarding the scope of the notion of 'the network character of rail transport'. Two divergent points of view regarding the scope of this concept have been put forward by experts. According to one point of view, the network character of rail transport would only be violated to a legally unacceptable degree in the event that the client disregarded the network character of rail transport, did not act to ensure the continuity of connections, or did not address the issue of the technical maintenance of the operational stock. The fact that the client may maintain tariff integration is not important, given that the services are provided by a national carrier and that such tariff integration is thus guaranteed. The opposing point of view interprets 'the network character of rail transport' to mean the integration of elements of spatial, temporal and tariff interconnectivities, including related technological operations. The proponents of this point of view — myself included — believe tariff integration to be a vital feature of the concept of 'the network character of rail transport'.

Since the issue of passenger transport by rail is, pursuant to Regulation No 1370/2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) Nos 1191/69 and 1107/70, governed by EC law, I feel that the concept of 'the network character of rail transport' should be interpreted in accordance with EC law, in particular with the introductory provisions of the regulation.

In view of the above, I would ask the Commission in this instance to state its position and to dispel all doubts by providing an interpretation of the concept of 'the network character of rail transport' that is in accordance with EC law, and of what features must be included in order for the network character of rail transport to be preserved, especially if tariff integration is to be included within the concept.

Could the Commission please address this issue, which is of vital importance in the Czech rail transport market's ongoing liberalisation?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The Commission fully recognises that the efficiency of rail transport, and its attractiveness to end-users, depends on its network characteristics. Put simply, a user wanting to go from A to D via points B and C (for example) will do so based on the price, quality and reliability of all three legs A-B, B-C and C-D combined, while for an operator there may well be efficiencies in operating A-B, B-C etc as part of a network rather than stand-alone services. So the economic performance and social value of each leg cannot be assessed entirely separately from the others. In its recent proposal to amend Regulation 1370/2007 as part of the 4th Rail Package, the Commission has developed the network concept, in recognising that PSO services could be tendered as 'bundles' of routes with some internal cross subsidisation, and also through requiring contracting authorities to prepare public service plans, identifying and justifying their PSO networks.

The concept of the 'network character of rail transport' is however not a term used as such in EU legislation. Therefore, the Commission cannot provide a legal definition.

As the concept of the 'network character of rail transport' is not defined in EC law, the Commission regrets not being able to reply as to its constitutive features including the term 'tariff integration'.

However, the requirement to establish a common tariff scheme may be a public service obligation as defined in Art 2(e) or a general rules as defined in Art 2(l) and as such be part of a public service contract according to Art 4(1). It is up to Member States and their authorities to decide on its application, which must however be in compliance with EC law and in particular with Regulation 1370/2007.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-000108/13
Komisi
Richard Falbr (S&D)
(8. ledna 2013)

Předmět: Interpelace ve věci deformace trhu v oblasti veřejných služeb v přepravě cestujících železniční dopravou

V souvislosti s liberalizací trhu služeb spočívajících v poskytování veřejných služeb v přepravě cestujících veřejnou drážní osobní dopravou k zajištění dopravní obslužnosti se objevila otázka povinnosti pořízení nových drážních vozidel požadovaných v rámci nabídkových řízení dle nařízení (ES) č. 1370/2007 na základě zadávacího řízení v souladu se zadávacími směrnicemi, přičemž této povinnosti podléhají pouze někteří ze soutěžících dopravců.

České dráhy, a.s. sídlem Nábřeží L. Svobody 1222/12, 110 15 Praha 1, (dále jen „ČD") jsou v souladu s čl. 1 odst. 9 směrnice č. 2004/18/ES o koordinaci postupů při zadávání veřejných zakázek na stavební práce, dodávky a služby (dále jen „směrnice č. 2004/18/ES") veřejným subjektem, tedy zadavatelem, a vztahují se na ně příslušná ustanovení směrnice č. 2004/18/ES. ČD provádí v oblasti veřejné drážní dopravy relevantní činnost v dopravě dle čl. 5 směrnice č. 2004/17/ES o koordinaci postupů při zadávání zakázek subjekty působícími v odvětví vodního hospodářství, energetiky, dopravy a poštovních služeb (dále jen „směrnice č. 2004/17/ES"), tudíž se na ČD v souladu s čl. 2 odst. 2 směrnice č. 2004/17/ES vztahují při této činnosti příslušná ustanovení této směrnice.

ČD jako společnost vlastněná státem je povinna v případě účasti v nabídkových řízeních vyhlašovat zadávací řízení na dodávky vozidel dle zadávacích směrnic resp. podle vnitrostátních právních předpisů, které je upravují.

V České republice však působí dopravci, kteří nejsou zadavateli a účastní se nabídkových řízení. Tito dopravci nemusí svá vozidla nakupovat nebo jinak pořizovat legislativně upravenými postupy. Jedná se nejen o soukromé dopravce, kteří nejsou nijak propojeni s žádnou veřejnoprávní korporací, ale i o dceřiné společnosti národních dopravců jiných členských států EU.

Z uvedeného tedy jednoznačně vyplývá, že na trhu veřejné osobní drážní dopravy v České republice působí dvě skupiny soutěžitelů, které mají nedůvodně rozdílné podmínky, a to 1) ČD a 2) ostatní dopravci.

Žádám Komisi o vyjádření, zda tento stav není v rozporu s právními předpisy EU, zejména zda ČD nejsou tímto postupem diskriminovány, nedochází k omezování hospodářské soutěže nebo není touto deformací trhu vytvořena netarifní překážka obchodu mezi členskými státy.

Odpověď pana Barniera jménem Komise
(28. února 2013)

Komise by nejprve chtěla upozornit na to, že nařízení č. 1370/2007 a směrnice 2004/17/ES upravují různé otázky. Nařízení stanoví podmínky pro uzavírání smluv o veřejných službách veřejnými nebo soukromými subjekty u veřejných služeb v přepravě cestujících po železnici a silnici. Neupravuje, jakým způsobem musí tyto subjekty provádět své zadávání zakázek, a to včetně pořizování nových kolejových vozidel.

Pokud jde o pořizování nových kolejových vozidel, Komise souhlasí s tím, že na různé subjekty provozující železniční dopravu se mohou vztahovat různé povinnosti, pokud jde o jejich zadávání zakázek.

Na subjekt podléhající dominantnímu vlivu veřejného sektoru, například z důvodu jeho vlastnické struktury, se budou bez ohledu na jeho státní příslušnost nebo právní formu vztahovat pravidla pro zadávání veřejných zakázek podle směrnice 2004/17/ES, aby tak k jeho zakázkám měly přístup všechny hospodářské subjekty a zároveň bylo zajištěno účinné nakládání s veřejnými výdaji. Je tomu tak i v případě, že daný subjekt působí v oblasti hospodářské soutěže se zapojením soukromoprávních uchazečů, jakou je např. vnitrostátní železniční doprava.

Na soukromé subjekty bez jakéhokoli zvláštního nebo výlučného práva se pravidla pro zadávání veřejných zakázek nevztahují. Svoje činnosti provozují bez omezení za tržních podmínek.

Komise nepovažuje tento stav za diskriminaci ani za narušení trhu, neboť daná pravidla jsou společně a jednotně uplatňována ve všech členských státech.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000108/13
to the Commission
Richard Falbr (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Market distortions in public passenger rail transport services

With reference to the liberalisation of the market for the provision of public passenger rail transport services, a question has arisen concerning the acquisition of new rolling stock. It is a requirement of the tendering procedures that this acquisition be carried out in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1370/2007 on the basis of a procurement procedure in line with the procurement directives. However, not all of the competing carriers are subject to this requirement.

Pursuant to Article 1(9) of Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts (hereinafter referred to as 'Directive 2004/18/EC'), '*České Dráhy*' (Czech Rail) — with its headquarters at Nábřeží L. Svobody 1222/12, 110 15 Prague 1 (hereinafter referred to as 'ČD') — is a body governed by public law, and thus a contracting authority, and is governed by the relevant provisions of Directive 2004/18/EC. ČD operates in the area of public rail transport in accordance with Article 5 of Directive 2004/17/EC coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors (hereinafter referred to as 'Directive 2004/17/EC'). Therefore, in accordance with Article 2(2) of Directive 2004/17/EC, it is the relevant provisions of that directive which apply to ČD.

As a state-owned company, ČD is obliged to launch procurement procedures for the supply of rolling stock when participating in tendering procedures, in accordance with the procurement directives and relevant national laws.

However, in the Czech Republic, carriers are operating which are not contracting authorities and which are participating in tendering procedures. These carriers are not obliged to purchase or otherwise acquire their rolling stock through legally prescribed procedures. This applies not only to private carriers with no connections to any body governed by public law, but also to subsidiaries of the national carriers of other EU Member States.

It is, therefore, clear that there are two separate groups of competitors involved in public passenger rail transport in the Czech Republic, and that they are facing conditions that differ for no justifiable reason. The first group is ČD, and the second group comprises all other carriers.

Does the Commission not agree that this state of affairs runs counter to EC law?

Is ČD not being discriminated against by this procedure?

Does the Commission not agree that a restriction of economic competition is occurring in this case, or that the aforementioned market distortions have created a non-tariff barrier to trade between Member States?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission would first like to note that regulation 1370/2007 and Directive 2004/17/EC regulate different issues. The regulation sets the conditions for awarding public service contracts for public passenger transport services by rail and by road to public or private entities. It does not regulate the way these entities have to conduct their procurements, including the acquisition of new rolling stock.

As regards acquisition of the new rolling stock the Commission agrees that different entities operating rail transport can be subject to different obligations regarding their procurements.

An entity subject to a dominant influence by the public sector, for instance because of its ownership structure, will, regardless of its nationality or legal form, be subject to public procurement rules according to Directive 2004/17/EC in the view of ensuring access of all economic operators to its procurements and ensure effective public spending. This is also the case if such an entity operates in a field with private competition such as national railway transport.

Private entities without any special or exclusive right are not subject to public procurement rules. They are operating freely under market conditions.

The Commission does not consider this situation to be discriminating or distorting the market, as these rules are commonly and uniformly applicable in all Member States.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000109/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de janeiro de 2013)

Assunto: Novas previsões FMI

Num documento de trabalho publicado na passada quinta-feira, dia 3 de janeiro corrente, assinado pelo economista-chefe, Olivier Blanchard, e pelo investigador Daniel Leigh, o FMI reconheceu ter subestimado os efeitos das medidas de austeridade, tendo declarado que «as previsões subestimaram de forma significativa o aumento do desemprego e a baixa do consumo privado e do investimento resultantes da consolidação orçamental». Em consequência, foi comunicado que «o FMI vai mudar a forma como avalia a necessidade de austeridade em economias desenvolvidas, como as da Europa, onde alguns países em crise não estão a obter os resultados esperados com a consolidação.» A afirmação de que o FMI vai mudar as políticas de austeridade contém ínsita e necessariamente a assunção de que as atualmente implementadas não servirão os seus propósitos. Na verdade, obviamente que o acerto das previsões iniciais ponderadas pelo FMI, desde logo acerca do impacto das medidas de austeridade nas variações do desemprego, consumo privado e PIB, foram causa determinante e necessária para os termos acordados no Memorando de Entendimento Sobre as Condicionalidades de Política Económica, subscrito entre a chamada Troika, e o Estado português. O reconhecimento do FMI pode ser um passo importante para uma redefinição dos planos exigidos aos países intervencionados, reconduzindo-os à sua real capacidade de cumprir metas, em função de resultados expectáveis, assentes, por seu lado, como é suposto, em previsões fidedignas. O FMI, contudo, é apenas uma das três partes contratantes credoras, subscritoras do memorando, que possibilitou o plano de financiamento, sob certas condições.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Subscreve o entendimento do referido trabalho publicado pelo FMI?

— Reconhece que a falha das previsões anteriormente assumidas pela Troika poderá redundar na impossibilidade real de Portugal (e outros países intervencionados) atingir as metas, termos, condições e prazos impostos pelos memorandos de entendimento subscritos?

— Sendo evidente a forma exemplar como Portugal tem vindo a cumprir as suas obrigações, mas também a absoluta necessidade de as medidas de austeridade serem sustentáveis do ponto de vista da real capacidade do esforço pedido aos contribuintes, trabalhadores e empresas, e corresponderem, pelo menos de forma aproximada, às previsões feitas que justificaram o memorando em concreto, não considera adequado e prudente reponderar alguns dos seus termos e metas?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(28 de fevereiro de 2013)

O documento de trabalho do FMI publicado a 3 de janeiro de 2013 refere que o impacto negativo, a curto prazo, da política orçamental na atividade económica vinha sendo subestimado durante a crise. Todavia, as conclusões desse documento têm sido objeto de debate: a análise efetuada pelos serviços da Comissão mostra que a subestimação não é um dado adquirido; na maior parte dos Estados-Membros da UE em processo de consolidação orçamental, nomeadamente, os resultados dessa análise não revelam nenhuma subestimação significativa (ver a caixa I.5 das Previsões Económicas Europeias do outono de 2012).

Apesar do debate sobre essa matéria, não deve esquecer-se que os efeitos a curto prazo da política orçamental na atividade económica são apenas um dos muitos fatores a ter em conta para determinar o grau e o ritmo da consolidação orçamental de uma economia. Num país como Portugal, com um elevado serviço da dívida e acesso limitado aos mercados financeiros, um dos imperativos é o saneamento das finanças públicas.

A Comissão reconhece os progressos consideráveis realizados por Portugal, no último ano e meio, em termos de reformas estruturais e de consolidação orçamental. As circunstâncias próprias de cada Estado-Membro são importantes e a Comissão prontifica-se a reagir a qualquer eventualidade. Por exemplo, na quinta avaliação, ajustaram-se as metas do programa para o défice em virtude da queda substancial da receita e da taxa de desemprego mais elevada do que previsto verificadas em 2012.

O êxito da recente emissão de obrigações indicia o aumento da confiança no sucesso do programa, mas o rácio da dívida pública mantém-se muito elevado e é fundamental que Portugal continue a efetuar reformas estruturais profundas com vista a aumentar o potencial de crescimento da economia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000109/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: New IMF forecasts

In a working paper published on Thursday 3 January 2013, signed by chief economist Olivier Blanchard and researcher Daniel Leigh, the IMF admitted that it had underestimated the effects of austerity, saying that 'forecasters significantly underestimated the increase in unemployment and the decline in private consumption and investment associated with fiscal consolidation'. This led to reports that the IMF will change the way that it evaluates the need for austerity in developed economies, such as those in Europe, where consolidation is not achieving the expected results in some crisis-hit countries. A change in the IMF's austerity policies fundamentally implies that those currently in place will not meet the desired objectives. The IMF's initial forecasts on how the austerity measures would impact on unemployment, private consumption and GDP played a decisive and vital role in establishing the terms agreed in the memorandum of understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality concluded between the Troika and the Portuguese State. The IMF's admission may be an important step towards redefining the plans required of the bailed-out countries and adapting them to their actual ability to meet targets, in view of expected results which are duly based on reliable forecasts. The IMF, however, is only one of three contracting parties that concluded the memorandum, which enabled the financing plan to be established under certain conditions.

I would ask the Commission:

— Does it agree with the views contained in this paper published by the IMF?

— Does it recognise that the inaccuracy of previous forecasts made by the Troika may result in Portugal (and other bailed-out countries) being unable to achieve the goals, terms, conditions and deadlines laid down in the Memoranda of Understanding?

— Although Portugal has been exemplary in fulfilling its obligations, is it essential that the austerity measures be sustainable in terms of the demands placed on taxpayers, workers and businesses and that they correspond, at least roughly, to the forecasts that justified the memorandum itself. Does the Commission therefore not believe that it is appropriate and wise to reconsider some of its terms and targets?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The IMF working paper published on Thursday 3 January 2013 states that the short-term negative impact of fiscal policy on economic activity has been underestimated during the crisis. However, the findings reported in the working paper have been subject to debate: analysis conducted by Commission services shows that the underestimation is not robust and in particular in most EU countries undertaking fiscal consolidation, the results do not point to any significant underestimation (see European Economic Forecast Autumn 2012, Box I.5).

Notwithstanding this debate, it should be kept in mind that short-term effects of fiscal policy on economic activity are only one of the many factors that need to be considered in determining the appropriate size and pace of fiscal consolidation for any single economy. In particular, restoring sound public finances is imperative in countries with high debt burden and limited access to financial markets such as Portugal.

The Commission acknowledges the considerable achievements in terms of structural reforms and fiscal consolidation undertaken in Portugal over the past year and a half . Circumstances in individual countries are important and the Commission is ready to react to unexpected developments. For instance, in the 5th review, the programme deficit targets were revised in light of large revenue shortfalls and higher than expected unemployment in 2012.

While the recent successful bond issuance signals increasing confidence in the success of the programme, the public debt ratio remains very high and it remains paramount that Portugal continues to implement bold structural reforms with a view to raising the growth potential of the economy.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000110/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Biologické zdroje rozvojových krajín využívané vo farmaceutickom priemysle

V ostatných rokoch naberá na intenzite tzv. biologické pirátstvo. Ak napr. dôjde k situácii, že domorodé obyvateľstvo objaví liečivé účinky niektorých rastlín, nezriedka sa stáva, že veľké farmaceutické spoločnosti ich využívajú následne na výrobu liekov. Sú patentované a pôvodné obyvateľstvo ich viac ďalej nemôže používať bez platenia nemalých financií práve farmaceutickým firmám. Paradoxne tak pôvodné obyvateľstvo nemôže využívať pôvodne vlastné zdroje obživy. Takéto konanie je však v rozpore so záväzkami Únie v oblasti odstraňovania chudoby a ochrany biodiverzity.

Aké opatrenia chce podniknúť Komisia v snahe ochrániť rozvojové krajiny a pomôcť im v prístupe k biologickým zdrojom? Nie je zároveň v tomto prípade opodstatnená modifikácia legislatívy zastrešujúcej udeľovanie patentov tak, aby bolo možné deliť sa o prínos?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(11. marca 2013)

1. V roku 2010 EÚ podpísala novú medzinárodnú zmluvu – Protokol z Nagoje o prístupe ku genetickým zdrojom a spravodlivom a rovnocennom spoločnom využívaní prínosov vyplývajúcich z ich používania. V súčasnosti je tento nový špecifický nástroj v procese vykonávania v rámci Únie. Cieľom protokolu je zabezpečiť, aby poskytovateľské krajiny získali výmenou za prístup ku genetickým zdrojom a tradičným poznatkom určité prínosy. Používatelia musia pred prístupom získať predbežný informovaný súhlas a vyjednať dohodu o spoločnom využívaní prínosov. Tento nástroj prispeje k udržateľnému využívaniu biodiverzity v prospech zraniteľného pôvodného obyvateľstva a zároveň k vytvoreniu právnej istoty pre používateľov v rámci EÚ.

2. Návrh Komisie na vykonávanie protokolu z Nagoje nemení existujúce patentové právo, ale zameriava sa na vytvorenie podmienok na maximalizáciu legálneho prístupu ku genetickým zdrojom a tým napomáha inováciám a spoločnému využívaniu prínosov.

Komisia sa aktívne zúčastňuje na prebiehajúcich rokovaniach v rámci Svetovej organizácie duševného vlastníctva (WIPO) ohľadom vzťahu medzi patentovými prihláškami a genetickými zdrojmi. Členovia Svetovej organizácie duševného vlastníctva v súčasnosti skúmajú, či by mohli byť právne predpisy v oblasti patentov na celosvetovej úrovni zmenené tak, aby sa vytvorili rovnaké podmienky. V tejto súvislosti Európska komisia a členské štáty predložili v roku 2005 Svetovej organizácii duševného vlastníctva a Svetovej obchodnej organizácii spoločnú pozíciu EÚ stanovujúcu novú požiadavku na zverejňovanie zdroja genetických zdrojov v patentových prihláškach, ktorá by umožnila spoločné využívanie prínosov okrem iného aj s rozvojovými krajinami alebo pôvodným obyvateľstvom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000110/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: The use of biological resources of developing countries by the pharmaceutical industry

The phenomenon of 'biological piracy' has been on the increase in recent years. For instance, after indigenous populations have discovered the medicinal properties of a given plant, major pharmaceutical companies often use that plant to produce medicines. They then take out patents, and the people responsible for the discovery are no longer able to use the plants unless they pay significant sums to the pharmaceutical companies. Thus, the indigenous population is paradoxically unable to make use of the resources that they themselves discovered. Such behaviour, however, runs counter to the EU's commitments in the areas of poverty reduction and protection of biodiversity.

What steps will the Commission take to protect developing countries and to help them maintain their access to biological resources?

Would it not be justifiable in this case to modify the legislation on the granting of patents in order to make it possible for the benefits to be shared?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

1. In 2010 the EU has signed a new international treaty, the 'Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization'. Currently, this new dedicated instrument is in the process of being implemented in the Union. The Protocol's objective is that benefits must be granted to the provider country in exchange for access to genetic resources (GR) and traditional knowledge. Users need to obtain prior informed consent before access and to negotiate a benefit sharing agreement. This instrument will contribute to the sustainable use of biodiversity for the benefit of vulnerable indigenous populations and at the same time to creating legal certainty for users in the EU.

2. The Commission's proposal for implementing the Nagoya Protocol will not modify existing patent law, but focuses on creating conditions to maximise legal access to GR thus helping innovation and benefit sharing.

The Commission actively participates in the ongoing negotiations at the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) regarding the connection between patent applications and genetic resources. WIPO members are in the process of assessing whether patent legislation could be modified at global level in order to create a level playing field. In this regard, in 2005, the European Commission and Member States submitted at WIPO and WTO an EU common position setting out a new requirement for disclosure of source of GR in patent applications, which could enable benefit sharing with *inter alia* developing countries or indigenous populations.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000111/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Grécky dlh na udržateľnej úrovni

V ostatných týždňoch sa ministri financií usilovali dospieť k dohode v otázke, ako dostať grécky dlh na udržateľnú úroveň. Grécko dostalo dva roky navyše na dosiahnutie rozpočtových cieľov. V júni 2012 mu však bola pomoc zmrazená po tom, čo nepokračovalo v snahe uskutočňovať začaté reformy. Tieto boli predpokladom toho, aby krajine bola poskytnutá pomoc. Podľa predkladaného dokumentu nebude reálne dosiahnuť 120 % dlh do roku 2020, pokiaľ ministri neakceptujú straty z pôžičiek Grécku. Odmietavý postoj k tomuto návrhu má však Európska centrálna banka i niektoré členské štáty vrátane Slovenska.

Existuje z pohľadu Komisie napriek všetkému priestor na dosiahnutie dohody v otázke uvoľnenia zmrazenej pomoci Grécku?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(15. februára 2013)

Dovoľujeme si váženú pani poslankyňu odkázať na stanoviská Euroskupiny z 27. novembra ([1]) a 13. decembra 2012 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/133857.pdf
([2]) http://eurozone.europa.eu/media/864723/eg_statement_greece_13_12_12.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000111/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Bringing Greek debt to sustainable levels

In recent weeks, finance ministers have been trying to reach an agreement on bringing Greek debt down to sustainable levels. Greece was given two years to achieve its budget targets. However, assistance to Greece was frozen in June 2012 after it ceased efforts to implement the reforms that had been initiated. Those reforms had been a condition for Greece to receive assistance. According to the documents submitted, it is unlikely that Greece will be able to reach a debt level of 120% of GDP by 2020 unless ministers accept losses on loans made to Greece. However, the ECB and some Member States — including Slovakia — are opposed to this idea.

In the Commission's opinion, will it be possible to reach an agreement on the issue of releasing the frozen assistance to Greece in spite of this opposition?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

We refer the honourable MEP to the Statements of the Eurogroup of 27 November ([1]) and 13 December 2012 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/133857.pdf
([2]) http://eurozone.europa.eu/media/864723/eg_statement_greece_13_12_12.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000112/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Medzinárodný deň ľudí s postihnutím

Tretí decembrový deň je v kalendároch spomínaný aj ako Medzinárodný deň ľudí s postihnutím. Pripomíname si ho každoročne od roku 1993. Termín zdravotné postihnutie zahŕňa veľké množstvo rôznych funkčných obmedzení, ktoré sa vyskytujú v každej populácii vo všetkých krajinách na svete. Ľudia môžu byť postihnutí telesnou, duševnou alebo zmyslovou chybou, poruchou zdravia alebo duševnou chorobou. Takéto chyby, poruchy alebo choroby môžu mať trvalý, alebo prechodný ráz. Úzko s ním súvisí strata alebo obmedzenie príležitosti mať rovnaký podiel na živote spoločnosti ako ostatní. Označuje sa ním nezhoda medzi osobou s postihnutím a prostredím. Kladie dôraz na nedostatky prostredia a niektorých druhov organizovanej činnosti spoločnosti (šírenie informácií, dorozumievanie, vzdelávanie a pod.), ktoré zdravotne postihnutým osobám bránia, aby ich využívali vo svoj prospech za rovnakých podmienok. Vytváranie rovnakých príležitostí znamená proces, ktorý sprístupňuje ľuďom, zvlášť osobám so zdravotným postihnutím, rôzne systémy spoločnosti a prostredie. Potreby každého jednotlivca a všetkých ľudí sú rovnako dôležité. Tieto potreby sa musia pre spoločnosť stať štandardom na plánovanie a všetky zdroje sa musia využiť tak, aby zabezpečili každému jednotlivcovi rovnakú príležitosť na integráciu.

Aké kroky podnikla Komisia v oblasti uspokojovania potrieb ľudí s hendikepom usilujúc sa uľahčiť ich snahu o integráciu a rovnaký podiel na živote spoločnosti?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(26. februára 2013)

Komisia si uvedomuje, že je dôležité zvyšovať povedomie o rovnakých príležitostiach pre osoby so zdravotným postihnutím. Rovnosť preto bola označená za jeden z kľúčových nástrojov na dosiahnutie cieľov Európskej stratégie pre oblasť zdravotného postihnutia 2010 – 2020 ([1]).

Ako sa uvádza v tejto stratégii, Komisia: a) vykonáva politiky a opatrenia vrátane legislatívnych iniciatív na európskej úrovni a b) podporuje úsilie vynakladané na vnútroštátnej úrovni na podporu začlenenia a plného zapojenia osôb so zdravotným postihnutím do všetkých oblastí života ([2]).

EÚ je okrem toho stranou Dohovoru Organizácie Spojených národov o právach osôb so zdravotným postihnutím a je ním v rozsahu svojich právomocí viazaná.

Komisia vyzýva členské štáty, aby na zlepšenie prístupnosti, predchádzanie diskriminácii a podporu rovnakých príležitostí využívali európske fondy vrátane štrukturálnych fondov EÚ. V rámci programu PROGRESS Komisia poskytuje financovanie mimovládnym organizáciám na celoeurópskej úrovni, určené na posilnenie ich organizačnej štruktúry a možností presadzovania ich cieľov.

Komisia takisto realizuje aj také činnosti zamerané na zvyšovanie povedomia, akými sú konferencia pri príležitosti Európskeho dňa osôb so zdravotným postihnutím a usporiadanie každoročného udeľovania ceny Access City, ktorého cieľom je uľahčiť nadviazanie kontaktov medzi mestami, ktoré by si chceli navzájom vymeniť skúsenosti s rozvojom a plánovaním miest bez bariér.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:SK:PDF

([2]) „Obnovený záväzok vybudovať Európu bez bariér“, KOM(2010) 0636 v konečnom znení: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:sk:NOT a zoznam opatrení na roky 2010 - 2015 SEK(2010) 1324 v konečnom znení: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:EN:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000112/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: International Day of Persons with Disabilities

On 3 December, we mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities. We have been marking this occasion every year since 1993. The term 'disabled' covers a multitude of different disabilities that occur in populations worldwide. People may be affected by physical, mental or psychological problems, health problems or mental illness. Such problems and illnesses may be chronic or temporary. They are very closely associated with the loss or reduction of opportunities to participate in society on an equal footing with others. This is referred to as a conflict between a disabled person and his/her environment. This day draws attention, through awareness-raising, communication, education, etc., to the shortcomings of the environment and of certain types of organised social activities that prevent disabled people from enjoying them on an equal basis. Creating equal opportunities means establishing a process that makes various social activities and environments accessible to people, and especially people with disabilities. The needs of every individual and of all people are equally important. These needs must always be taken into account during planning processes, and all resources must be used in such a way as to ensure that every individual has an equal opportunity to integrate.

What steps has the Commission taken towards satisfying disabled people's needs by making it easier for them to integrate and to participate in society on an equal footing?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The Commission is conscious of the importance of raising awareness on equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. For this reason, equality has been identified as one of the key instruments to achieve the objectives of the European Disability Strategy (EDS) 2010-2020 ([1]).

As set out in the EDS, the Commission: a) carries out policies and actions including legislative initiatives at European level and b) supports national efforts to promote the inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life ([2]).

Moreover, the EU is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and is bound by it to the extent of its competences.

The Commission encourages Members States to use European funds, including EU structural funds, to improve accessibility, combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities. Under the Progress Programme the Commission provides funding to EU-level NGOs to reinforce their organisational structure and advocacy capacity.

The Commission also carries out awareness raising actions such as the European Day of Persons with Disabilities conference and the annual Access City Award aiming at facilitating the establishment of contacts between cities that want to learn from one another to develop and design cities without barriers.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) 'A renewed commitment to a barrier-free Europe', COM(2010) 0636 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT and the list of actions for 2010-2015 SEC(2010)1324 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:EN:NOT

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000113/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Nedostatočná ochrana spotrebiteľa nakupujúceho prostredníctvom internetu

V júni roku 2012 sa uskutočnila kontrola digitálneho obsahu viacerých internetových obchodov. Nemalé percento preverených obchodných spoločností disponuje značnými nedostatkami. Chýba napríklad prístup k zmluvným podmienkam, úplné kontaktné informácie a nezriedka sa vyskytujú i zavádzajúce informácie.

Akým spôsobom zamýšľa Komisia eliminovať takéto praktiky? Je možné domnievať sa, že uvalením sankcií by internetové stránky mali väčšiu snahu dodržiavať stanovené pravidlá na ochranu spotrebiteľa?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(21. februára 2013)

Vnútroštátne orgány presadzovania práva sú v prvom rade zodpovedné za vyšetrovanie činností spoločností činných na svojom domácom trhu na základe právnych predpisov EÚ v oblasti ochrany spotrebiteľa vrátane dozoru nad dodržiavaním uplatniteľných ustanovení smernice o elektronickom obchode, a ak je to potrebné, pokračujú s vynucovacími opatreniami, ktoré môžu mať podobu sankcií, napríklad vo forme pokút.

Kontroly, na ktoré sa vážená pani poslankyňa odvoláva boli koordinovanou akciou na presadzovanie práva („sweep“). Vnútroštátne orgány presadzovania práva počas tejto akcie kontrolovali súčasne pod vedením Komisie vzorku webových stránok na dodržiavanie právnych predpisov týkajúcich sa spotrebiteľov. V druhej fáze vnútroštátne orgány prijmú v prípade potreby vynucovacie opatrenia na základe ich vnútroštátnych právnych predpisov. Komisia podá správu o výsledkoch druhej fázy tejto akcie zameranej na digitálny obsah na jeseň roku 2013. Výsledky týchto akcií vykonaných v minulosti doposiaľ preukázali, že vnútroštátne presadzovanie práva, v niektorých prípadoch zahŕňajúce pokuty, viedli k zlepšeniu dodržiavania pravidiel na ochranu spotrebiteľa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000113/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Inadequate consumer protection for online purchases

In June 2012, checks were carried out into the digital content of a number of online shops. A significant number of those shops checked had serious shortcomings. For instance, contractual terms were not available to consult, or contact details were often either missing or misleading.

How does the Commission intend to put a stop to such practices? Is it reasonable to assume that imposing sanctions on websites would oblige them to put greater effort into adhering to current rules on consumer protection?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

National enforcement authorities are primarily responsible for investigating activities of companies active on their domestic market in the light of EU consumer legislation, including supervision of compliance with the applicable provisions of the E-commerce Directive, and, if necessary, follow-up with enforcement action, which can take the form of sanctions, such as fines.

The checks to which the Honourable Member is referring was a coordinated enforcement action ('sweep'). In a sweep, national enforcement authorities check simultaneously, under the coordination of the Commission, a sample of websites for compliance with consumer law. In a second phase, the national authorities take enforcement action, where needed, on the basis of their national legislation. The Commission will report on the results of the second phase of the sweep on digital content in autumn 2013. The results of 'sweeps' carried out in the past have so far shown that national enforcement, including where applicable sanctions, has led to improved compliance.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000114/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Ochrana detí v digitálnom svete

Internet a digitálny svet vo všeobecnosti aktuálne azda najviac ohrozuje všetky menej chránené skupiny vrátane maloletých a negatívne vplýva na ich ekonomickú, sociálnu a kultúrnu budúcnosť. Ponuka škodlivého obsahu online s výraznými prvkami násilia, diskriminácie, sexizmu či rasizmu, ktorých charakter nie je vhodný pre maloletých, môže u nepripraveného používateľa znížiť vnímanie urážky ľudskej dôstojnosti a uľahčiť rozšírenie používania siete maloletými s úmyslami, ktoré viac či menej vedome škodia ich dôstojnosti alebo dôstojnosti iných. Je nevyhnutné, aby sa členské štáty usilovali o ochranu maloletých v digitálnom svete aj tým, že budú podporovať všetky formy dohľadu nad digitálnym svetom.

Nezvažuje Komisia vydanie smernice zaručujúcu ochranu práv detí v digitálnom svete? Akým konkrétnym spôsobom chce dohliadať na bezpečnosť internetu z pohľadu maloletých a mladistvých?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(18. februára 2013)

Komisia si je vedomá toho, že deti sú v online prostredí obzvlášť zraniteľnou skupinou, ktorá si vyžaduje osobitné opatrenia na posilnenie práv a ochranu pred akýmkoľvek druhom škodlivého obsahu/správania, a rozbehla stratégiu ([1]), ktorej cieľom je vytvoriť lepší internet pre deti. Navrhované kroky poskytnúť deťom digitálne zručnosti a nástroje potrebné na to, aby v plnej miere a bezpečne využívali prínosy digitálneho sveta, bude musieť Komisia podniknúť spoločne s členskými štátmi a výrobným odvetvím. Jedným z cieľov stratégie je poskytnúť obom rodičom a deťom technické nástroje, ktoré sú potrebné na zabezpečenie ochrany detí v online prostredí, a rozšíriť zvyšovanie povedomia.

V roku 2013 sa implementácia tejto stratégie opiera o existujúci program Bezpečnejší internet 2009 – 2013. Od roku 2014 by mala byť v rámci EÚ vytvorená interoperabilná infraštruktúra služieb na podporu centier bezpečnejšieho internetu, poskytujúca informácie o bezpečnosti online, ktorá je podmienená prijatím Nástroja na prepojenie Európy.

Čo sa týka audiovizuálneho obsahu, existujú osobitné pravidlá na európskej úrovni v smernici o audiovizuálnych mediálnych službách ([2]). V oblasti služieb televízneho vysielania sú programy, ktoré „by mohli vážne poškodiť" vývoj maloletých, zakázané. Programy, ktoré by mohli byť jednoducho „škodlivé" pre maloleté osoby, môžu byť vysielané alebo sprístupnené takým spôsobom, že maloleté osoby zvyčajne nebudú mať k nim prístup (prostredníctvom výberu času vysielania či hocijakého technického opatrenia ako napríklad šifrovanie). V prípade služieb poskytovaných na požiadanie, programy, ktoré by mohli vážne poškodiť telesný, duševný alebo mravný vývoj maloletých osôb, musia byť dostupné iba takým spôsobom, aby sa zabezpečilo, že maloleté osoby nebudú takéto služby na požiadanie za normálnych okolností počuť alebo vidieť.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/286
([2]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2010/13/EÚ z 10. marca 2010 o koordinácii niektorých ustanovení upravených zákonom, iným právnym predpisom, alebo správnym opatrením v členských štátoch týkajúcich sa poskytovania audiovizuálnych mediálnych služieb.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000114/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Child protection in the digital world

At present, the Internet and the digital world perhaps pose the greatest threat to less well-protected groups, including minors. Furthermore, they can have a negative impact on their economic, social and cultural prospects. The availability of harmful online content with explicit elements of violence, discrimination, sexism or racism of a character unsuitable for minors may diminish the perception of offence to human dignity in an unaccustomed user and may promote Internet use by minors in ways that, deliberately or otherwise, are harmful to their dignity or the dignity of others. It is vital that the Member States undertake efforts to ensure that minors are protected in the digital world, including by supporting all forms of supervision of the digital world.

Is the Commission not considering proposing a directive to guarantee the protection of children's rights in the digital world?

How precisely does it intend to monitor the online security of minors and young people?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

The Commission is aware that children are a particularly vulnerable group online that needs special empowerment and protection measures from any kind of harmful content/conduct and has rolled out a strategy ([1]) to make the Internet Better for Children. The proposed actions to give children the digital skills and tools they need to benefit fully and safely from the digital world are to be undertaken jointly by the Commission, Member States and industry. Among the aims of the strategy is to give both parents and children the technical tools necessary for ensuring the online protection of children and to scale up awareness raising.

In 2013 the implementation of this strategy relies on the existing Safer Internet Programme 2009-2013. From 2014, the creation of an EU-wide interoperable service infrastructure to support the Safer Internet Centres, which provide online safety information, is foreseen subject to the adoption of Connecting Europe Facility.

As regards audiovisual content, there are specific rules in place at European level in the Audiovisual Media Services Directive ([2]). In television broadcasting services, programmes which 'might seriously impair' the development of minors are prohibited. Programmes which might simply be 'harmful' to minors can only be transmitted or made available in such a way that minors will not normally have access to them (by selecting the time of the broadcast, any technical measure like encryption). For on demand services, programmes which might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors shall only be made available in such a way as to ensure that minors will not normally hear or see such on-demand services.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/286
([2]) Directive 2010/13 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000115/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Ochrana autorských práv

Predovšetkým veľké korporácie a softvérové spoločnosti sa zasadzujú za sprísnenie legislatívy v otázke šírenia filmov, hudby hier či rôznych aplikácií a s tým súvisiacej ochrany autorských práv. Najmä zvyšujúca sa rýchlosť internetu dáva totiž používateľom väčšie možnosti nelegálne sťahovať a šíriť množstvo multimediálnych dát. Dohoda ACTA nebola schválená, ochranu autorských práv je ale každopádne potrebné vhodným spôsobom legislatívne ošetriť.

Komisia sa v uplynulých dňoch vyjadrila, že začiatkom roka 2013 chce otvoriť diskusiu o ochrane autorských práv. Akým spôsobom je podľa predstaviteľov Európskej komisie nevyhnutné korigovať aktuálne platnú legislatívu, aby bolo možné porušovaniu autorských práv efektívne predchádzať?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(15. marca 2013)

V oznámení z 18. decembra 2012 o obsahu na digitálnom jednotnom trhu ([1]) Komisia vytýčila svoju stratégiu na nasledujúce dva roky s cieľom zaistiť účinnosť digitálneho jednotného trhu v oblasti autorských práv.

Táto stratégia zahŕňa dve paralelné línie opatrení. Na jednej strane Komisia zavŕši svoje prebiehajúce úsilie v oblasti preskúmavania a modernizácie legislatívneho rámca EÚ upravujúceho autorské práva.

Na strane druhej Komisia začne uskutočňovať štruktúrovaný dialóg so zainteresovanými stranami s názvom „Udeľovanie licencií v Európe“, v rámci ktorého sa všetky dotknuté strany budú môcť vyjadriť k viacerým otázkam, pri ktorých je možné dosiahnuť rýchly a konkrétny pokrok. Cieľom tohto procesu bude využiť potenciál a preskúmať prípadné obmedzenia inovatívnych licenčných a technologických riešení, ktoré pomôžu docieliť vytvorenie fungujúceho digitálneho jednotného trhu. Proces „Udeľovanie licencií v Európe“ bude pokrývať tieto štyri témy: cezhraničný prístup a prenositeľnosť služieb, používateľmi tvorený obsah a udeľovanie licencií malým používateľom, audiovizuálny sektor a inštitúcie kultúrneho dedičstva a získavanie textov a údajov. Dialóg „Udeľovanie licencií v Európe“ sa začal uskutočňovať 4. februára. Ukončenie s ním spojenej práce sa očakáva na jeseň. Kolégium potom vyhodnotí výsledky dialógu.

Okrem toho, pokiaľ ide o analýzu prípadnej potreby preskúmania občianskoprávneho presadzovania práv duševného vlastníctva, útvary Komisie začali proces verejnej konzultácie, ktorý bude finalizovaný koncom marca 2013 ([2]). Výsledky konzultácie budú zverejnené a umožnia uskutočnenie primeraného vyhodnotenia.

([1]) COM(2012)789 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2012/intellectual-property-rights_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000115/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Copyright protection

Major corporations and software companies are calling for laws relating to the distribution of films, music, games, applications and associated copyrights to be strengthened. Although ACTA was not passed, the issue of copyright protection must still be dealt with in a suitable manner through legislation.

The Commission recently said that it wishes to open a debate in early 2013 on copyright protection. How does the Commission plan to modify current legislation in order to prevent copyright violation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2013)

In its communication of 18 December 2012 on content in the Digital Single Market ([1]), the Commission has set out its strategy for the next two years in order to ensure an effective digital single market in the area of copyright.

This strategy has two parallel tracks of action. On the one hand, the Commission will complete its ongoing effort to review and to modernise the EU copyright legislative framework.

On the other hand, the Commission will set out a structured stakeholder dialogue, named 'Licenses for Europe', with all stakeholders concerned to address a number of issues on which rapid and concrete progress is possible. This process will seek to exploit the potential and explore the possible limits of innovative licensing and technological solutions to help achieving a functioning Digital Single Market which work on the ground for the benefit of all. The process 'Licenses for Europe' will cover the four following topics; cross-border access and the portability of services, user-generated content and licensing for small-scale users, audiovisual sector and cultural heritage institutions and text and data mining. 'Licenses for Europe' started on 4 February. It is expected to complete its work by this autumn. The College will then take stock of the outcome of the dialogue.

Furthermore, regarding the need to analyse whether IPR civil enforcement would need review, the Commission's services have launched a public consultation which will be closed at the end of March 2013 ([2]). The result of that consultation will be made public and will allow for the appropriate assessment to be made.

([1]) COM(2012) 789 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2012/intellectual-property-rights_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000116/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Počítačová bezpečnosť a obrana

V dnešnom globalizovanom svete sú EÚ a jej členské štáty mimoriadne závislé od bezpečného kybernetického priestoru, bezpečného využívania informačných a digitálnych technológií a odolných a spoľahlivých informačných služieb a súvisiacej infraštruktúry. Počítačových hrozieb a útokov, žiaľ, pribúda a predstavujú obrovskú hrozbu pre bezpečnosť, obranu, stabilitu a konkurencieschopnosť národných štátov. Väčšina najzreteľnejších a najničivejších počítačových incidentov je v súčasnosti politickej povahy. V EÚ a v jej členských štátoch existuje mnoho prekážok politického, legislatívneho a organizačného rázu, ktoré ovplyvňujú rozvoj komplexného a jednotného prístupu ku kybernetickej obrane a bezpečnosti.

Má Komisia v úmysle pričiniť sa o globálny a koordinovaný prístup k tejto problematike na celoúnijnej úrovni? Nepovažuje za opodstatnené usilovať sa o vytvorenie stratégie pre počítačovú bezpečnosť, ktorá by mohla do značnej miery zamedziť kybernetickým útokom?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(25. februára 2013)

Komisia zdieľa názor váženej pani poslankyne na dôležitosť zabezpečenia komplexného a integrovaného prístupu v oblasti kybernetickej bezpečnosti v EÚ. Komisia už dlho vykonáva aktivity na zabezpečenie vysokej úrovne bezpečnosti siete a informácií v EÚ, akými sú napríklad Digitálna agenda pre Európu ([1]) a politika v oblasti ochrany kritických informačných infraštruktúr ([2]). Komisia plánuje zintenzívniť svoje aktivity v záujme poskytnutia komplexnejšieho pohľadu na túto mnohostrannú oblasť.

Oznámenie stratégie o kybernetickej bezpečnosti Európskej únie ([3]) predkladá integrovaný pohľad na túto oblasť. Predstavuje konkrétne politické opatrenia na zabezpečenie bezpečného a odolného digitálneho prostredia a posilnenie boja proti počítačovej kriminalite, pričom rešpektuje a presadzuje základné práva a hodnoty EÚ. Stratégia skúma synergie medzi prevenciou a odolnosťou, presadzovanie práva, medzinárodnú spoluprácu a kybernetickú obranu.

Stratégiu sprevádza návrh Komisie na smernicu o bezpečnosti sietí a informácií v celej EÚ s cieľom zabezpečiť hladké fungovanie vnútorného trhu. Cieľom návrhu je posilniť vnútroštátnu pripravenosť, posilniť spoluprácu na úrovni EÚ a stanoviť záväzky bezpečnosti sietí a informácií pre prevádzkovateľov na trhu, ktorí majú rozhodujúci význam pre hospodárstvo, spoločnosť a verejnú správu, čím sa zabezpečí lepšia prevencia a reakcia na tieto útoky, ako aj na prípady spôsobené výpadkami, ľudskými chybami alebo prírodnými udalosťami.

([1]) KOM(2010) 245.
([2]) KOM(2009) a KOM(2011) 163.
([3]) Predložili podpredsedníčka Komisie Neelie Kroesová, komisárka Cecilia Malmströmová a vysoká predstaviteľka Catherine Ashtonová.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000116/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Computer security and defence

In today's globalised world, the EU and its Member States are incredibly dependent on cyber-security, the secure use of digital and information technologies, resistant and reliable information services, and related infrastructure. Regrettably, computer threats and attacks are on the increase, and they represent a major threat to the security, defence, stability and competitiveness of countries. The majority of the most noticeable and destructive incidents today have a political dimension. In the EU and its Member States, there are many political, legislative and organisational obstacles that can hinder the development of a comprehensive and unified approach to cyber-security and defence.

Is the Commission planning on playing a role in developing a comprehensive and coordinated approach to this issue at EU level?

Does the Commission not believe that efforts should be made to create a cyber-security strategy that could halt a significant number of cyber attacks?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member on the importance to ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach to cybersecurity in the EU. The Commission has long undertaken activities to ensure a high level of network and information security in the EU, such as the Digital Agenda for Europe ([1]) and the policy on Critical Information Infrastructure Protection ([2]). The Commission is now planning to step up its activities to provide a more comprehensive vision in this multifaceted domain.

The communication on a Cybersecurity Strategy for the European Union ([3]) puts forward an integrated vision in this domain. It presents concrete policy actions to ensure a safe and resilient digital environment and step up the fight against cybercrime, while respecting and promoting fundamental rights and EU core values. The strategy explores synergies among prevention and resilience, law enforcement, international cooperation and cyber defence.

The strategy is accompanied by a Commission proposal for a directive on network and information security across the EU to ensure the smooth functioning of the internal market. The proposal aims to strengthen national preparedness; reinforce EU-level cooperation; and impose network and information security obligations on market operators which are critical for the economy and society and public administrations. This will ensure better prevention and response to attacks as well as to incidents caused by outages, human mistakes, or natural events.

([1]) COM(2010) 245.
([2]) COM(2009) 149 and COM(2011) 163.
([3]) Presented by Commission Vice-President Neelie Kroes, Commissioner Cecilia Malmström and High representative Catherine Ashton.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000117/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Porušovanie ľudských práv v Iráne

Aktivisti bojujúci za ľudské práva, právnici – títo všetci sú väznení a neľudsky sa s nimi zaobchádza len preto, že bojujú za dodržiavanie ľudských práv v Iráne. Situácia sa stáva čoraz neúnosnejšou. Pozitívnym krokom bolo vytvorenie tzv. čiernej listiny EÚ s menami tých Iráncov, ktorí ľudské práva porušujú a ktorým bol vstup do Európy zakázaný. Elementárne ľudské práva sa v Iráne porušujú stále závažnejším spôsobom. I preto je opodstatnené daný zoznam rozšíriť. Okrem toho je nesmierne dôležité smerovať všetky reštriktívne a sankčné opatrenia tak, aby bola oslabená iránska vláda. Bez toho, aby boli poškodzované práva bežných občanov.

Uvažuje Komisia, že by sa aktívne zapojila do diskusie s Iránom, ktorej predmetom by bolo dodržiavanie ľudských práv? Aké konkrétne riešenia sú v jej kompetencii, aby bolo možné pokúsiť sa o pozitívnu zmenu, čo sa týka neľahkej situácie iránskeho obyvateľstva?

Odpoveď podpredsedníčky Komisie/vysokej predstaviteľky Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(27. februára 2013)

Vysoká predstaviteľka a podpredsedníčka je znepokojená situáciou iránskych obhajcov ľudských práv a neustále vyzýva iránske orgány, aby rešpektovali a zachovávali občianske a politické práva všetkých svojich občanov. Vydala v tejto veci viacero vyhlásení, naposledy k rozsudkom smrti vyneseným nad piatimi ahvázijskými arabskými mužmi (29. januára 2013), k hroziacej poprave dvoch kurdských väzňov (11. januára 2013), k rušeniu medzinárodného mediálneho vysielania (14. novembra 2012) a k smrti blogera Sattara Beheshtiho vo väzení (11. novembra 2012).

Vysoká predstaviteľka a podpredsedníčka veľmi starostlivo sleduje jednotlivé prípady obhajcov ľudských práv a Parlament nedávno udelil Sacharovovu cenu za slobodu myslenia obhajcovi ľudských práv, právnikovi Nasrinovi Sotoudehovi a filmárovi Jafarovi Panahimu. Okrem toho Európska služba pre vonkajšiu činnosť prostredníctvom miestneho zastúpenia EÚ v Teheráne, ako aj iránskemu veľvyslancovi v Bruseli zaslala viacero demaršov poukazujúcich na represie voči iránskym obhajcom ľudských práv.

Okrem týchto opatrení EÚ uložila sankcie 78 iránskym jednotlivcom, ktorí sú zodpovední, priamo alebo vydaním rozkazu, za závažné porušovanie ľudských práv v Iráne. Tieto sankcie zahŕňajú zákaz cestovania v rámci EÚ a zmrazenie aktív a aktualizujú sa priebežne podľa vývoja situácie v Iráne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000117/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Violation of human rights in Iran

Human rights activists and lawyers are being imprisoned and treated in an inhumane manner solely because they are fighting to ensure that human rights are respected in Iran. The situation is becoming increasingly bleak. A positive development was the drawing up of an EU 'black list' containing the names of those Iranians responsible for human rights violations and banning them from entering Europe. Fundamental human rights are being violated in Iran with increasing severity. Therefore, the black list should be expanded. Furthermore, it is vitally important that we focus all restrictions and sanctions on weakening the Iranian Government without harming the rights of ordinary citizens.

Would the Commission consider taking part in a discussion with Iran focusing on respect for human rights?

What specific measures is the Commission competent to take, with a view to ensuring that the difficult situation facing Iranians changes for the better?

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

The HR/VP is troubled by the situation of Iranian human rights defenders, and continuously calls upon the Iranian authorities to respect and uphold the civil and political rights of all its citizens. She has issued several statements to this end, most recently on the death penalties awarded to five Ahwazi arab men (29 January 2013), the imminent execution of two Kurdish prisoners (11 January 2013), the jamming of international media broadcasts (14 November 2012) and the death of blogger Sattar Beheshti in custody (11 November 2012).

The HR/VP is following individual cases of human rights advocates very closely, and Parliament recently awarded the Sakharov Price for Freedom of Thought to human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh and film maker Jafar Panahi. Moreover, the European External Action Service has made several demarches highlighting the repression of Iranian human rights defenders, which have been carried out both by the local EU representation in Tehran and to the Iranian ambassador in Brussels.

In addition to these measures, the EU imposed sanctions on 78 Iranian individuals who are responsible, directly or by order, for severe human rights abuses in Iran. These sanctions include a travel ban inside the EU and an asset-freeze, and are updated continuously in light of the stuation in Iran.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000118/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Posilnenie práv ľudí so zdravotným znevýhodnením

Začiatkom decembra sa viac ako štyristo delegátov z organizácií zastupujúcich osoby s hendikepom stretlo nielen s predsedom Európskeho parlamentu, ale i s európskymi poslancami a zákonodarcami Únie. Je dôležité, aby európske inštitúcie intenzívnejšie spolupracovali s mimovládnymi organizáciami i s postihnutými. V priebehu nadchádzajúceho roku bude Európska únia predkladať Organizácii Spojených národov správu o tom, ako sa snaží vychádzať v ústrety osobám s postihnutím.

Ako konkrétne sa môže i Komisia pričiniť o ochranu a upevnenie práv zdravotne znevýhodnených osôb? Vynaloží väčšie úsilie na zefektívnenie spolupráce a na zvýšenie povedomia širšej verejnosti o problematike hendikepovaných?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(26. februára 2013)

V decembri 2011 sa EÚ stala signatárom Dohovoru Organizácie Spojených národov o právach osôb so zdravotným postihnutím (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – CRPD) ([1]). To znamená, že práva ustanovené v dohovore sa majú uplatňovať a rešpektovať zo strany EÚ v jej legislatívnych opatreniach, ako aj pri tvorbe jej politiky a programov v rozsahu jej právomocí. Toto sa vykonáva okrem iného začlenením otázok zdravotného postihnutia a zohľadňovaním CRPD pri posudzovaní vplyvu prijímaných opatrení ([2]).

V októbri 2012 Rada na základe návrhu Komisie ustanovila rámec EÚ na podporu, ochranu a monitorovanie uplatňovania CRPD, ako sa ustanovuje v článku 33.2 CRPD. Mandát rámca EÚ zahŕňa oblasti právomocí EÚ a je doplnkom národných rámcov ustanovených v členských štátoch. Rieši aj uplatňovanie dohovoru inštitúciami EÚ konajúcimi ako orgány verejnej správy. Rámec EÚ tvoria tieto inštitúcie a orgány EÚ: Európsky parlament (zastúpený Výborom pre petície), európsky ombudsman, Európska komisia, Agentúra EÚ pre základné práva a Európske fórum zdravotného postihnutia, hlavná zastrešujúca organizácia na úrovni EÚ pre ľudí so zdravotným postihnutím.

Komisia od roku 2010 organizuje aj pracovné fórum pre uplatňovanie CRPD v EÚ, ktoré predstavuje platformu pre vzájomné odovzdávanie poznatkov a výmenu osvedčenej praxe medzi riadiacimi mechanizmami ustanovenými na národnej úrovni a na úrovni EÚ s cieľom uplatňovať a monitorovať CRPD, ako aj vo vzťahu k občianskej spoločnosti, organizáciám osôb so zdravotným postihnutím, inštitúciám EÚ a príslušným medzinárodným orgánom.

Komisia by okrem toho chcela odkázať váženú pani poslankyňu na svoju odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-000112/2013.

([1]) Okrem EÚ podpísali dohovor všetky členské štáty a 24 z nich ho aj ratifikovalo. Komisia od roku 2008 v spolupráci so skupinou na vysokej úrovni pre zdravotné postihnutie uverejňuje výročnú správu o uplatňovaní CRPD v členských štátoch a v EÚ: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/dhlg_5th_report_en.pdf

([2]) Pracovný dokument útvarov Komisie – Prevádzkové usmernenie o zohľadňovaní základných práv v posúdeniach vplyvu vypracovaných Komisiou, SEK(2011) 567 v konečnom znení, výslovne vyžaduje overovanie súladu iniciatív Komisie s CRPD. Interné usmernenia na posudzovanie sociálnych vplyvov v rámci systému Komisie na posudzovanie vplyvov okrem toho výslovne uvádza osoby so zdravotným postihnutím a pomáha posudzovať sociálne vplyvy na túto špecifickú skupinu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000118/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Strengthening the rights of people with disabilities

In early December 2012, more than 400 delegates from organisations representing disabled people met with the President of Parliament, as well as with MEPs and EU legislators. It is vital that the European institutions cooperate more closely with NGOs and with disabled people. In 2013, the EU will submit a report to the United Nations on how it is trying to meet the needs of disabled people.

In what specific ways can the Commission help to protect and strengthen the rights of disabled people? Will it put greater effort into making its cooperation more effective and raising awareness among the general public of disabled issues?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

Since 22 January 2011 the EU is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) ([1]). This implies that the rights enshrined therein need to be implemented and respected by the EU in its legislative actions as well as its policy-making and programmes, to the extent of its competences. This is done i.a. through disability mainstreaming and by taking into account the CRPD in impact assessments ([2]).

In October 2012, based on a Commission's proposal, the Council set up the EU Framework to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the CRPD as provided for in Art. 33.2 CRPD. The EU Framework's mandate covers areas of EU competence, and is a complement to the national frameworks set up in the Member States. It also addresses the implementation of the Convention by the EU institutions acting as Public Administration. The following EU institutions and bodies form the EU framework: the European Parliament (represented by the Petitions Committee); the European Ombudsman; the European Commission; the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights; and the European Disability Forum, the main EU-level umbrella organisation of people with disabilities.

Since 2010 the Commission has also organised the Work Forum on the implementation of the CRPD in the EU, providing a platform for mutual learning and exchange of good practice between the governance mechanisms set up at national and EU level to implement and monitor the CRPD as well as civil society, organisations of persons with disabilities, EU institutions and relevant international bodies.

Furthermore the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000112/2013.

([1]) In addition to the EU, all Member States have signed the Convention and 24 among them have ratified it. Since 2008 the Commission, in cooperation with its Disability High Level Group has published an annual report on the implementation of the CRPD in the Member States and the EU. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/dhlg_5th_report_en.pdf

([2]) The Commission's Staff Working Paper Operational Guidance on taking account of Fundamental Rights in Commission Impacts Assessments, SEC(2011) 567final, explicitly requires the verification of compliance of Commission's initiatives with the CRPD. Furthermore, the internal Guidance for assessing Social Impacts within the Commission Impact Assessment system explicitly mentions persons with disabilities and helps assessing 'social impacts' on this particular group.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000119/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Prevencia kožného melanómu

Štvrtého decembra toho roku sa v priestoroch Európskeho parlamentu konal dobrovoľný bezplatný skríning kože. Nádory kože sú jednými z najčastejšie sa vyskytujúcich zo všetkých zhubných nádorov. Každý okamih, kedy sa človek vystavuje slnečnému žiareniu bez dostatočnej ochrany, môže viesť ku vzniku ochorenia. Výskyt nádorového ochorenia kože je častejší so stúpajúcim vekom, pričom celosvetový výskyt ročne stúpne približne o 4 % predovšetkým u osôb s bledšou farbou pokožky. A hoci v súčasnosti 7 z 10 prípadov pripadá na ľudí nad 60 rokov veku, výskyt rakoviny kože, žiaľ, stúpa aj u podstatne mladších.

Existujú dostupné opatrenia, ktorými Komisia bojuje proti nárastu počtu pacientov s rakovinou kože? Je v dohľadnej budúcnosti možné podniknúť kroky súvisiace s prevenciou a osvetou v rámci danej problematiky?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(5. marca 2013)

V Európskom kódexe proti rakovine ([1]) sa odporúča: „Nevystavujte sa nadmernému slnečnému žiareniu. Zvlášť dôležité je chrániť deti a mladistvých. Tí, ktorí majú sklon sa na slnku rýchlo spáliť, sa musia chrániť počas celého života."

V rámci programu v oblasti zdravia na roky 2007 – 2013 boli podporené dva projekty. V projekte EUROSUN (ktorý meria vystavenie jednotlivcov a obyvateľstva v Európe UV žiareniu prostredníctvom údajov z meteorologických satelitov) ([2]) sa vypracovali odkazy o prevencii prispôsobené pre každý členský štát, ako aj atlas ožiarenia UV lúčmi, ktorý bol vytvorený na základe mesačného spriemerovania denných hodnôt ožiarenia UVA a UVB lúčmi v európskych krajinách počas štyroch päťročných období. V rámci projektu EPIDERM (Európska iniciatíva na prevenciu zhubných nádorov kože) ([3]) sa zozbierali a v súčasnosti sa šíria vedomosti o jednotlivých druhoch rakoviny kože, pokiaľ ide o výskyt, rizikové faktory, liečbu a náklady, čo môže pomôcť formovať stratégie prevencie a odporúčania osvedčených postupov.

V rámci programu FP6 pre výskum Komisia okrem iného financovala projekt EUROSKIN (európska sieť na prevenciu rakoviny kože) zameraný na primárnu prevenciu u detí, európske certifikačné normy pre soláriá, epidermálne kmeňové bunky a karcinómy, ako aj na skríning rakoviny kože (identifikáciu vysoko rizikových skupín).

Plošné uplatnenie odporúčaní z týchto projektov v národných plánoch členských štátov pre boj proti rakovine by mohlo znížiť výskyt rakoviny kože, ako sa už ukázalo v iných častiach sveta (napr. v Austrálii).

([1]) http://www.cancercode.eu/
([2]) http://www.eurosun-project.org/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2007101

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000119/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Preventing skin melanomas

On 4 December 2012, a free and voluntary skin screening session took place in Parliament. Skin tumours are some of the most commonly occurring malignant tumours. Every moment spent exposed to the sun's rays without adequate protection could increase the risk of this disease occurring. The incidence of skin tumours becomes more common with increasing age, and worldwide incidence is increasing by 4% annually, mainly among people with paler skin. Although seven out of 10 cases currently occur among the over-sixties, the incidence of skin cancer is unfortunately increasing among people in much younger age groups.

What measures are available to the Commission to combat the increasing incidence of skin cancers? Will the Commission take steps in the foreseeable future with a view to raising awareness and helping to prevent skin cancer?

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

The European Code Against Cancer ([1]) recommends that 'Care must be taken to avoid excessive sun exposure. It is specifically important to protect children and adolescents. For individuals who have a tendency to burn in the sun, active protective measures must be taken throughout life'.

The Health Programme 2007-2013 has supported two projects. The project EUROSUN (Measuring the exposure of individuals and populations in Europe to UV radiation by using the data of meteorological satellites) ([2]), developed prevention messages adapted to each Member State, and an atlas of UV irradiation developed by averaging daily UVA and UVB irradiations per month during four 5-year periods in European countries. The project EPIDERM (European Prevention Initiative for Dermatological Malignancies) ([3]), gathered and disseminate knowledge on skin cancers relating to their occurrence, risk factors, treatments and costs, which can help shape prevention strategies and best practice recommendations.

In the framework of the FP6 Programme for Research, the Commission has also funded the project EUROSKIN (European network of skin cancer prevention) on primary prevention in children, on European certification standard for solaria, on Epidermal stem cells and carcinoma and on Screening of skin cancer (identification of high risk groups).

Widespread implementation of the recommendations of these projects in Member States' national Cancer Plans could lead to a reduction in skin cancers incidence, as it has been demonstrated in other parts of the world (e.g. Australia).

([1]) http://www.cancercode.eu/
([2]) http://www.eurosun-project.org/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2007101

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000120/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Proces rozširovania Európskej únie

Práve Európsky parlament je inštitúciou, ktorá sa azda najviac zasadzuje za proces rozširovania Európskej únie. Najbližšie sa novým, v poradí 28. členským štátom má stať Chorvátsko. Najneskôr do 1. júla 2013 však musí jeho prístupovú zmluvu ratifikovať kompletná európska dvadsať sedmička. Je opodstatnené podporiť myšlienku rozširovania Únie, zároveň však je rovnako potrebné upevňovať existujúce vzťahy medzi súčasnými členskými štátmi.

Vníma i Komisia rozširovanie a zvyšovanie počtu členských štátov Únie ako jednu z foriem úspešnej zahraničnej politiky? Aké úsilie zamýšľa vyvinúť predovšetkým na zaistenie a rešpektovanie práv jednotlivých etnických a náboženských menšín v rozrastajúcej sa Únii?

Odpoveď pána Füleho v mene Komisie
(20. februára 2013)

Komisia takisto vníma proces rozširovania, ktorého účelom je pripraviť krajiny, ktoré chcú pristúpiť k Európskej únii, na členstvo v nej, ako veľmi úspešný nástroj zahraničnej politiky. V čase, keď Európska únia čelí zásadným výzvam, proces rozširovania i naďalej prispieva k mieru, bezpečnosti a prosperite v Európe a umožňuje Európskej únii lepšie reagovať na globálne výzvy a sledovať svoje strategické záujmy. Vyhliadka na pristúpenie je v tých európskych krajinách, ktoré sa uchádzajú o členstvo v Európskej únii, hybnou silou politických a hospodárskych reforiem, transformácie spoločnosti a upevňovania právneho štátu a vytvára nové príležitosti pre občanov a podnikateľské subjekty. Proces rozširovania má teda transformačný a stabilizačný efekt, z ktorého má prospech nielen Európska únia, ale aj európske krajiny, ktoré k nej chcú pristúpiť.

Európska únia je odhodlaná chrániť ľudské práva vrátane náboženských práv občanov a práv osôb patriacich k menšinám. Každý človek má právo na slobodu myslenia, svedomia a náboženského vyznania, pričom akákoľvek diskriminácia, ku ktorej dochádza okrem iného na základe náboženského vyznania, rasového pôvodu alebo príslušnosti k národnostnej menšine, je zakázaná. Aby sa uvedené práva rešpektovali aj v rozširujúcej sa Európe, tieto zásady tvoria súčasť kritérií, ktoré musí krajina splniť, ak chce pristúpiť k Európskej únii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000120/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: EU enlargement

The European Parliament is perhaps the institution that is most in favour of the EU enlargement process. Croatia is set to become the 28th Member State in the near future. However, its accession agreement must be ratified by all 27 EU Member States by 1 July 2013. It is right to support further EU enlargement, but we must also consolidate the existing ties between current Member States.

Does the Commission also see enlargement and increasing the number of Member States as a form of successful foreign policy? How does it intend to strengthen the rights of ethnic and religious minorities in an expanding Europe and ensure that these rights are respected?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The Commission also sees the enlargement process, which aims at preparing aspirant countries for EU membership, as a very successful foreign policy instrument. At a time when the European Union faces major challenges, the enlargement process continues to contribute to peace, security and prosperity in Europe and allows the European Union to be better positioned to address global challenges and pursue its strategic interests. The prospect of accession drives political and economic reforms, transforming societies and consolidating the rule of law in those European countries aspiring to join the European Union, creating new opportunities for citizens and business. The enlargement process thus has a transformative and stabilising effect to the benefit of both the European Union and the European countries aspiring to join.

The European Union is committed to protecting human rights, including the religious rights of citizens, as well as the rights of persons belonging to minorities. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and any discrimination on grounds of, *inter alia*, religion, race or association with a national minority is prohibited. To ensure that these rights are also respected in an expanding Europe, these principles are part of the criteria that a country has to meet in order to join the European Union.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000121/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Škrtanie výdavkov na zdravotnú starostlivosť

Európska komisia a Organizácia pre hospodársku spoluprácu a rozvoj predložili správu, podľa ktorej za rok 2010 klesli výdavky na zdravotníctvo približne o 0,6 %. Ide o historicky prvý pokles na celoeurópskej úrovni za posledné desaťročia. Škrtanie výdavkov na zdravotnú starostlivosť však vážnym spôsobom ohrozuje obyvateľov Európskej unie a má ďalekosiahle dôsledky. Navyše škrtanie výdavkov nerieši zlú hospodársku situáciu v Únii a výrazným spôsobom zhoršuje sociálnu krízu.

Aké kroky je Komisia pripravená podniknúť, aby k znižovaniu financií na zdravotnú starostlivosť nedochádzalo?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(25. februára 2013)

Komisia si je plne vedomá zistenia v správe Zdravie v skratke – Európa 2012 ([1]), že „v priemere sa v rámci EÚ výdavky na zdravotnú starostlivosť na obyvateľa zvýšili o 4,6 % ročne v reálnom vyjadrení v rokoch 2000 až 2009, po čom v roku 2010 nasledoval pokles o 0,6 %.“ V rámci EÚ predstavujú verejné výdavky asi 80 % výdavkov na zdravotnú starostlivosť na obyvateľa.

Hospodárska situácia skutočne vedie niektoré členské štáty k zníženiu nákladov na zdravotnú starostlivosť. Je zrejmé, že takéto zníženie rozpočtu by v ideálnom prípade malo byť podporené zvýšením efektívnosti s cieľom zabezpečiť pacientom neustály prístup k zdravotnej starostlivosti.

Ako Komisia uviedla v ročnom prieskume rastu 2013 ([2]), na zabezpečenie nákladovej účinnosti a udržateľnosti by sa mali prijať reformy systémov zdravotnej starostlivosti, pričom by sa malo posúdiť fungovanie týchto systémov z hľadiska dvojitého cieľa účinnejšieho využívania verejných zdrojov a prístupu ku kvalitnej zdravotnej starostlivosti. To sa odráža aj v odporúčaniach pre jednotlivé krajiny, ktoré sa zaoberajú reformou systému zdravotnej starostlivosti v rámci európskeho semestra.

V dôsledku toho Komisia podporuje všetky opatrenia členských štátov podporujúce účinnejšie využívanie verejných zdrojov, ako aj prístup ku kvalitnej zdravotnej starostlivosti.

([1]) Pozri http://www.oecd.org/els/healthpoliciesanddata/HealthAtAGlanceEurope2012.pdf
([2]) Pozri http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_sk.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000121/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Cutting healthcare expenditure

The Commission and the OECD have released a report which shows that expenditure on healthcare fell by approximately 0.6% in 2010. This is the first time that such a fall has been noted throughout Europe in the last decade. Cutting healthcare expenditure entails significant risks for EU citizens and has far-reaching consequences. Furthermore, cutting healthcare expenditure will not resolve the EU's economic difficulties; rather, it will merely serve to aggravate the social crisis.

What action is the Commission prepared to take to prevent cuts to healthcare expenditure from taking place?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the finding in the Health at a Glance Europe 2012 report ([1]) that 'on average across the EU, health spending per capita increased by 4.6% per year in real terms between 2000 and 2009, followed by a fall of 0.6% in 2010.' Within the EU, public expenditure accounts for some 80% of health spending per capita.

The economic situation is indeed leading some Member States to reduce spending on healthcare. It is evident that such budget reductions should ideally be underpinned by efficiency gains in order to ensure continued patient access to healthcare.

As communicated by the Commission in the Annual Growth Survey 2013 ([2]) reforms of healthcare systems should be undertaken to ensure cost-effectiveness and sustainability, assessing the performance of these systems against the twin aim of a more efficient use of public resources and access to high quality healthcare. This is also reflected in those country-specific recommendations that address healthcare system reform within the frame of the European Semester.

Consequently, the Commission supports all measures by Member States fostering a more efficient use of public resources as well as access to high quality healthcare.

([1]) See http://www.oecd.org/els/healthpoliciesanddata/HealthAtAGlanceEurope2012.pdf
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000122/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Škrty v oblasti vedy

V polovici novembra predseda Európskej rady Herman Van Rompuy predložil návrh rozpočtu pre podporu konkurencieschopnosti vo výške 139,5 mld. EUR. V prvotnom návrhu Komisie bolo len na samotný program Horizont 2020 vyčlenených 80 mld. EUR. So škrtmi financií v tejto oblasti sú akademici nespokojní. Argumentujú, že škrty v oblasti vedy môžu mať rozsiahly vplyv na ekonomický rast. Práve v období, keď jednou z politických priorít by mal byť návrat k rastu, svoje opodstatnenie a patričný význam má ponechanie resp. nezničovanie finančných investícii do vedy a výskumu.

Aký názor zastáva Komisia v otázke krátenia rozpočtu pre oblasť vedy a výskumu? Plánuje podniknúť potrebné kroky a dôraznejšie zasiahnuť proti škrtom, ktoré by sa mohli negatívne dotknúť práve i programu Horizont 2020?

Odpoveď pani Geogheganovej-Quinnovej v mene Komisie
(11. februára 2013)

Komisia si dovoľuje odporučiť do pozornosti váženej pani poslankyne odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-9836/12, ktorú predložil pán Romeva i Rueda ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000122/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Cuts in the area of science

In mid-November 2012, the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, unveiled a draft budget to support competitiveness amounting to EUR 139.5 billion. In the original Commission draft, EUR 80 billion was allocated to the Horizon 2020 programme alone. Academics are becoming concerned by the cuts in funding in this area. They argue that cuts in the area of science may have a significant impact of economic growth. At a time when returning to growth is supposed to be one of our political priorities, it is vitally important that investment in science and research is maintained, not reduced.

What is the Commission's view on budget cuts for science and research?

Does it plan to take the necessary steps and fight against cuts that could have a negative impact on even the Horizon 2020 programme?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E/9836/12 by Mr Romeva i Rueda ([1]).

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000123/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Snaha o konsenzus v otázke bankového dohľadu

Európska únia sa borí s dohodou o detailoch v otázke budúcej spoločnej bankovej únie. Predovšetkým je dôležité nájsť kompromis s Londýnom. Británia sa totiž pokúša presadiť návrh, aby sa pred akýmkoľvek konečným rozhodnutím hlasovalo dva razy; raz by hlasovali štáty v bankovej únii a raz štáty mimo nej. V každom prípade je v problematike bankového dohľadu potrebné a dôležité nájsť spoločnú reč. Tri roky boli na rôznych úrovniach prijímané čiastkové opatrenia a rozhodnutia. Samotná dohoda o spoločnej bankovej únii je po uvedenom trojročnom období vôbec prvým komplexným pokusom o integráciu eurozóny. Zároveň je tiež akýmsi východiskovým bodom pre širšiu ekonomickú úniu.

Akým spôsobom, resp. podniknutím akých konkrétnych krokov by Komisia mohla byť nápomocná a pričiniť sa o dosiahnutie zhody v otázke spoločnej bankovej únie?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(1. marca 2013)

Dňa 12. septembra 2012 Komisia prijala súbor dvoch návrhov, z ktorých sa prvý týka vytvorenia jednotného mechanizmu dohľadu pre banky pod vedením Európskej centrálnej banky (ECB) a druhým sa mení a dopĺňa nariadenia o Európskom orgáne pre bankovníctvo s cieľom upraviť jeho spôsoby hlasovania v súvislosti s určením ECB ako nového jednotného orgánu dohľadu. Jednotný mechanizmus dohľadu je prvým krokom smerom k bankovej únii a predpokladom pre priamu rekapitalizáciu bánk prostredníctvom EMS a tak prispeje k ukončeniu negatívnej cyklickej spätnej väzby medzi bankami a štátmi.

Bola dosiahnutá jednomyseľná dohoda o legislatívnych návrhoch, ktoré predložila Rada ECOFIN 13. decembra 2012. Trojstranné rokovania sa začali 18. decembra 2012 a intenzívne pokračovali aj počas januára, aby sa vo februári roku 2013 dosiahla konečná dohoda.

Znenie nariadenia o Európskom orgáne pre bankovníctvo navrhované Radou zachováva úlohu Európskeho orgánu pre bankovníctvo, ktorý bude pokračovať v rozvíjaní jednotného súboru pravidiel platných pre všetkých 27 členských štátov. Ako už spomenula vážená pani poslankyňa, pre členské štáty mimo eurozóny budú existovať záruky prostredníctvom požiadavky tzv. hlasovania dvojitou väčšinou, čím sa zabezpečí, že rozhodnutia budú kryté väčšinou zo zúčastnených a zároveň aj väčšinou z nezúčastnených členských štátov.

Vzhľadom na svoju sprostredkovateľskú úlohu sa Komisia aktívne zapája do trojstranných rokovaní o jednotnom mechanizme dohľadu s cieľom dosiahnuť dohodu čo najskôr. Systém jednotného mechanizmu dohľadu by mali byť zavedený do 1. marca 2014. Po dohode o zostávajúcich návrhoch týkajúcich sa požiadaviek na bankový kapitál (CRR/CRD IV) a reštrukturalizácie bánk a riešenia krízových situácií plánuje Komisia ako ďalší krok predložiť návrh na jednotný mechanizmus riešenia krízových situácií s cieľom účinne zvládať cezhraničné riešenie krízovej situácie bánk, aby sa zabránilo najmä finančným injekciám z verejných prostriedkov do bánk v ťažkostiach.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000123/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Attempts to reach a consensus on banking supervision

The EU is struggling to reach an agreement on the details of a future banking union. Above all, a compromise has to be found with London. The UK is attempting to push forward a proposal which stipulates that two votes should take place before any final decision is reached; one vote would involve states inside the banking union, and the other would involve states outside the banking union. In any case, it is vitally important that we find a common ground on the issue of banking supervision. For three years, piecemeal measures and decisions have been adopted at various levels. The agreement on a banking union is the first comprehensive attempt in those three years at integrating the eurozone. It is also a starting point for the wider EU economy.

In what way can the Commission play a role in helping to promote a consensus on the banking union (e.g., by taking specific measures)?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

On 12 September 2012 the Commission adopted a set of two proposals, one concerning the establishment of a Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) for banks led by the European Central Bank (ECB) and a second one amending the EBA regulation to adjust its voting modalities to the emergence of the ECB as this new single supervisor. The SSM is a first step towards a banking union and a pre-condition for direct recapitalisation of banks by the ESM and will thus contribute to putting an end to the negative feedback loops between banks and sovereigns.

Unanimous agreement was reached on the legislative proposals by the Ecofin Council on 13 December 2012. Trilogues started on 18 December 2012 and have continued intensively throughout January in order to reach a final agreement in February 2013.

The Council text on the EBA Regulation preserves the role of EBA which will continue developing the single rulebook applicable to all 27 Member States. As mentioned by the Honourable Member, there will be safeguards for non-eurozone Member States by means of double majority voting requirements, which ensure that decisions are backed by both a majority of the participating and the non-participating Member States.

In its role as a facilitator the Commission is actively involved in the trilogue negotiations on the SSM in order to reach an agreement as soon as possible. The SSM should be in place by 1 March 2014. After agreement on the pending proposals on bank capital requirements (CRR/CRD IV) and banking restructuring and resolution, as a next step the Commission envisages making a proposal for a Single Resolution Mechanism to deal efficiently with cross-border bank resolution to avoid in particular the injection of public money into banks in difficulty.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000124/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Stúpajúci počet stimulačných drog

Európske monitorovacie centrum pre drogy a drogovú závislosť predložilo v uplynulých dňoch správu, podľa ktorej prudko narastá počet najmä mladších užívateľov tzv. stimulačných drog. Do popredia sa dostávajú práve tieto nekontrolované psychotropné látky takého zloženia, ktoré napodobňuje resp. supluje účinky drog kontrolovaných. Chemické zloženie týchto stimulačných látok je však pozmenené a de facto tak nespadá pod žiadny z existujúcich kontrolných mechanizmov.

Pre pretrvávajúcu krízu viaceré členské štáty nedisponujú potrebným financiami, aby neľahkú situáciu mohli vhodným a efektívnym spôsobom riešiť. Je možné v dohľadnej dobe počítať so snahou Komisie aplikovať také opatrenia, ktoré by mohli napomôcť na jednej strane znížiť dopyt po drogách a na druhej strane obmedziť ich ponuku a dostupnosť? Neuvažuje Komisia zamerať sa na lepšiu koordináciu existujúcej protidrogovej politiky?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(4. marca 2013)

Komisia si je vedomá nárastu vo výskyte nových psychoaktívnych látok v rámci Európskej únie, ako aj ich zvyšujúcej sa popularity u mladých užívateľov drog.

V oznámení „Ráznejšia európska reakcia na drogovú problematiku“ ([1]) predstavila Komisia plánované iniciatívy zamerané na riešenie drogovej problematiky a konkrétne výzvy súvisiace s rýchlo sa meniacim trhom s novými psychoaktívnymi látkami.

Hodnotenie rozhodnutia Rady 2005/387/SVV ([2]) o kontrole nových psychoaktívnych látok ukázalo, že tento nástroj nepostačuje na riešenie otázky rýchleho vzniku a šírenia sa nových psychoaktívnych látok, ktoré sú často predávané ako legálne alternatívy ku kontrolovaným látkam, ktorých riziká sú ale neznáme.

Vzhľadom na to plánuje Komisia predstaviť legislatívny návrh na posilnenie reakcie EÚ v prípade nových psychoaktívnych látok prostredníctvom väčšieho monitorovania a posudzovania rizík nových psychoaktívnych látok a rýchlejšej a efektívnejšej reakcie na ich nový výskyt.

Riešenie problematiky ponuky drog a dopytu po drogách s rovnakým nasadením a integrovaným spôsobom je kľúčovým prvkom Protidrogovej stratégie EÚ (2013 – 2020). Komisia sa zaviazala k podpore boja proti nelegálnemu pašovaniu drog a k zníženiu dostupnosti zakázaných drog v EÚ. Komisia bude pokračovať v podpore aktivít členských štátov pri ich reakcii na nelegálne pašovanie drog, a to aj prostredníctvom financovania projektov cezhraničnej spolupráce v rámci finančných programov EÚ.

([1]) KOM(2011) 689, 25.10.2011.
([2]) Rozhodnutie Rady 2005/387/SVV z 10. mája 2005 o výmene informácií, hodnotení rizika a kontrole nových psychoaktívnych látok, Ú. v. EÚ L 127, 20.5.2005, s. 32 – 37.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000124/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Increasing number of stimulant drugs

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Addiction has just published a report which states that the number of users of stimulants is sharply rising, especially among younger drug users. What stands out is the use of legal psychotropic substances that have similar effects to controlled drugs. The chemical compositions of those stimulants are, however, altered. As a result, they are not subject to any existing control mechanisms.

Owing to the ongoing crisis, a number of Member States do not have the financial resources to resolve this difficult situation in an appropriate and effective manner.

Can we expect the Commission to take action in the near future to help reduce demand for drugs on the one hand, and to limit their supply and availability on the other?

Does the Commission intend to focus on better coordinating the existing anti-drugs policy?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

The Commission is aware of the increasing emergence in the EU of new psychoactive substances and of their rising popularity among young drug users.

In the communication 'Towards a stronger EU response to drugs' ([1]), the Commission announced the foreseen initiatives to address the drugs problem and specifically the challenge posed by the fast-changing market on new psychoactive substances.

The evaluation of the Council Decision 2005/387/JHA ([2]) on new psychoactive substances has shown that the instrument is inadequate for addressing the rapid emergence and spread of new psychoactive substances, which are often marketed as legal alternatives to controlled substances but whose risks are widely unknown.

Therefore, the Commission is planning to present a legislative proposal to strengthen the EU response to new psychoactive substances, through enhanced monitoring and risk assessment of new psychoactive substances, and swifter and more effective answers to their emergence.

Addressing drug supply and drug demand with equal vigour and in an integrated fashion is a key element of the EU Drugs Strategy (2013-2020). The Commission is strongly committed to supporting the fight against illicit drug trafficking and to reducing the availability of illicit drugs in the EU. The Commission will continue supporting Member States' action in addressing illicit drug trafficking, including through the funding of cross-border cooperation projects, under EU financial programmes.

([1]) COM(2011) 689, 25.10.2011.
([2]) Council Decision 2005/387/JHA of 10 May 2005 on the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances, OJ L 127, 20.5.2005, pp 32-37.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000125/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Svetový deň AIDS

Prvého decembra 2012 si pripomíname Svetový deň AIDS. Jeho cieľom a hlavným zmyslom je predovšetkým apelovať na zvýšenie informovanosti o tomto zákernom ochorení a poukázať na problémy, ktoré s ním súvisia. V súčasnosti vo svete žije 33,3 milióna ľudí nakazených vírusom HIV. Vyše 25 miliónov ľudí danému ochoreniu podľahlo v priebehu ostatných pätnástich rokov. Je prinajmenšom smutné, že infikovaní ľudia sú často stigmatizovaní a diskriminovaní. Nezriedka sú vyčleňovaní zo spoločnosti. Je dôležité podniknúť vhodné kroky, aby sa takýmto neprávostiam zabránilo. Zároveň, musíme informovať širokú verejnosť o možnostiach ochrany, nebezpečenstve a spôsoboch nákazy a rovnako o možnostiach liečby, ktorá je celosvetovo dostupná. Je opodstatnené venovať pozornosť prítomnosti tohto ochorenia a problematike, ktorá s ním súvisí.

Prijala Komisia opatrenia viažuce sa k prevencii a snahám predchádzať samotnému vzniku ochorenia? Akým spôsobom je ošetrená ochrana práv už infikovaných osôb, aby nedochádzalo k ich diskriminácii?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(12. februára 2013)

Oznámenie Komisie o boji proti HIV/AIDS v EÚ a v susedných krajinách a s ním súvisiaci akčný plán ustanovujú politický rámec pre reakciu EÚ na problém HIV/AIDS ([1]). Politika Únie sa zameriava na účinnú prevenciu a činnosti v rámci prioritných skupín a zaoberá sa potrebou boja proti diskriminácii ľudí žijúcich s HIV/AIDS. V oznámení sa uvádza, že najlepšou reakciou na túto epidémiu je a naďalej kombinácia špecifických zdravotných zásahov a širších sociálnych zásahov. Komisia podporuje niekoľko projektov týkajúcich sa HIV/AIDS prostredníctvom programu v oblasti zdravia.

V súlade so Zmluvou o fungovaní Európskej únie majú členské štáty zodpovednosť za vymedzenie ich zdravotnej politiky, za organizáciu a poskytovanie zdravotníckych služieb a zdravotnej starostlivosti. Z tohto dôvodu je činnosť Európskej komisie zacielená na podporu členských štátov v ich úsilí.

Komisia organizuje v spolupráci s UNAIDS konferenciu o HIV/AIDS naplánovanú na 27. – 28. mája tohto roku, na ktorej sa bude okrem iného diskutovať aj tom, ako skoncovať s diskrimináciou.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/aids/docs/com2009_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000125/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: World AIDS Day

On 1 December 2012 we mark World AIDS Day. The main purpose of this day is to call for increased awareness of this pernicious disease and to shed light on the issues associated with it. There are currently 33.3 million people who are infected with the HIV virus globally, and more than 25 million people have died as a result of AIDS in the past 15 years. It is sad that those infected are often stigmatised and discriminated against. They are often ostracised from their communities. It is vital that we take appropriate measures to prevent such injustices from occurring. We must also ensure that the general public is aware of prevention methods, risks and infection pathways, as well as the treatment options that are available worldwide. I firmly believe that we should focus our attention on this disease and related issues.

Has the Commission adopted measures to prevent people from being infected by this disease?

How does the Commission protect the rights of those already infected, with a view to ensuring that they do not suffer from discrimination?

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

The Commission communication on 'combating HIV/AIDS in the EU and neighbouring countries' and its accompanying action plan ([1]) set the policy framework for the EU response to HIV/AIDS. This policy focuses on effective prevention, activities in priority groups and addresses the need to fight discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS. It states that the 'best response to the epidemic remains a combination of health specific and wider social interventions' and that 'any form of HIV/AIDS-related discrimination and stigmatisation is unacceptable'. The Commission has been supporting a number of projects on HIV/AIDS through the Health Programme.

In accordance with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Member States are responsible for the definition of their health policy and the delivery of health services and medical care. This is why the European Commission action is aimed at supporting Member States in their efforts.

The Commission is organising, together with UNAIDS, a Conference on HIV/AIDS on 27-28 May this year which will discuss, amongst other issues, how to end discrimination.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/aids/docs/com2009_en.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000126/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Otázka ťažby bridlicového plynu

Ťažba bridlicového plynu môže mať významný vplyv na dynamiku a ceny na trhu so zemným plynom, ako aj na výrobu elektrickej energie. Bridlicovému plynu sa pripisuje predovšetkým strategický význam, nakoľko by mohol Európe pomôcť znížiť jej závislosť na importe z Ruska. Hoci jeho ťažba môže mať i negatívny dopad na životné prostredie, produkuje oxid uhličitý v menšej miere ako uhlie. Je dôležité monitorovať regulačné režimy a postupy vo svete. Komisia a príslušné vnútroštátne orgány by mali naďalej skúmať potenciálny vplyv na životné prostredie a verejnosti poskytovať informácie založené na overených vedeckých údajoch, zachovajúc maximálnu transparentnosť.

Vrchní predstavitelia Európskej komisie sa nechali počuť, že súčasná legislatíva Únie v oblasti prieskumov ložísk, vydávania licencií na ťažbu a samotnej produkcie bridlicového plynu je dostačujúca. S týmto tvrdením však nemalá časť europoslancov nesúhlasí. Nedomnieva sa Komisia, že je potrebné a opodstatnené starostlivo zvážiť všetky prínosy a riziká v súvislosti s ťažbou bridlicového plynu? Ako sa chce pričiniť o elimináciu neraz zámerného zamlčovania skutočností ku ktorému aktuálne dochádza vo verejnej diskusii v oblasti danej problematiky?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(26. februára 2013)

Komisia súhlasí, že je potrebné zvážiť všetky riziká a prínosy súvisiace s ťažbou bridlicového plynu.

Bez toho, aby vyjadrila svoje stanovisko k súčasným diskusiám o bridlicovom plyne, Komisia zreteľne oznamuje skutočnosti, ako aj náš politický prístup k bridlicového plynu, ktorý sa zameriava na tri hlavné aspekty:

— potenciálne vplyvy na trh s energiou v EÚ;

— klimatický vplyv potenciálnej nekonvenčnej výroby plynu v EÚ;

— potenciálne riziká pre životné prostredie a ľudské zdravie.

Dňa 7. septembra 2012 Komisia zverejnila štúdie venované všetkým trom otázkam ([1]). Komisia sa bude aj naďalej zaoberať príslušnými rizikami a prínosmi v kontexte tohtoročnej iniciatívy s cieľom vytvoriť rámec environmentálneho hodnotenia v oblasti klímy a energetiky umožňujúci bezpečnú a zabezpečenú nekonvenčnú ťažbu uhľovodíkov. Verejná konzultácia so zainteresovanými stranami, ktorá potrvá až do 23. marca 2013 ([2]), je súčasťou tejto činnosti.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/studies/energy_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/batteries_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000126/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Shale gas extraction

The extraction of shale gas could have a major impact on the dynamic of the natural gas market, on prices, and on electricity generation. Shale gas has been ascribed a significant strategic role, as it could help Europe to reduce its dependence on energy imports from Russia. Although shale gas extraction may have a negative environmental impact, it produces less carbon dioxide than coal. It is important to monitor regulatory regimes and practices globally. The Commission and the relevant national authorities should conduct further research on the possible impact of shale gas extraction on the environment and provide the public with information based on verified scientific data, all while maintaining the maximum levels of transparency.

High representatives of the Commission have stated that the EU's current laws on exploration, on the granting of extraction licences and on the production of shale gas itself are adequate. However, a significant number of MEPs would disagree with this assertion.

Does the Commission not think that it is valid and necessary to weigh up all the risks and benefits associated with shale gas extraction?

How does it intend to put a stop to the often deliberate distortions of facts heard in the public debate on shale gas extraction?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The Commission agrees that it is necessary to weigh up all the risks and benefits associated with shale gas extraction.

Without expressing an opinion on the current debate on shale gas, the Commission is clearly communicating facts as well as our policy approach towards shale gas, which focuses on three main aspects:

— Potential energy market impacts in the EU;

— Climate impact of potential unconventional gas production in the EU;

— Potential risks for the environment and human health.

On 7 September 2012 the Commission published studies on all three issues ([1]). Relevant risks and benefits will be further looked at by the Commission in the context of its 2013 initiative, aiming at an environmental, climate and energy assessment framework to enable safe and secure unconventional hydrocarbon extraction. A public stakeholder consultation which is open until 23 March 2013 ([2]) is part of this work.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/studies/energy_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/uff_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000127/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Transparentnosť tieňového bankovníctva

Tieňové bankovníctvo sa vykonáva prostredníctvom subjektov alebo finančných zmlúv, ktoré vytvárajú kombináciu funkcií podobných funkciám bánk, avšak mimo regulačného rámca alebo v rámci regulačného režimu, ktorý je buď nedostatočne prísny alebo rieši iné otázky než systémové riziká. Počas krízy banky vážne postihovalo nielen celkové narušenie trhu, ale aj ich vystavenie tieňovému bankovému systému. Prijali sa rozličné opatrenia, ktorých cieľom je riešiť systémové riziká spôsobené tieňovým bankovníctvom. Inovačný charakter tieňového bankového systému však môže viesť k novému vývoju, ktorý môže byť zdrojom systémového rizika, ktoré je potrebné a nevyhnutné riešiť. V záujme primeraného riešenia tejto otázky by sa mali využiť také spôsoby monitorovania, ktoré by poskytli konkrétny prehľad o systéme sprostredkovávania úverov ako takom.

Môže sa Komisia zasadiť za podporu iniciatívy monitorovať systém tieňového bankovníctva? Akými konkrétnymi krokmi vie riešiť systémové riziká tieňového bankovníctva?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(1. marca 2013)

Oblasť tieňového bankovníctva predstavuje jednu z priorít finančnej reformy Komisie. Po uverejnení svojej zelenej knihy Komisia získala silnú podporu pre konanie najmä z Európskeho parlamentu (správa El Khadraoui).

Finančnou reformou Komisie sa už riešili niektoré riziká, ktoré predstavuje tieňové bankovníctvo. Okrem iného:

— prijatím smernice EÚ o správcoch alternatívnych investičných fondov (AIFM) sa zavedú minimálne štandardy pre správcov fondov vrátane zaisťovacích fondov,

— nariadenie o bankovom sektore (CRD2, CRD3 a pripravované CRD4) bolo posilnené a budú sa môcť lepšie zachytiť riziká spojené s expozíciou tieňovému bankovníctvu,

— pokiaľ ide o sekuritizačné transakcie, od implementácie CRD2 boli zavedené požiadavky na presun rizika. Predpokladá sa zahrnutie ďalších opatrení do iných odvetvových smerníc (AIFM, Solventnosť 2, PKIPCP).

Komisia identifikovala aj iné oblasti, na ktorých je potrebné ďalej pracovať, a preto v súčasnosti pripravuje nové legislatívne návrhy. Ich úlohou bude najmä posilnenie nariadenia týkajúceho sa fondov peňažného trhu a vytvorenie nového právneho rámca v oblasti cenných papierov s cieľom riešiť riziká spojené s repo transakciami a požičiavaním cenných papierov. Komisia podrobnejšie objasní svoj plán neskôr v tomto semestri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000127/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Transparency of the shadow banking system

The shadow banking system is facilitated by entities or financial contracts that perform functions similar to those performed by banks, but which are either outside the regulatory framework or covered by a regulatory regime that is insufficiently precise or that is not intended to deal with issues of systemic risk. During the crisis the banks suffered significantly, not only as a result of the total collapse of the market, but also because they were left to the mercies of the shadow banking system. A variety of measures have been adopted in order to tackle the systemic risk caused by the shadow banking system. The innovative character of this system means that a new development could occur that would create systemic risk. This issue must be addressed. In order to resolve this problem in an appropriate manner, we should take advantage of monitoring tools that would give us a clear insight into the credit intermediation system.

Will the Commission give its backing to initiatives to monitor the shadow banking system? What specific actions will the Commission take to address the issue of systemic risk in the shadow banking system?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The shadow banking area constitutes a priority of the Commission financial reform. Following the publication of its Green Paper, the Commission has received a strong support to act in particular from the European Parliament (the El Khadraoui report).

The Commission financial reform already addressed some of the risks posed by the shadow banking. Among others:

— The adoption of the EU Directive on Alternative Investment Fund Managers (AIFMD) will introduce minimum standards for fund managers including hedge funds.

— The banking sector regulation (CRD2, CRD3 and the forthcoming CRD4) has been strengthened and will better capture the risks linked to its exposures to the shadow banking.

— Looking at securitisation transactions, risk retention requirements have been in place since the CRD2 implementation. Further alignments are foreseen in the other sectoral directives (AIFM, Solvency 2, UCITS).

The Commission has also identified other areas where additional works are needed and is therefore currently working on new legislative proposals. They will notably strengthen the regulation of money market funds and establish a new securities law framework with a view to address risks associated with repo and securities lending transactions. Later in the semester, the Commission will further detail its roadmap.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000128/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. januára 2013)

Vec: Únia proti praniu špinavých peňazí

Ani smernice EÚ, ani rôzne odporúčania na medzinárodnej úrovni sa, žiaľ, nejavia ako dostatočné v boji proti praniu špinavých peňazí. Neraz s použitím nových moderných technológií sa zločinci vyhnú stanoveným postihom a sankciám. Tieto nekalé finančné praktiky môžu mať rôznu podobu, pričom zároveň táto forma organizovaného zločinu je podporovaná nejednotnými pravidlami na úrovni Európskej únie ako celku.

Práve zjednotenie a harmonizácia roztrieštenej legislatívy odlišnej v jednotlivých členských štátoch a väčšia spolupráca – to všetko by mohlo výrazne napomôcť v boji proti tomuto druhu kriminality, v boji proti daňovým rajom a pod. Ako chce Komisia prispieť k efektívnemu riešeniu danej problematiky?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(28. februára 2013)

Komisia súhlasí s názorom váženej pani poslankyne, že je potrebné posilniť našu kolektívnu reakciu v boji proti praniu špinavých peňazí s cieľom zabrániť zločincom v obchádzaní pravidiel.

Pranie špinavých peňazí je medzinárodný problém, ktorý si vyžaduje globálnu reakciu. Spolupráca v tejto oblasti sa uskutočňuje v rámci Finančnej akčnej skupiny (FATF), ktorá vo februári 2012 schválila nové normy na sprísnenie existujúcich pravidiel a na zabezpečenie ich účinného uplatňovania.

Na úrovni EÚ sú právne predpisy proti praniu špinavých peňazí v platnosti od roku 1991. Komisia prijala 5. februára nový návrh štvrtej smernice o boji proti praniu špinavých peňazí s cieľom posilniť účinnosť boja proti praniu špinavých peňazí a financovaniu terorizmu a zabezpečiť, aby EÚ prijala koordinovanú reakciu. V súlade s medzinárodným prístupom sa väčší dôraz kladie na to, aby povinné subjekty správne porozumeli rizikám a zmierňovali ich, zatiaľ čo úlohou európskych orgánov pre dohľad je poskytovať usmernenia s cieľom zabezpečiť konzistentnosť prístupov v celej EÚ. Komisia tiež navrhuje rozšíriť rozsah uplatňovania pravidiel, aby sa zahrnuli všetky formy hazardných hier, keďže tieto boli identifikované ako riziková oblasť, pokiaľ ide o pranie špinavých peňazí.

Otázkou daňových rajov sa zaoberá iniciatíva Komisie zo 6. decembra 2012 s názvom Akčný plán na posilnenie boja proti daňovým podvodom a daňovým únikom ([1]), ako aj dve odporúčania týkajúce sa agresívneho daňového plánovania a opatrení, ktorých cieľom je podporovať tretie krajiny, aby uplatňovali minimálne normy dobrej správy v daňových záležitostiach ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012) 722.
([2]) C(2012) 8806; C(2012) 8805.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000128/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: EU against money laundering

It is with regret that I note that neither EU directives, nor the various international guidelines, have been effective in the fight against money laundering. Often criminals are able to evade legal sanctions and penalties through the use of modern technology. Their dubious financial practices may take a variety of forms, but the organised crime of money laundering is being supported by the lack of consistent rules at EU level.

It is by harmonising the fragmented and divergent laws of Member States and by cooperating more closely that we shall be able to strike a significant blow against this form of criminality and against, *inter alia*, tax havens. How does the Commission intend to play a part in resolving this problem effectively?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that there is a need to strengthen our collective response in the fight against money laundering in order to prevent criminals from circumventing the rules.

Money laundering is an international problem which requires a global response. Cooperation on this issue has taken place within the framework of the Financial Action Task Force, which in February 2012 agreed new standards designed to tighten existing rules and ensure their more effective application.

At the EU level, legislation against Money laundering has been in force since 1991. The Commission has adopted on 5 February a new proposal for a fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive to reinforce the efficacy of the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing and ensure that the EU adopts a coordinated response. In line with the international approach, greater emphasis is placed on obliged entities correctly understanding and mitigating their risks, while European Supervisory Authorities are tasked with providing guidance with a view to ensuring consistent approaches across the EU. The Commission also proposes to broaden the scope of application of the rules to include all forms of gambling, as this has been identified as an area of risk in terms of money laundering.

The issue of tax havens is addressed by the Commission initiative of 6 December 2012: an Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion ([1]) together with two recommendations on aggressive tax planning and regarding measures intended to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012)722.
([2]) C(2012)8806; C(2012)8805.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000129/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Zonas de la red Natura 2000 afectadas por el proyecto «Trabajos de sísmica 3D en Casablanca» (Tarragona, España)

Actualmente se encuentra en trámite la evaluación de impacto ambiental del proyecto «Trabajos de sísmica 3D en Casablanca» (Tarragona), y estos trabajos tienen por objeto comprobar la posibilidad de que existan nuevos yacimientos de hidrocarburos en una zona que engloba los campos de Montanazo, Lubina y Casablanca. Estas operaciones se están desarrollando en una época en la que la lucha contra el cambio climático es una prioridad política para la Unión Europea y cuando es evidente que las alteraciones del sistema climático tienen su origen en actividades humanas (principalmente, el uso de combustibles fósiles), en un contexto de consumo acelerado de combustibles fósiles y alta dependencia energética exterior.

Según el informe EIA y la evaluación del impacto acústico, la zona de actuación está próxima a los siguientes espacios naturales protegidos de la red Natura 2000: Delta de l'Ebre, Litoral Tarragoní, Sèquia Major, Costes del Tarragonés, Costes del Garraf, Grapissar de la Masia Blanca, sierra de Irta, la Marjal de Peñíscola e islas Columbretes, y también afecta a un 5 % de la propuesta de ZEP «Corredor de migración de cetáceos», sin que se aprecien medidas correctoras suficientes.

La realización de estudios sísmicos dentro del corredor de migración de cetáceos y en las proximidades de espacios protegidos, a menos de 12 km del parque natural Delta de l'Ebre, pondrán en peligro especies protegidas por Natura 2000 y ZEP. La propuesta de vigilancia ambiental de tortugas marinas y cetáceos para su avistamiento en un radio de 500 metros a partir de la fuente no garantiza la protección de estas especies, ya que se han observado impactos en el comportamiento a más de 2 o 3 km de distancia, lo que puede afectar al equilibrio de las poblaciones, especialmente en zonas de migración.

Además, los estudios del EIA están basados en modelos que pueden subestimar las condiciones reales, como se ha demostrado ya en un estudio realizado en Nueva Escocia (McQuinn and Carrier, 2005). Según este estudio, los científicos encontraron que los niveles reales de la intensidad sonora producida por las prospecciones sísmicas en la zona eran 10 dB (valor medio) mas altos que los reales, lo que supone que a una distancia de 800 metros los cetáceos estarían expuestos a 180 dB, que es el límite máximo del umbral de seguridad para los daños físicos.

En vista de lo expuesto, ¿qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión no dispone de información detallada sobre el proyecto «Trabajos de sísmica 3D en Casablanca» (Tarragona). De acuerdo con los datos facilitados por Su Señoría, este proyecto está actualmente siendo objeto de una evaluación de impacto ambiental. Por consiguiente, las autoridades competentes no han adoptado aún una decisión definitiva al respecto. Puesto que los procedimientos siguen en curso, no es posible detectar ninguna infracción de la legislación medioambiental de la UE y la Comisión no ve motivos para adoptar medidas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000129/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Natura 2000 areas in Tarragona, Spain, affected by the planned '3D seismic survey at the Casablanca oil rig'

The proposed 3D seismic survey at the Casablanca oil rig (Tarragona) is currently undergoing an environmental impact assessment (EIA); the aim of the project is to determine whether there are new hydrocarbon deposits in the area covered by the Montanazo, Lubina and Casablanca oil fields. This work is being carried out at a time when the fight against climate change is a political priority for the European Union and when it is clear that changes in the world's climate system are a result of human actions, mainly, our use of fossil fuels, and against a backdrop of a rapid increase in the consumption of fossil fuels and high dependence on energy imports.

According to the EIA and the noise assessment, the area where the survey would be conducted is close to the following natural habitats, which are part of the Natura 2000 network: Delta de l'Ebre, Litoral Tarragoní, Sèquia Major, Costes del Tarragonés, Costes del Garraf, Grapissar de la Masia Blanca, Sierra de Irta, la Marjal de Peñíscola and the Islas Columbretes. It would also affect 5 % of a proposed Special Protection Area (SPA), the 'Migration corridor for cetaceans', but sufficient corrective measures have not been put forward.

Conducting seismic surveys in this marine migration corridor and in close proximity to protected natural areas (the work would be carried out less than 12 km away from the Delta de l'Ebre natural park) would endanger species that are protected under the Natura 2000 programme or in SPAs. Proposals for monitoring sea turtles and cetaceans in order to spot them if they come within a 500-metre radius of the seismic survey area do not guarantee that they will be protected, since changes in their behaviour have been observed more than two or three kilometres away from such areas. Their population numbers, especially in migration areas, could be affected.

Moreover, EIAs are based on models that may underestimate the impact of seismic surveys, as has already been shown in a study carried out in Nova Scotia (McQuinn and Carrier, 2005). McQuinn and Carrier found that the actual noise levels of seismic pulses in the studied area were on average 10 dB higher than those predicted. This means that cetaceans at a distance of 800 metres from the exploration area would be exposed to sound levels of 180 dB, which is the maximum safe limit for these species.

In light of the above, what action will the Commission take?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The Commission does not possess detailed information on the project of '3D seismic survey at the Casablanca oil rig' in Tarragona. According to the information provided by the Honourable Member, this project is currently undergoing an environmental impact assessment. The competent authorities have therefore not yet taken a final decision on this matter. Since the procedures are still ongoing, it is not possible to identify any breach of the EU environmental legislation and the Commission has no cause to take action.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000130/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Cautiverio de la orca Morgan

En junio del 2010, la orca llamada Morgan, una hembra de 4 años de edad, fue encontrada debilitada y herida en el mar de Frisia (o mar de Wadden), en la costa de los Países Bajos. Tras rescatarla, fue trasladada al delfinario de Harderwijk de manera provisional, donde después de su recuperación se la exhibió al público. Un grupo de científicos e investigadores especialistas en cetáceos se unieron formando el «Free Morgan Group» («Grupo Morgan Libre»), y comenzaron a luchar para impedir que Morgan fuese enviada a un parque acuático y para que, en lugar de ello, fuera devuelta a su hábitat natural junto a su grupo familiar, que han encontrado científicos expertos en la materia.

Este grupo elaboró y presentó un completo plan de rehabilitación al Ministerio de Agricultura de los Países Bajos y al delfinario donde Morgan estaba recogida. A pesar de ello, la orca fue transferida de los Países Bajos al zoológico Loro Parque de Tenerife, manteniéndola en cautividad para su exhibición al público. Según los expertos, corren grave riesgo la salud y el bienestar de Morgan. En cautiverio, las orcas reducen significativamente su tasa de supervivencia, (su esperanza de vida pasa de 50 años o más en libertad a 8 años en cautividad), su éxito reproductivo merma considerablemente y el estrés puede inducirlas a la agresión hacia sus pares y entrenadores y causarles graves enfermedades e incluso la muerte.

1. ¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre el cautiverio y la exhibición de esta orca en el zoológico Loro Parque de Tenerife?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que para esta orca era mejor destino el zoológico Loro Parque que volver a su hábitat natural, en libertad y junto a su familia?

3. ¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre la decisión de Suiza de prohibir el mantenimiento de delfines o cualquier cetáceo en zoos o parques acuáticos?

4. En vista de los pasos de países como Noruega, Luxemburgo, Eslovenia o Chipre, que están en vías de prohibir el mantenimiento de delfines o cualquier otro cetáceo en zoos o parques acuáticos, ¿piensa la Comisión proponer alguna norma a este respecto a nivel de la Unión?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de febrero de 2013)

Como se establece en la Directiva de Hábitats ([1]), la prioridad en la EU es conservar los cetáceos en libertad. La práctica de mantener en cautividad animales salvajes, tales como ballenas, para su exhibición en zoos de la UE se encuentra regulada por la Directiva sobre parques zoológicos ([2]). El objetivo de la Directiva es reforzar el papel de los zoos en la conservación de la biodiversidad con la adopción en los Estados miembros de disposiciones adecuadas de autorización e inspección que garanticen que aquellos respeten las medidas de conservación previstas. Dentro de ese marco, no hay ninguna disposición que prohíba exhibir especies animales en zoológicos. La exhibición pública de ejemplares como Morgan es un asunto de competencia nacional.

Al no ser uno de los Estados miembros de la UE, Suiza no está sujeta a los requisitos de la Directiva sobre parques zoológicos. Esta Directiva no impide que los Estados miembros adopten medidas de protección más estrictas, siempre que sean conformes a la normativa de la Unión. La Comisión no tiene la intención de proponer a nivel de la UE la prohibición de mantener en zoológicos delfines u otros cetáceos.

([1]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).
([2]) Directiva 1999/22/CE del Consejo, de 29 de marzo de 1999, relativa al mantenimiento de animales salvajes en parques zoológicos (DO L 94 de 9.4.1999).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000130/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Killer whale kept at zoo as public attraction

In June 2010, a four-year old killer whale was found injured and weak in the Wadden Sea off the coast of the Netherlands. After being rescued, the whale, which by then had been named Morgan, was taken temporarily to the dolphinarium in Harderwijk, where she was 'put on show' to the public once she had recovered from her injuries. A group of scientists and researchers specialising in cetaceans joined forces to establish the 'Free Morgan Foundation' and began campaigning for Morgan to be released into the wild to rejoin her pod (located by experts) rather than for her to be moved to a water park.

The campaigners drew up and presented a comprehensive rehabilitation plan to the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture and to the dolphinarium where Morgan was being kept. However, a decision was made to move her to the Loro Parque zoo in Tenerife, where she is being kept as a public attraction. Experts claim that Morgan's health and welfare is at risk. In captivity, a killer whale's life expectancy decreases significantly (from 50 years or more to 8 years) and its chances of reproducing diminish substantially. Stress can also cause it to behave aggressively towards other whales and trainers and can lead to serious illness, and even death.

1. Morgan is being kept as a public attraction at the Loro Parque zoo in Tenerife. What view does the Commission take on this?

2. Does the Commission think that Morgan is better off at the zoo than in the wild with her pod?

3. What view does it take on Switzerland's decision to ban zoos and water parks from keeping dolphins and other cetaceans?

4. In view of the fact that countries such as Norway, Luxembourg, Slovenia and Cyprus are currently working on legislation to ban zoos and water parks from keeping dolphins and other cetaceans, does the Commission intend to propose a similar ban at Union level?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

As set out in the Habitats Directive ([1]), the priority in the EU is the conservation of cetaceans in the wild. The practice of keeping wild animals, such as whales, for exhibition in zoos in the EU is regulated by the Zoos Directive ([2]), which aims to strengthen the role of zoos in the conservation of biodiversity through the adoption by the Member States of appropriate measures for the licensing and inspection of zoos in order to ensure that they respect the foreseen conservation measures. Within this framework there is no prohibition on exhibiting animal species in zoos. The public exhibition of specimens such as Morgan is a matter of national competence

Switzerland is not an EU Member State and is not subject to the requirements of the Zoos Directive. The directive does not prevent Member States from taking stricter protection measures as long as this is in conformity with EU legislation. The Commission does not intend to propose a ban on the keeping of dolphins or other cetaceans in zoos at the EU level.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and o wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).
([2]) Council Directive 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos (OJ L 94, 9.4.1999).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000131/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Pesca furtiva en reservas marinas

Las reservas marinas gestionadas por el Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente (MAGRAMA) español están siendo víctimas de los pescadores furtivos debido a la falta de vigilancia. La Audiencia Nacional estableció en una sentencia del año pasado que las tareas de vigilancia solo podían ser llevadas a cabo por parte de empresas de seguridad especializadas y habilitadas para ello, requisito que no cumplían las contratadas por el Ministerio. Según una noticia publicada el día 16 de septiembre en el diario *El Periódico*, el MAGRAMA aprovechó la renovación de siete de los diez contratos para reducir la plantilla de vigilantes y ha eliminado los trabajadores que ejercían tareas de control en vez de contratar empresas con los permisos necesarios. Según Oceana, con los recortes presupuestarios efectuados en la vigilancia se ponen en peligro activos naturales por valor de 500 millones de euros.

1. ¿Está al corriente la Comisión de dicha situación?

2. ¿Ha evaluado la Comisión el impacto que está teniendo la falta de vigilancia en las reservas marinas?

3. ¿Considera la Comisión que el Gobierno español está haciendo todo lo posible para evitar la pesca ilegal que se está produciendo desde abril en las reservas marinas?

4. ¿Considera la Comisión que el Gobierno está respetando plenamente la Directiva 2008/56/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 17 de junio de 2008, por la que se establece un marco de acción comunitaria para la política del medio marino?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión no está al corriente de que exista pesca furtiva en las reservas marinas españolas.

En la política pesquera común, se aplica el principio general de que compete a los Estados miembros controlar las actividades llevadas a cabo por personas físicas o jurídicas en su territorio y en las aguas sujetas a su soberanía o jurisdicción y, en particular, las actividades pesqueras. En el caso de las reservas marinas que forman parte de la red de zonas protegidas Natura 2000, el artículo 6 de la Directiva 92/43/CEE (Directiva de Hábitats) obliga a los Estados miembros a adoptar las medidas de gestión que sean necesarias, en las que se incluyen medidas adecuadas de vigilancia que impidan actividades perjudiciales como la pesca ilegal.

España presentó en los plazos fijados las estrategias marinas previstas en los artículos 8, 9 y 10 de la Directiva 2008/56/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 17 de junio de 2008, por la que se establece un marco de acción comunitaria para la política del medio marino. En estos momentos, la Comisión está examinándolas para determinar si los elementos notificados constituyen un marco apropiado a tenor de lo dispuesto en esa Directiva y podría solicitar información adicional a España.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000131/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Illegal fishing in marine reserves

The marine reserves managed by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment (MAGRAMA) are being targeted by illegal fishers because of a lack of surveillance. A 2012 judgment of the Spanish National Court (*Audiencia Nacional*) ruled that only specialised security companies that were authorised to undertake this type of surveillance could do so; the companies contracted by MAGRAMA did not fulfil this requirement. According to an article published on 16 September 2012 in the *El Periódico* newspaper, MAGRAMA used the renewal period for seven of the ten contracts as an opportunity to reduce security staff numbers and it let employees go instead of contracting properly qualified companies. According to Oceana, the reductions in the security budget put natural assets valued at EUR 500 million at risk.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Has the Commission evaluated the effect that the lack of surveillance is having on the marine reserves?

3. In the Commission's opinion, is the Spanish Government making every effort to prevent illegal fishing, which has been taking place in marine reserves since April 2012?

4. Is the Commission satisfied that the Spanish Government is fully complying with Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission has not been made aware of a situation of illegal fishing in the Spanish marine reserves.

In respect of the common fisheries policy, the general principle is that Member States shall control the activities carried out by any natural or legal person on their territory and within waters under their sovereignty or jurisdiction, in particular fishing activities. As regards marine reserves that form part of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas, Member States are required to put in place the necessary management measures in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC including adequate surveillance to prevent any damaging activities such as illegal fishing.

Spain has submitted in due time its marine strategies according to Articles 8, 9 and 10 of Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy. The Commission is now assessing whether the elements notified constitute an appropriate framework to meet the requirements of this directive and may ask Spain to provide additional information.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000132/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Riesgo nuclear de las vasijas del reactor de Doel

La Agencia Federal Nuclear belga se ha mostrado a favor del cierre «permanente» de los veinte reactores nucleares existentes en todo el mundo cuya vasija ha sido construida por el mismo fabricante si se descubren fisuras serias tal y como se han detectado en el tercer reactor de la central belga de Doel. El mismo fabricante holandés Rotterdamsche Droogdok Maatschappij es el responsable de una veintena de reactores repartidos en todo el mundo, entre ellos, los de las centrales de Santa María de Garoña y Cofrentes. El Director General de la Agencia Federal Nuclear belga, Willy De Roovere, informó el día 16 de agosto a expertos nucleares de varios países, incluido España, sobre los problemas detectados en Doel. El Director recomendó al resto de países llevar a cabo inspecciones en sus reactores para evaluar el estado de sus vasijas.

Aunque las primeras pruebas en Doel III apuntan a un fallo de fabricación en la vasija, el Director de la Agencia Federal Nuclear belga no descarta que las fisuras detectadas puedan deberse a un problema de calidad del acero empleado en su fabricación, algo que podría dar lugar a un problema a nivel mundial porque afectaría a todos los reactores de la misma generación que Doel y Tihange, es decir, alrededor de 350 del total de 450 que existen en todo el mundo. La Comisión Europea anunció que esperaba que los diferentes países realizaran inspecciones en sus reactores y prometió «extraer las lecciones» a raíz de los problemas detectados en Doel III.

1. ¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de que se hayan realizado las pruebas en las centrales con vasijas similares a la de Doel?

2. ¿Va a llevar a cabo algún tipo de revisión con respecto a estas pruebas?

3. ¿Qué avances ha efectuado la Comisión en relación con la revisión de la legislación sobre la calidad de los materiales de las centrales nucleares?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de febrero de 2013)

1. En 2012 se llevaron a cabo inspecciones similares a la de la central nuclear de Doel en Suecia (Ringhals-2) y en Suiza (Mühleberg y Leibstadt), sin que se detectaran anomalías. En Bélgica se inspeccionó también Tihange-2, donde se detectaron deficiencias similares en la vasija de presión del reactor, aunque al parecer son menos que en Doel-3. En 2013 se van a realizar inspecciones análogas en Borssele (Países Bajos). Los reactores con vasija de presión del mismo fabricante situados en Alemania no serán investigados, puesto que ya se han cerrado. En España, los reactores potencialmente afectados, o bien ya están cerrados, o bien se trata de reactores construidos mediante otro proceso de fabricación (Cofrentes).

2. La responsabilidad en materia de seguridad recae en el titular de la licencia bajo la supervisión del regulador nacional. La Comisión proporcionó asistencia técnica en las reuniones técnicas organizadas por los reguladores belgas para informar de la situación en Doel-3.

3. La Comisión está preparando una propuesta de modificación de la Directiva sobre seguridad nuclear (2009/71/Euratom) en las áreas siguientes: aspectos técnicos, gobernanza de la seguridad nuclear, transparencia, supervisión y verificación, y preparación y respuesta *in situ* ante emergencias.

Asimismo, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-8256/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000132/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Problems with the reactor vessels at the Doel nuclear power plant

Major cracks have been discovered in the third reactor at the Doel nuclear power plant in Belgium, built by the Dutch firm Rotterdamsche Droogdok Maatschappij. There are currently about 20 other nuclear plants in operation throughout the world, including the Santa María de Garoña and Cofrentes plants, whose reactor vessels were built by the same firm. The Belgian Federal Nuclear Agency is in favour of decommissioning them if their reactor vessels are also found to be cracked. On 16 August 2012, the Director-General of the Belgian Federal Nuclear Agency, Willy De Roovere, spoke to nuclear experts from various countries, including Spain, about the problems at Doel and advised them to carry out inspections to assess the state of their reactor vessels.

Initial tests carried out on Doel III point to a construction fault. However, Mr De Roovere has not ruled out the possibility that the cracks developed because of a problem with the quality of the steel used to build the vessel. If that turns out to be the case, it would have global ramifications, given that the same type of steel was used to build the entire Doel and Tihange generation of reactors (around 350 reactors of a total of 450 reactors worldwide). The Commission has urged those countries that have Doel-generation reactors to carry out inspections and has promised to draw lessons from the problems detected at Doel III.

1. Can the Commission say whether tests have been carried out at the plants with similar vessels to Doel?

2. Does it intend to review the results of the tests?

3. What progress has it made with its plans to review current legislation on the quality of the materials used to build nuclear power plants?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

1. Inspections like those which took place at the Doel nuclear power plant were carried out in 2012 at Ringhals-2 (Sweden) and Mühleberg and Leibstadt (Switzerland), and no anomalies were detected. In Belgium, such type of inspections were also carried out at Tihange-2, where similar flaws in the Reactor Pressure Vessel (RPV) were detected, although they appear to be fewer than those at Doel-3. In 2013, similar inspections will be held at Borssele (Netherlands). Reactors in Germany which have RPVs from the same manufacturer will not be investigated as they have already been closed. In Spain, reactors which are potentially concerned are either shut down or are reported not to be affected because another manufacturing process had been used (Cofrentes).

2. The responsibility for safety is with the licensee under the supervision of the national Regulator. The Commission provided technical expertise in technical meetings organised by the Belgian regulators to provide information about the situation at Doel-3.

3. The Commission is currently preparing a proposal to amend the Nuclear Safety Directive (2009/71/Euratom) in relation to the following areas: technical issues; nuclear safety governance; transparency; monitoring and verification on-site emergency preparedness and response.

The Commission would also like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-8256/2012 ([1]).

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000133/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Eigen „vooruitgangsrapport" van Turkije

Op 31 december 2012 kondigde de Turkse minister voor EU-zaken Egemen Bagis aan dat de Turkse regering een eigen „vooruitgangsrapport" had opgesteld. Volgens de persmededeling van de heer Bagis wordt het vooruitgangsrapport van de Europese Commissie gekenmerkt door „subjective, biased, groundless and narrow views".

In diezelfde persmededeling wordt op een bijzonder brutale manier de draak gestoken met de financiële en economische problemen van de Republiek Cyprus.

1. Heeft de Commissie inmiddels kennisgenomen van het eigen „vooruitgangsrapport" van de Turkse regering? Heeft zij hierover contact opgenomen met de Turkse regering? Zo ja, wat waren de conclusies?

2. Hoe reageert de Commissie op de brutale toon en de aantijgingen in de persmededeling van minister Bagis?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(1 maart 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van het door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde rapport. Dit rapport is uitsluitend de verantwoordelijkheid van de Turkse regering en is dan ook niet besproken met de Commissie.

De conclusies van het vooruitgangsrapport van de Commissie van oktober 2012 ([1]) worden regelmatig met de Turkse autoriteiten besproken.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000133/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Turkey prepares its own 'progress report'

On 31 December 2012, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, Egemen Bagis, announced that the Turkish Government had prepared its own 'progress report'. According to Mr Bagis's press release, the Commission's progress report was characterised by 'subjective, biased, groundless and narrow views'.

The same press release made fun of the financial and economic problems facing the Republic of Cyprus in an exceptionally harsh way.

1. Is the Commission aware of the Turkish Government's own 'progress report'? Has it been in contact with the Turkish Government on this issue? If so, what conclusions were drawn?

2. What is its response to the harsh tone of and the allegations made in Minister Bagis's press release?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission is aware of the report the Honourable Member refers to. The report is the sole responsibility of the Turkish Government and has therefore not been discussed with the Commission.

The Commission recalls that its findings as laid down in the progress report of the Commission published in October 2012 ([1]) are discussed on a regular basis with the Turkish authorities.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000134/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Maíz MON810

En una respuesta parlamentaria (número de referencia 184/003778 en el registro del Congreso de los Diputados), el Gobierno español afirmaba lo siguiente: «No hay duda de que, de acuerdo con el documento de EFSA, el cultivo de maíz MON810 es seguro en España». Algo que ya ha demostrado la experiencia de unos 15 años en el cultivo de estas variedades, durante los cuales no se han producido incidentes de ningún tipo. El maíz MQNB14 ha resultado ser una solución en la lucha contra la plaga del taladro para muchos agricultores de amplias regiones españolas, como la del Valle del Ebro. El cultivo de este maíz ha permitido ahorrar a los agricultores muchos litros de productos insecticidas y pasadas de tractor en sus explotaciones. Por tanto, ha demostrado ser una opción más respetuosa con el medio ambiente que el maíz convencional.

1. ¿Comparte la Comisión la afirmación de que está demostrado que el maíz MON810 es una opción más respetuosa con el medio ambiente que el maíz convencional?

2. ¿Ha tenido acceso la Comisión a los estudios que el Gobierno llevó a cabo para hacer tal afirmación? ¿Tiene constancia de la existencia de algún estudio relativo a la seguridad del maíz MON810?

3. ¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre la desaparición del maíz ecológico como consecuencia de la contaminación originada por el maíz MON810?

4. ¿Considera la Comisión que el Gobierno garantiza que se apliquen estrictamente las recomendaciones básicas de la Agencia Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria (EFSA) para evitar las contaminaciones y la aparición de resistencia a la toxina generada por este maíz en insectos?

Respuesta del Sr. Mr Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de febrero de 2013)

1.-2. En su contribución al informe de la Comisión sobre las consecuencias socioeconómicas del cultivo de OMG en la EU ([1]), España notificó elementos similares a los planteados por Su Señoría. En el informe la Comisión destaca que en muchos casos se carece de datos y estadísticas específicos del contexto de la UE que respalden las opiniones expresadas por los encuestados. La Comisión y los Estados miembros han creado el European GMO Socio-Economic Bureau (grupo de trabajo técnico) para definir los factores que reflejan las consecuencias socioeconómicas del cultivo de OMG, en particular la sostenibilidad agronómica.

En su expediente de solicitud para MON 810, el titular de la autorización presentó una serie de estudios a fin de demostrar su seguridad para la salud humana y animal y para el medio ambiente, que fueron evaluados por la EFSA ([2]). Además, el titular de la autorización proporciona una revisión anual de la literatura existente que es evaluada por la EFSA, y en 2012 la EFSA publicó una revisión de todos los estudios científicos sobre MON 810 aparecidos entre 2009 y 2012 ([3]).

3. Uno de los objetivos de la normativa de la UE sobre OMG ([4]) es evitar la presencia accidental de OMG en otros productos, evitando a los productores posibles pérdidas económicas en los cultivos convencionales y ecológicos. Los Estados miembros pueden aplicar esas medidas de coexistencia. La Oficina Europea de Coexistencia ([5]) desarrolla, conjuntamente con los Estados miembros, las mejores prácticas en materia de coexistencia, incluidas las de maíz modificado genéticamente. Además, en julio de 2010 la Comisión publicó una recomendación sobre directrices para la elaboración de medidas nacionales de coexistencia.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/gmo/reports_studies/docs/socio_economic_report_gmo_es.pdf
([2]) La Autoridad Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria.
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3017.htm
([4]) Artículo 26 bis de la Directiva 2001/18/CE sobre la liberación intencional en el medio ambiente de organismos modificados genéticamente (DO L 106 de 17.4.2001).
([5]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

4. Es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros garantizar que los cultivos modificados genéticamente autorizados se producen con arreglo a las disposiciones relativas a la autorización de comercialización, especialmente en lo que se refiere al cumplimiento de vigilancia medioambiental posterior a la comercialización por los titulares de la autorización, en particular en materia de gestión de la resistencia en insectos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000134/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: MON810 maize

In a parliamentary answer (reference number 184/003778, Spanish Congress of Deputies' register), the Spanish Government stated that: 'in line with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) opinion, there is absolutely no doubt that growing MON810 maize in Spain is safe. Indeed, the last 15 years have shown how safe these crop varieties are, as during that time not a single incident has been reported. MQNB14 maize has helped farmers in many parts of Spain, such as the Valle del Ebro, combat the European corn borer pest. Thanks to MQNB14 maize, farmers have not had to make endless tractor rounds to spray litres of insecticide over their crops. Consequently, genetically modified maize has been shown to have less of an environmental impact than conventional maize'.

1. Does the Commission agree with the claim that MON810 maize has been shown to be more environmentally friendly than conventional maize?

2. Has the Commission been given access to the Spanish Government studies that were the basis for this claim? Is the Commission aware of whether any studies have been carried out into the safety of MON810 maize?

3. What is the Commission's view on the disappearance of organic maize as a result of contamination from MON810 maize?

4. Is the Commission satisfied that the Spanish Government is making sure that EFSA's basic recommendations are being applied strictly enough to prevent contamination and the emergence of insects resistant to the toxins produced by MON810 maize?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

1-2. In their contribution to the Commission report on the socioeconomic impacts of GMO cultivation in the EU ([1]), Spain reported similar elements to those raised by the Honourable Member. The Commission stressed in the report that facts and statistics pertinent to the EU context were often missing to support the views expressed by the respondents. The Commission and Member States have set up the European GMO Socio-Economic Bureau to define factors capturing the socioeconomic consequences of GMO cultivation, including e.g. agronomic sustainability.

In its application file for MON 810, the consent holder provided a series of studies to demonstrate its safety for human and animal health and for the environment, which were evaluated by EFSA ([2]). In addition the consent holder provides an annual literature review which is assessed by EFSA, and in 2012 EFSA issued a review of all scientific literature on MON 810 published between 2009 and 2012 ([3]).

3. One of the objectives of EU legislation on GMOs ([4]) is to avoid unintended presence of GMOs in other products, preventing potential economic losses for conventional and organic crops growers. These co-existence measures can be implemented by Member States. The European Coexistence Bureau ([5]) develops, together with Member States, best practices for co-existence, including for GM maize. Furthermore the Commission published in July 2010 a recommendation on guidelines for the development of national co-existence measures.

4. It is the responsibility of Member States to ensure that authorised GM crops are grown according to the provisions of the marketing authorisation, in particular as regards performance of Post Market Environmental Monitoring by consent holders, including on insect resistance management.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/gmo/reports_studies/docs/socio_economic_report_gmo_en.pdf
([2]) The European Food Safety Authority.
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3017.htm
([4]) Article 26a of Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment (OJ L 106, 17.4.2001).
([5]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000135/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Batidas de lobos en el Parque Nacional de Picos de Europa

Según fuentes no oficiales, el Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente español (Magrama) tenía intención de iniciar, con carácter inmediato, nuevas batidas de lobos en el Parque Nacional de Picos de Europa para controlar el número de ejemplares de esta especie.

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de que el Magrama tenga intención de iniciar batidas de lobos en el Parque Nacional de Picos de Europa?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión compatibles las batidas de lobos en un parque protegido con la Directiva sobre hábitats?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de la Resolución de 9 de noviembre de 2012 que autoriza las batidas de lobos en el Parque Nacional de los Picos de Europa.

Las poblaciones de lobos al norte del río Duero en España están contempladas en el anexo V de la Directiva sobre hábitats ([1]), que enumera las especies cuya recogida en la naturaleza y explotación pueden ser objeto de medidas de gestión. Las especies enumeradas en el anexo V pueden ser cazadas, siempre que ello sea compatible con el mantenimiento o el restablecimiento de estas especies en un estado de conservación favorable.

Por consiguiente, las batidas de lobos están autorizadas si son compatibles con el estado de conservación de la especie y siempre que no impidan el cumplimiento de las exigencias ecológicas de los hábitats y de las demás especies que hayan motivado la designación de las zonas.

([1]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestre (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000135/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Wolf culls in the Picos de Europa National Park

According to non-official sources, the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment (MAGRAMA) intended to start new wolf culls in the Picos de Europa National Park with immediate effect, in order to control their population numbers.

1. Is the Commission aware that MAGRAMA intended to allow wolf culls in the Picos de Europa National Park?

2. Does the Commission consider wolf culls to be permissible in a park that comes under the protection of the Habitats Directive?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the Resolution of 9 November 2012 allowing for wolf culls in the National Park of Picos de Europa.

The Spanish wolf population to the North of the Duero River is included in Annex V of the Habitats Directive ([1]), which lists species whose taking in the wild and exploitation may be subject to management measures. Species listed in Annex V can be hunted, as long as this is compatible with such species being maintained at or restored to a favourable conservation status.

Therefore, wolf culls are permissible as long as this is compatible with the conservation status of the species and provided that this does not prevent the achievement of the ecological requirements of the habitats and other species for which the areas have been designated.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000136/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Gestión de residuos en el Estado español

El pasado mes de septiembre, la Comisión realizó un estudio sobre la gestión de los residuos en los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea, en el que se concluye que España incurre en muchas deficiencias en el programa de prevención de residuos, en la legislación sobre vertidos, en la capacidad para el tratamiento y en las previsiones sobre la generación y el tratamiento. Esta valoración sitúa al Estado español en el grupo de países en los que no todos los hogares están conectados a la recogida de residuos, la planificación del tratamiento de residuos no es suficiente y la prevención no está todavía en la agenda política. Además, estos déficits en la gestión de residuos se ven reflejados en procedimientos de infracción y casos penales para la mayoría de estos países.

1. ¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de que el Gobierno haya llevado a cabo alguna acción para abordar las deficiencias en la gestión de residuos en el Estado español?

2. ¿Qué medidas va a llevar a cabo la Comisión para mejorar la situación deficiente de la gestión de los residuos en España?

3. ¿Cree la Comisión que las medidas aprobadas en el Real Decreto-ley 17/2012, de 4 de mayo, de medidas urgentes en materia de medio ambiente, en el que se elimina en la práctica el sistema de depósito, devolución y retorno, van a contribuir a aumentar la tasa de reciclaje de envases?

4. ¿Tiene abierto la Unión Europea algún expediente sancionador contra el Estado español en relación con los residuos?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de marzo de 2013)

1. y 2. La Comisión se propone llevar a cabo en 2013 una evaluación detallada de la integridad e idoneidad de los planes de gestión de residuos tanto nacionales como regionales adoptados por los Estados miembros de conformidad con los artículos 28 y 29 de la Directiva 2008/98/CE ([1]). La Comisión no desea prejuzgar las conclusiones de esta evaluación.

3. La legislación de la UE no establece la obligación de implantar sistemas de depósito, devolución y retorno. Aunque estos sistemas pueden hacer que aumente la tasa de reciclaje de envases, la experiencia demuestra en varios Estados miembros que también se puede lograr una tasa de reciclaje de envases elevada sin contar con dichos sistemas de depósito.

4. Aunque se han incoado varios procedimientos de infracción respecto a España en el ámbito de la gestión de los residuos, ninguno de estos procedimientos está en la fase en que la Comisión solicita la aplicación de sanciones a España por parte del Tribunal de Justicia, de conformidad con el artículo 260 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la UE.

([1]) Directiva 2008/98/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 19 de noviembre de 2008, sobre los residuos y por la que se derogan determinadas Directivas, DO L 312 de 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000136/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Waste management in Spain

Last September, the Commission carried out a study on waste management in EU Member States. It found many shortcomings in Spain's waste reduction programme, legislation on landfills, waste treatment capacity and in its forecasts for waste generation and treatment. The assessment put Spain in the group of countries where not all households have a waste collection service, where waste treatment planning is lacking and where waste reduction has not yet featured on the political agenda. More seriously, these failures in waste management result in infringement procedures and legal proceedings for the majority of these countries.

1. Is the Commission aware of any action taken by the Spanish Government to rectify failings in waste management in Spain?

2. What action is the Commission going to take to improve Spain's unsatisfactory waste management?

3. Does the Commission think that the measures approved in Royal Decree 17/2012 of 4 May 2012 on urgent environmental measures, which effectively do away with the deposit, return and recovery system, will lead to an increase in the recycling of packaging?

4. Has the EU begun any proceedings to impose waste-related penalties on Spain?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission intends to perform in 2013 a detailed assessment of the completeness and appropriateness of waste management plans adopted by Member States as required by Articles 28 and 29 of Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]). The Commission does not wish to prejudge the conclusions of this assessment.

3. EU legislation does not establish the obligation to set up deposit, return and recovery systems. Whereas these systems can lead to increases of the recycling rates of packaging, experiences in several Member States show that high recycling rates can also be achieved in the absence of such deposit systems.

4. Several infringement procedures have been initiated against Spain in the field of waste management. Nevertheless no procedure has come to the stage of the Commission asking the Court of Justice to impose penalties to Spain (in accordance with Art. 260 TFEU).

([1]) Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000137/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Discriminación por orientación sexual por parte de la compañía Easyjet

Un ciudadano natural de Venezuela, de 33 años, residente en España, ha dado a conocer la denuncia interpuesta el pasado 23 de octubre en el aeropuerto de El Prat por homofobia, en la que alegaba que una empleada de la compañía aérea Easyjet, con actitud intimidatoria y prepotente, le profirió, ante un malentendido, insultos por su homosexualidad, impidiéndole además llevar a cabo el viaje que había pagado y contratado, y obligándole a bajar del avión acompañado por efectivos de la Guardia Civil. A pesar de que otros empleados de la compañía defendieron ante la Guardia Civil al usuario agredido, ésta finalmente expulsó al pasajero del avión. El artículo 19 del TFUE ofrece una base jurídica para combatir cualquier forma de discriminación por motivos de sexo, origen racial o étnico, religión o convicciones, discapacidad, edad u orientación sexual.

1. ¿Tenía conocimiento la Comisión de dicha denuncia?

2. ¿Piensa realizar alguna acción ante la compañía aérea?

3. ¿Considera correcta la actuación de las fuerzas de seguridad del Estado español en este caso?

Respuesta de la Sra. Redingen en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión Europea condena todas las formas y manifestaciones de intolerancia, como la homofobia, ya que son incompatibles con los valores y principios en los que se fundamenta la Unión Europea, y reitera su compromiso de luchar con todas sus fuerzas contra la homofobia y la discriminación por motivos de orientación sexual en virtud de las competencias que le otorgan los Tratados.

La Directiva 2000/78/CE de la UE prohíbe la discriminación basada en la orientación sexual, pero solo en lo que se refiere al empleo y a la ocupación ([1]).

([1]) Directiva 2000/78/CE, de 27 de noviembre de 2000, relativa al establecimiento de un marco general para la igualdad de trato en el empleo y la ocupación (DO L 303 de 2.12.2000, p. 16).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000137/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Discrimination based on sexual orientation by Easyjet

A 33-year-old Venezuelan national residing in Spain has spoken out about a complaint he filed concerning an alleged homophobic incident that took place on 23 October 2012 at El Prat airport, Barcelona. He claims that an employee from the Easyjet airline behaved in an intimidating and high-handed manner and, following a misunderstanding, shouted homophobic insults at him, refused to allow him to travel and had him escorted off the plane by Guardia Civil officers. Despite other Easyjet employees defending the insulted passenger to the Guardia Civil officers, he was taken off the plane. Article 19 of the TFEU provides a legal basis for combating any form of discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

1. Is the Commission aware of this complaint?

2. Will the Commission take any action against the airline?

3. Does the Commission believe that the Spanish security forces acted properly in this incident?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The European Commission condemns all forms and manifestations of intolerance such as homophobia, as they are incompatible with the values and principles upon which the European Union is founded, and reiterate the Commission's commitment to combat homophobia and discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation to the full extent possible based on the powers conferred on it by the Treaties.

EU Directive 2000/78/EC prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, but applies to employment and occupation only ([1]).

([1]) Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p.16.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000138/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ενεργειακή φτώχεια και προβλήματα ατμοσφαιρικής ρύπανσης

Η αυξημένη φορολογία στο πετρέλαιο θέρμανσης σε περίοδο κρίσης, σε συνδυασμό με τα ανενεργά δίκτυα φυσικού αερίου που επιβαρύνουν τους φορολογούμενους και την απουσία εκτεταμένων και αποτελεσματικών προγραμμάτων μόνωσης των κτιρίων, έχει οδηγήσει αυξανόμενο αριθμό πολιτών να χρησιμοποιούν για θέρμανση των κατοικιών τους παραδοσιακά τζάκια και φτηνές συσκευές καύσης χαμηλής ενεργειακής απόδοσης. Η μαζική χρήση τους δημιουργεί αποπνικτική ατμόσφαιρα, κυρίως σε αστικές περιοχές, σε συνδυασμό με την καύση ακατάλληλων υλικών, απορριμμάτων και ξύλων με χρώματα και χημικά συντηρητικά. Καυσόξυλα προέρχονται συχνά από λαθροϋλοτόμηση που παίρνει μεγάλες διαστάσεις ([1]) λόγω της ανόδου της τιμής τους και ευνοείται από την περαιτέρω αποδυνάμωση των δασικών υπηρεσιών (μείωση προϋπολογισμών και προσωπικού τους). Ως αποτέλεσμα, υπάρχει δραματική αύξηση της συγκέντρωσης στην ατμόσφαιρα ιδιαίτερα σε Αττική και Θεσσαλονίκη, μικροσωματιδίων με διάμετρο < 10 μm, με σημαντικό ποσοστό να έχει μέγεθος κάτω από τα 2,5 μm που θεωρούνται ιδιαίτερα επικίνδυνα για την υγεία.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη για το πρόβλημα, το οποίο επηρεάζει τις υποχρεώσεις της χώρας για την ποιότητα του ατμοσφαιρικού αέρα, αλλά και για την προστασία της βιοποικιλότητας;

2. Είχαν συνυπολογιστεί οι συγκεκριμένες επιπτώσεις κατά τη διαπραγμάτευση της τρόικας με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για το μέτρο της εξομοίωσης της φορολογίας πετρελαίου θέρμανσης και κίνησης; Υπήρξε συνεργασία μεταξύ διαφορετικών Δ/νσεων της Επιτροπής;

3. Πώς προτίθεται να συμβάλλει στην αντιμετώπιση της ενεργειακής φτώχειας στην Ελλάδα, η οποία αυτό το χειμώνα αποκτά εκρηκτικές διαστάσεις; Έχει ζητήσει βοήθεια η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ή προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να βοηθήσει με πρωτοβουλία της ώστε να αξιοποιηθούν αδιάθετοι πόροι από το ΕΣΠΑ για τη μείωση της εξάρτησης των νοικοκυριών από το πετρέλαιο για θέρμανση, μέσω υιοθέτησης περιβαλλοντικά υπεύθυνων εναλλακτικών λύσεων κι αποτελεσματικών μέτρων προστασίας, που θα αναζωογονούσαν παράλληλα κλάδους της οικονομίας, δημιουργώντας θέσεις εργασίας;

4. Σκοπεύει να προτείνει σχετική νομοθεσία σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο για ενεργειακά και περιβαλλοντικά αποτελεσματικές συσκευές θέρμανσης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Μαρτίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για το πρόβλημα της αυξημένης οικιακής καύσης ξύλου στην Ελλάδα και σε άλλα κράτη μέλη. Η καύση ξύλου συντελεί στην υπέρβαση των οριακών τιμών ΑΣ10 και ΑΣ2,5, πράγμα που με τη σειρά του έχει σοβαρές βραχυπρόθεσμες και μακροπρόθεσμες επιπτώσεις στην υγεία. Ωστόσο, η ακριβέστερη εκτίμηση των επιπτώσεων όσον αφορά την ποιότητα του ατμοσφαιρικού αέρα στην Ελλάδα θα καταστεί δυνατή μετά τα επίσημα στοιχεία για την ποιότητα του ατμοσφαιρικού αέρα για το 2012, που θα είναι διαθέσιμα τον Σεπτέμβριο το 2013.

2. Η εξίσωση του πετρελαίου θέρμανσης είχε αποφασιστεί από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση, σε συνεννόηση με την Τρόικα, με σκοπό να μειωθούν τα κίνητρα για λαθρεμπόριο και να περιοριστούν οι δημοσιονομικές ανισορροπίες. Όπως αναφέρει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος, και άλλοι σημαντικοί παράγοντες επηρεάζουν την κατάσταση και οι επιπτώσεις στη ρύπανση δεν μπορούν να αποδοθούν σε αυτό το συγκεκριμένο μέτρο. Η Επιτροπή βρίσκεται σε στενή επικοινωνία με τις αρχές τόσο για το θέμα αυτό όσο και για άλλα συναφή θέματα.

3. Τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της ΕΕ μπορούν να στηρίξουν πολιτικές στον τομέα της ενεργειακής απόδοσης και των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας. Στην Ελλάδα, το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) στηρίζει ένα ταμείο για τη βελτίωση της ενεργειακής απόδοσης στις κατοικίες ([2]). Διαθέτει κονδύλια ύψους 396 εκατ. ευρώ και παρέχει επιχορηγήσεις και δάνεια προς τα νοικοκυριά μετά την ολοκλήρωση εξατομικευμένων μέτρων βελτίωσης της ενεργειακής απόδοσης. Η επιλογή των σχεδίων και η εκτέλεσή τους αποτελούν αρμοδιότητα των ελληνικών αρχών. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) στην Ελλάδα έχει ως στόχο να διευκολύνει την πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση ([3]).

([1]) Η λαθροϋλοτομία το 2012, Γιώργος Κεραμιτζόγλου, ΣΚΑΙ.gr, 8.1.2013.
([2]) Το ταμείο καλείται «Εξοικονόμηση κατ' Οίκον».
([3]) Για τον σκοπό αυτό το επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα «Ανάπτυξη των ανθρώπινων πόρων» προτείνει, μεταξύ άλλων, ενεργά μέτρα υπέρ της απασχόλησης και της επιχειρηματικότητας σε τομείς αιχμής όπως το περιβάλλον, η έρευνα και η καινοτομία.

4. Η Επιτροπή προτίθεται να αντιμετωπίσει την ενεργειακή απόδοση και άλλες περιβαλλοντικές πτυχές των διαφόρων τύπων συσκευών θέρμανσης στα εκτελεστικά μέτρα βάσει της οδηγίας 2009/125/ΕΚ ([4]) και της οδηγίας 2010/30/ΕΕ ([5]). Το 2012 δύο σχέδια μέτρων κοινοποιήθηκαν στον Παγκόσμιο Οργανισμό Εμπορίου (ΠΟΕ) και τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη δήλωσαν ότι θα στηρίξουν τέσσερα εκτελεστικά μέτρα. Αναμένεται να εγκριθούν το 2013 ή στις αρχές του 2014.

([4]) Οδηγία 2009/125/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 21ης Οκτωβρίου 2009, για τη θέσπιση πλαισίου για τον καθορισμό απαιτήσεων οικολογικού σχεδιασμού όσον αφορά τα συνδεόμενα με την ενέργεια προϊόντα, ΕΕ L 285 της 31.10.2009.

([5]) Οδηγία 2010/30/ΕΕ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 19ης Μαΐου 2010, για την ένδειξη της κατανάλωσης ενέργειας και λοιπών πόρων από τα συνδεόμενα με την ενέργεια προϊόντα μέσω της επισήμανσης και της παροχής ομοιόμορφων πληροφοριών σχετικά με αυτά, ΕΕ L 153 της 18.6.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000138/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Energy poverty and problems of atmospheric pollution

Increased tax on heating oil during the current crisis, in conjunction with inoperative natural gas supply networks and the absence of comprehensive and effective building insulation programmes, is placing an increased burden on the public and forcing many households to resort to traditional hearth fires and cheap and inefficient heating devices. The large-scale use of such heating methods, coupled with the combustion of unsuitable materials, such as refuse and wood which has been painted or treated with chemical preservatives, is starting to make the air unbreathable, particularly in urban areas.

Furthermore, increasingly costly firewood is frequently obtained through illegal logging activities, which are now taking place on a large scale ([1]), being further encouraged by additional forestry service cutbacks (reductions in staff and funding). This has led to a dramatic increase in concentrations of airborne microparticles with a diameter of less than 10mm, a large percentage being less than 2.5mm, resulting in a major health hazard, particularly in Attiki and Thessaloniki.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem, which is undermining the commitments made by Greece regarding air quality and the protection of biodiversity?

2. Did the negotiations between the Troika and Greek Government take account of the specific impact of placing heating oil and vehicle fuel on an equal footing for tax purposes? Are the various Commission directorates coordinating their strategies in this area?

3. What action will it take with a view to resolving the problem of energy poverty in Greece, which is assuming disastrous proportions this winter? Has the Greek Government sought assistance or does the Commission intend to provide assistance on its own initiative, mobilising unspent NSRF funds with a view to reducing the dependence of households on oil heating through the adoption of environmentally responsible alternatives and effective environmental protection measures, while at the same time reinvigorating the economy and creating new jobs in the relevant sectors?

4. Will it propose legislation at European level regarding the use of energy-effective and ecological heating devices?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the problem of increased domestic wood burning in Greece and in other Member States. Wood burning contributes to the exceedances of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ standards, which in turn leads to substantial short and long term health impacts. However, a more precise assessment of the impact on air quality for Greece must await the official air quality data for 2012 due in September 2013.

2. The equalisation of heating oil has been decided by the Greek Government, in consultation with the Troika, with the aim to reduce the incentive for smuggling and fiscal imbalances. As the Honourable Member indicates, other important factors are at play and the impact on pollution can not be attributable to this specific measure. The Commission is in close contact in this as in other areas.

3. The EU Structural Funds can support policies in the area of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. In Greece, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supports a fund for energy performance improvements in housing ([2]). It has an allocation of EUR 396 million and provides grants and loans to households upon completion of tailor made energy efficiency measures. Project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the Greek authorities. The European Social Fund (ESF) in Greece aims to facilitate access to employment ([3]).

([1]) Illegal logging in 2012, Georgos Keramitzoglou, SKAI.gr, 8.1.2013.
([2]) The fund is called 'Saving at Home'.
([3]) To this end the operational programme 'Human Resources Development' proposes, inter alia, active measures for the promotion of employment and enterpreneurship in cutting edge sectors such as the environment, research and innovation.

4. The Commission intends to address energy-efficiency and other environmental aspects of different types of heaters in implementing measures under Directive 2009/125/EC ([4]) and Directive 2010/30/EU ([5]). In 2012 two draft measures were notified to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and stakeholders expressed support for a further four implementing measures. These are expected to be adopted in 2013/early 2014.

([4]) Directive 2009/125/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products, OJ L 285, 31.10.2009.

([5]) Directive 2010/30/EU of the Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 on the indication by labelling and standard product information of the consumption of energy and other resources by energy related , OJ L 153, 18.6.2010.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000139/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 de janeiro de 2013)

Assunto: Uso de polifosfatos no processo de salga do pescado (II)

Em resposta à carta que lhe foi endereçada pelos deputados portugueses ao Parlamento Europeu, a 4 de setembro de 2012, sobre o uso de polifosfatos no processo de salga do pescado, o anterior Comissário John Dalli refere que «a larga maioria dos fosfatos adicionados são removidos durante o processo de demolha do peixe, antes do consumo». Afirmação idêntica havia já sido feita em resposta à pergunta E-002097/2012. Nessa resposta, a Comissão acrescenta que «a exposição dos consumidores aos fosfatos será mínima», pelo que é «adequado permitir a utilização de difosfatos (E 450), trifosfatos (E 451) e polifosfatos (E 452) para a preservação de peixe salgado por salga húmida». Na sua carta, John Dalli refere ainda que «a Comissão não dispõe de nenhuma informação de que o uso de fosfatos como aditivo alimentar possa constituir uma preocupação de segurança para o consumidor». Na carta é reconhecido que o uso de fosfatos dificulta a secagem do bacalhau, aumentando os custos de produção da indústria portuguesa.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual o ponto de situação relativamente a este assunto?

2. Que estudos suportam as afirmações de que «a larga maioria dos fosfatos adicionados são removidos durante o processo de demolha do peixe, antes do consumo» e que «a exposição dos consumidores aos fosfatos será mínima»?

3. De que estudos ou evidências científicas dispõe a Comissão para avaliar os efeitos na saúde dos consumidores da exposição aos fosfatos contidos no bacalhau mesmo após a demolha? Em que estudos se baseou para afirmar que «a quantidade de fosfatos presente após a demolha será comparável aos fosfatos naturalmente presentes»?

4. Não considera que se justifica neste caso a adoção do princípio da precaução?

5. Que avaliação, em concreto, foi feita do impacto desta medida na indústria portuguesa?

6. Que avaliação fez dos métodos analíticos disponíveis para verificar a possível existência de fosfatos adicionados no pescado? Quais são esses métodos e quais os custos envolvidos?

7. Tendo em conta a afirmação de John Dalli de que «se aguardam clarificações sobre possíveis soluções alternativas», dispõe já a Comissão das referidas clarificações?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(1 de março de 2013)

A Comissão considera que o pedido para o uso de fosfatos no peixe de salga húmida com um teor de sal de pelo menos 18 % respeita todas as condições de utilização, incluindo os requisitos de segurança estabelecidas no Regulamento (CE) n.° 1333/2008 relativo aos aditivos alimentares ([1]).

A adição de fosfatos resulta numa menor descolorização e num sabor mais característico, satisfazendo as exigências de mercados específicos. A investigação científica demonstrou que a concentração de fosfatos no produto pronto a ser utilizado é menor do que a concentração de fosfatos num filete de bacalhau fresco ([2]), ([3]). Por conseguinte, a exposição do consumidor aos fosfatos provenientes deste uso será menor do que a exposição aos mesmos em produtos frescos. Assim, a aplicação do princípio de precaução não é justificada.

([1]) JO L 354 de 31.12.2008, p. 16.
([2]) Schröder, U. (2010). «Changes in phosphate and water content during processing of salted Pacific cod (Gadus macrocephalus)». «Journal of Aquatic Food Product Technology», Volume 19, págs. 16-25.
([3]) Thorarinsdottir, K. A., et al.(2001). «Effects of phosphate on yield, quality, and water holding capacity in the processing of salted cod (Gadus morhua)». «Journal of Food Science», Volume 66, págs. 821-826.

Os métodos disponíveis para a determinação de fosfatos em músculo de peixe incluem: espetrofotometria, cromatografia iónica e cromatografia em camada fina ([2]), ([4]), ([5]), ([6]). Os métodos cromatográficos são relativamente simples e podem ser realizados na maioria dos laboratórios.

A proposta da Comissão para o Comité Permanente inclui, para além dos requisitos de rotulagem para peixe salgado tratado previstos pela legislação (os alimentos devem conter a informação «tratado com fosfatos» próximo da sua designação comercial), um período de transição para permitir que os produtores de bacalhau se adaptem a uma nova realidade em que o peixe tratado com fosfatos pode ser colocado no mercado. Durante este período, os produtores podem fazer acordos com os fornecedores e tomar conhecimento dos métodos analíticos de controlo da presença de fosfatos adicionados ao peixe. Os operadores de empresas do setor alimentar podem também indicar nos seus produtos que não foram usados fosfatos.

([4]) Nguyen, M. V., et al.. (2012). Quantitative and qualitative changes in added phosphates in cod (Gadus morhua) during salting, storage and rehydration. LWT — Food Science and Technology, 47, 126-132.

([5]) Iammarino, M., & Taranto, A. D. (2012). «Determination of polyphosphates in products of animal origin: application of a validated ion chromatography method for commercial samples analyses». European Food Research and Technology, 235:409-417.

([6]) Determinação semiquantitativa de fosfatos condensados no «peixe salgado», o Método de Análise é descrito por Budemheim Gmbh.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000139/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Use of polyphosphates in wet salted fish (II)

In response to the letter sent by Portuguese MEPs to Parliament on 4 September 2012 on the use of polyphosphates in wet salted fish, former Commissioner John Dalli said that 'the vast majority of the added phosphates are removed during the soaking of the fish in water before consumption'. The same claim was made in the answer to Written Question No E-002097/2012. In this answer, the Commission adds that 'the exposure of the consumer to the phosphates will be minimal' and it is therefore 'appropriate to allow the use of diphosphates (E 450), triphosphates (E 451) and polyphosphates (E 452) for the preservation of wet salted fish'. In his letter, John Dalli also says that 'the Commission does furthermore not dispose of any information that the use of phosphates as a food additive would be of safety concern for the consumer'. The letter acknowledges that the use of phosphates in cod can complicate drying, which in turn increases the Portuguese industry's production costs.

We would therefore ask the Commission:

1. What is the current state of play as regards this issue?

2. Which studies support the claims that 'the vast majority of the added phosphates are removed during the soaking of the fish in water before consumption' and that 'the exposure of the consumer to the phosphates will be minimal'?

3. Which studies or scientific evidence does the Commission dispose of to assess the health effects on consumers of exposure to the phosphates contained in cod even after soaking? On which studies does Commissioner Dalli base his claim that 'as most of the phosphates are removed during this soaking, the exposure of the consumer to the phosphates … is comparable to the exposure of phosphates that are naturally present'?

4. Does it not believe that the precautionary principle should be applied in this case?

5. What specific evaluation has been carried out on how this measure affects the Portuguese industry?

6. What evaluation has been carried out on the available analytical methods to verify the possible existence of phosphates added to the fish? What are these methods and what are the costs involved?

7. Given that John Dalli said that the request was justified 'pending further clarifications on possible alternative solutions', does the Commission dispose of these clarifications?

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

The Commission is of the opinion that the request for the use of phosphates in wet salted fish with a salt content of at least 18% complies with all the conditions of use, including safety requirements, laid down in the regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 on food additives ([1]).

The addition of phosphates results in less discolouration and a more consistent flavour and satisfies the demands of specific markets. Scientific research demonstrated that the phosphate concentration in the product ready for use is less than the phosphate concentration in a fresh cod fillet ([2]) ([3]). As a consequence, the exposure of the consumer to the phosphates due to this use will be lower than the exposure to phosphates in fresh products. The application of the precautionary principle is therefore not justified.

([1]) OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 16.
([2]) Schröder, U. (2010). Changes in phosphate and water content during processing of salted Pacific cod (Gadus macrocephalus). Journal of Aquatic Food Product Technology, 19, 16-25.
([3]) Thorarinsdottir, K. A., et al. (2001). Effects of phosphate on yield, quality, and water holding capacity in the processing of salted cod (Gadus morhua). Journal of Food Science, 66, 821-826.

Methods available for determining phosphates in fish muscle include: spectrophotometry, ion chromatography and thin layer chromatography ([4]) ([5]) ([6]). The chromatographical methods are relatively simple and can be carried out in most laboratories.

The Commission proposal to the Standing Committee includes on top of the labelling requirement for treated salted fish provided by the legislation (the food shall bear the information 'treated with "phosphates"' in the proximity of its sales name) also a transitional period in order to allow the bacalhau producers to adapt to the situation where fish treated with phosphates can be placed on the market. During this period the producers can make agreements with suppliers and become familiar with analytical methods for controlling the presence of added phosphates in the fish. Food business operators can also mark on their products that phosphates have not been used.

([4]) Nguyen, M. V., et al. (2012). Quantitative and qualitative changes in added phosphates in cod (Gadus morhua) during salting, storage and rehydration. LWT — Food Science and Technology, 47, 126-132.

([5]) Iammarino, M., & Taranto, A. D. (2012). Determination of polyphosphates in products of animal origin: application of a validated ion chromatography method for commercial samples analyses. European Food Research and Technology, 235, 409-417.

([6]) Semiquantitatively determination of condensated phosphates in 'salted fish', Method of Analysis described by Budemheim Gmbh.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000140/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ομάδα Δράσης (Task Force) για την Ελλάδα: οικονομικό κόστος, μεταρρύθμιση της κεντρικής διοίκησης, μεταρρύθμιση του ΤΠΕ και του ιατροφαρμακευτικού συστήματος

Τώρα που η Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα, με σκοπό την παροχή και το συντονισμό της τεχνικής βοήθειας που χρειάζεται η Ελλάδα για να ενισχύσει και να επιταχύνει τη μεταρρυθμιστική της διαδικασία, βρίσκεται σε λειτουργία για χρονικό διάστημα ενός έτους, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να αναφέρει:

1. Ποιο ήταν το οικονομικό κόστος της Ομάδας Δράσης για την Ελλάδα από την έναρξη των εργασιών της το Σεπτέμβριο του 2011, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του κόστους ευκαιρίας (αναφέροντας χωριστά τη μισθολογική δαπάνη των υπαλλήλων της ΕΕ στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, το πρόσθετο κόστος της απασχόλησής τους/εργασίας τους στην Ελλάδα και οιεσδήποτε άλλες δαπάνες);

2. Σε ό,τι αφορά τη βοήθεια με στόχο τη μεταρρύθμιση της κεντρικής διοίκησης, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει τόσο το ειδικό τριμερές μνημόνιο κατανόησης μεταξύ Ελλάδας, Γαλλίας και της Ομάδας Δράσης καθώς και τη συμφωνία μεταξύ της Ελλάδας, της Γερμανίας και της Ομάδας Δράσης, από κοινού με τον οδικό χάρτη και τις κυριότερες ενέργειες, αρμοδιότητες και χρονοδιαγράμματα για τη μεταρρύθμιση; Επιπλέον, η ανακοίνωση Τύπου «Ένα έτος της Ομάδας Δράσης για την Ελλάδα» (MEMO/12/784), που εξέδωσε η Επιτροπή στις 15 Οκτωβρίου 2012, αναφέρει ότι «βρίσκονται υπό ανάπτυξη προγράμματα δράσης σε περιφερειακή και τοπική διάσταση». Πότε θα είναι έτοιμα τα εν λόγω προγράμματα δράσης;

3. Ποια κράτη μέλη έχουν παράσχει βοήθεια στις ελληνικές αρχές με σκοπό να βελτιωθεί η ελληνική στρατηγική στον τομέα των τεχνολογιών της πληροφορίας και της επικοινωνίας (ΤΠΕ) καθώς και η διοικητική δομή; Ποιο αποτέλεσμα αναμένεται από το εν λόγω έργο;

4. Σε ό,τι αφορά τη μεταρρύθμιση του ιατροφαρμακευτικού τομέα στην Ελλάδα, η ανακοίνωση Τύπου αναφέρει ότι η Ομάδα Δράσης «συμμετέχει ενεργά στις προσπάθειες των ελληνικών αρχών να σχεδιάσουν ένα συνεκτικό σύστημα τιμολόγησης και επιστροφής του καταβληθέντος αντιτίμου των φαρμακευτικών προϊόντων με βάση δεσμεύσεις που υφίστανται στο μνημόνιο κατανόησης». Με ποιο τρόπο εμπλέκεται η Ομάδα Δράσης στις εν λόγω προσπάθειες και ποια υπήρξε η συμβολή της στην επιτάχυνση της μεταρρύθμισης του ιατροφαρμακευτικού τομέα στην Ελλάδα;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Μαρτίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην απάντηση που είχε δώσει στη γραπτή ερώτηση E9413/2012 ([1]).

2. Τα δύο μνημόνια συμφωνίας αποστέλλονται απευθείας στο Αξιότιμο Μέλος και στη Γραμματεία του Κοινοβουλίου. Όσον αφορά την τοπική διάσταση, βρίσκονται σε εξέλιξη εργασίες για να καθοριστούν αναλυτικά σχέδια δράσης με βάση τον χάρτη πορείας που ορίζεται στη συμφωνία μεταξύ της Ελλάδας, της Γερμανίας και της Ομάδας Δράσης για την Ελλάδα ([2]).

3. Η Αυστρία διαβίβασε στις ελληνικές αρχές προκαταρκτικά σχόλια για την εκπόνηση της συνολικής στρατηγικής της στον τομέα των ΤΠΕ και της ηλεκτρονικής διακυβέρνησης, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ανάγκης καθοδήγησης, καθορισμού προτεραιοτήτων και συνοχής με τις άλλες πολιτικές. Άλλα κράτη μέλη (το Βέλγιο, η Γαλλία, η Ισπανία, η Εσθονία, η Σουηδία) και η Επιτροπή είχαν επίσης διμερείς συναντήσεις με τις ελληνικές αρχές για την ανταλλαγή πρακτικών για την πιο ειδικά θέματα (συνδεσιμότητα, ηλεκτρονική υπογραφή, μητρώα, ασφάλεια, κλπ) και έργα (ηλεκτρονική δικαιοσύνη, ηλεκτρονική συνταγογράφηση, κ.λπ.). Η εν λόγω συνδρομή παρέχεται σε συντονισμό με την Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα.

4. Η Επιτελική Επιτροπή Μεταρρύθμισης Υγείας που συγκροτήθηκε τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2012, είναι υπεύθυνη για την ανάπτυξη, τον συντονισμό και την παρακολούθηση της εφαρμογής του από κοινού συμφωνηθέντος χάρτη πορείας για τις μεταρρυθμίσεις στον τομέα της υγείας στην Ελλάδα, εν μέρει μέσω της επίβλεψης του έργου καθεμίας από τις οκτώ θεματικές υποεπιτροπές. Μία από τις εν λόγω οκτώ υποεπιτροπές είναι υπεύθυνη για την ανάπτυξη, τον συντονισμό και την εφαρμογή της μεταρρύθμισης στην τιμολόγηση και την επιστροφή των εξόδων για φαρμακευτικά προϊόντα. Η Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα συμμετέχει στη διοικούσα επιτροπή και λαμβάνει ενεργό μέρος στο έργο της και σε εκείνο όλων των υποεπιτροπών.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα.

Στο πλαίσιο της προετοιμασίας της για τις προτάσεις που πρέπει να επεξεργαστεί, η Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα οργάνωσε τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 αποστολή αξιολόγησης ειδικά για την τιμολόγηση και την επιστροφή των εξόδων για φαρμακευτικά προϊόντα με εμπειρογνώμονες από τη Γερμανία και από τη σχολή London School of Economics.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000140/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Task Force for Greece: financial cost, reform of central administration, ICT and healthcare reform

Now that the Task Force for Greece, aimed at providing and coordinating the technical assistance that Greece needs in order to strengthen and accelerate its reform process, has been in operation for one year, could the Commission please state:

1. What has been the financial cost of the Task Force for Greece since the start of its operations in September 2011, including the opportunity cost (itemising separately the salary cost of the EU officials to the European Union, the additional cost of their employment/occupation/work in Greece, and any other costs)?

2. As regards assistance with the objective of central administrative reform, could the Commission provide both the specific trilateral Memorandum of Understanding between Greece, France and the Task Force and the agreement between Greece, Germany and the Task Force, together with the road map on the main steps, responsibilities and timetable for the reform? Furthermore, the press release 'One year of Task Force for Greece' (MEMO/12/784), issued by the Commission on 15 October 2012, mentions that 'in the regional and local dimension, action plans are under development'. When will these action plans be ready?

3. Which Member States have provided assistance to the Greek authorities in order to improve the Greek Information Communications Technology (ICT) strategy and management structure? What outcome is expected from this project?

4. Concerning the healthcare reform in Greece, the press release states that the Task Force is 'closely involved in the efforts of the Greek authorities to design a coherent system of pricing and reimbursement of pharmaceuticals on the basis of commitments in the memorandum of understanding'. How is the Task Force involved in these efforts and what has been its contribution towards the acceleration of the healthcare reform in Greece?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2013)

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-9413/2012 ([1]).

2. The two Memoranda of Understanding are sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat. Regarding the local dimension, work is ongoing to establish detailed action plans, on the basis of the roadmap defined in the agreement between Greece, Germany and the TFGR ([2]).

3. Austria has provided the Greek Authorities with a preliminary feedback for drafting its global ICT and e-Government strategy, including the need for steering and setting-up priorities and coherence with other policies. Other Member States (Belgium, France, Spain, Estonia, Sweden) and the Commission also had bilateral meetings with the Greek Authorities to exchange practices on more specific topics (interconnectivity, eSignature, registries; security, etc) and projects (eJustice, ePrescription, etc). This assistance is provided in coordination with the TFGR.

4. Established in September 2012, the Health Reform Steering Committee is responsible for developing, coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the commonly agreed Road Map on Health Reforms in Greece, in part by overseeing the work of each of the eight thematic sub-committees. One of those eight Sub-Committees is responsible for the development, coordination and implementation of the reform in pricing and reimbursement of pharmaceuticals. The TFGR participates to the steering committee and thereof is closely involved with its works and with that of all sub-committees.

5. To provide the necessary input, the TFGR organised in December 2012 an assessment mission dedicated to pricing and reimbursement of pharmaceuticals with experts from Germany and the London School of Economics.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Task Force for Greece.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000141/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ομάδα δράσης (Task Force) για την Ελλάδα: ταμεία για την πολιτική συνοχής, πρόσβαση σε χρηματοδότηση, καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες, καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς, επιχειρηματικό περιβάλλον, Ελεγκτικό Συνέδριο

Με την ευκαιρία της συμπλήρωσης ενός έτους λειτουργίας της «Ομάδας Δράσης για την Ελλάδα» σχετικά με την παροχή και το συντονισμό τεχνικής βοήθειας που χρειάζεται η Ελλάδα με σκοπό να ενισχύσει/επιταχύνει τη μεταρρυθμιστική της διαδικασία, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στις ακόλουθες ερωτήσεις:

1. Σε ό,τι αφορά την επιτάχυνση των έργων στον τομέα της πολιτικής συνοχής, τι είδους υποστήριξη παρείχε η εν λόγω ομάδα δράσης στις ελληνικές αρχές, και τι προτάσεις παρουσίασε; Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η βοήθεια που δόθηκε επιτάχυνε την απορρόφηση των πιστώσεων της ΕΕ;

2. Τι μέσο έχει αναπτυχθεί ώστε να υπάρχει εγγύηση των τραπεζικών δανείων σε μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις; Σε ποιο βαθμό έχει υλοποιηθεί το εν λόγω μέσο, και ποια είναι τα ειδικά αποτελέσματα από απόψεως δανείων προς μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις;

3. Σύμφωνα με ανακοινωθέν Τύπου της Επιτροπής της 15ης Οκτωβρίου 2012 ([1]), η Ελλάδα ζήτησε από μία διεθνή επιτροπή να εξετάσει τη σκοπιμότητα δημιουργίας ενός Οργανισμού για την οικονομική ανάπτυξη στη χώρα. Στις αρχές του Οκτωβρίου 2012, η επιτροπή παρουσίασε την πρότασή της στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση. Ποιο ήταν το ειδικό περιεχόμενο της εν λόγω προτάσεως; Σε ποιο βαθμό έχει αυτή υλοποιηθεί;

4. Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να παράσχει συγκεκριμένες πληροφορίες για το περιεχόμενο του οδικού χάρτη σχετικά με την καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες καθώς και για το συμφωνηθέν πρόγραμμα δράσης σχετικά με την πρόληψη, εντοπισμό και δίωξη κρουσμάτων διαφθοράς;

5. Τι περιλαμβάνει ο ειδικός χάρτης για το ελληνικό Ελεγκτικό Συνέδριο; Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να παράσχει αντίγραφο του εν λόγω εγγράφου;

6. Σύμφωνα με την προαναφερθείσα ανακοίνωση Τύπου «πολλά υποσχόμενη εργασία πραγματοποιείται σχετικά με την προπαρασκευή ενός οδικού χάρτη για την προώθηση των εξαγωγών. Η ομάδα δράσης έχει συμβάλει στην προετοιμασία νομοθετικών μεταρρυθμίσεων όσον αφορά τον κώδικα βιβλίων και στοιχείων (τήρηση φορολογικού μητρώου)». Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να εξηγήσει με ποιο τρόπο συνέβαλε η ομάδα δράσης στην εν λόγω προετοιμασία και ποια πρακτική επίπτωση είχε η εν λόγω συνεισφορά;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2013)

1. Η ΟΔΕ (Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα) και άλλες υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής εργάζονται κυρίως για α) τον εντοπισμό των αναγκών και την παροχή ΤΒ ([2]), β) την απλούστευση των διοικητικών διαδικασιών, γ) τη διευκόλυνση της ρευστότητας στην Ελληνική οικονομία ([3]).

2. Η Ελλάδα έθεσε σε εφαρμογή ένα μέσον εγγυήσεων χαρτοφυλακίου πρώτης ζημίας μέσω του δημόσιου φορέα ΕΤΕΑΝ ([4]). Ο φορέας αυτός θα παρέχει εγγυήσεις σε τράπεζες και θα μειώσει την ανάγκη για εξασφαλίσεις που πρέπει να παράσχουν οι ΜΜΕ προκειμένου να λάβουν δάνειο. Μπορούν να εκδοθούν εγγυήσεις άνω των 350 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ. Μετά από υποβολή προσφοράς, το ΕΤΕΑΝ διαπραγματεύεται τις συμβάσεις. Παράλληλα, η Ελλάδα εφάρμοσε μέτρα σε συνεργασία με την ΕΤΕπ για την παροχή ρευστότητας μέσω των τραπεζών, ανώτατου ποσού 1,44 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, και η ΕΤΕπ θέτει επί του παρόντος σε εφαρμογή ένα Πρόγραμμα ενίσχυσης της χρηματοδότησης του εμπορίου, ύψους 350 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ, στη διάθεση των ελληνικών ΜΜΕ με τη μορφή δανείων.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-784_en.htm
([2]) Τεχνική Βοήθεια.
([3]) Η απορρόφηση των κονδυλίων της πολιτικής συνοχής έχει βελτιωθεί κατά τους τελευταίους 18 μήνες. Για περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες, συμβουλευθείτε τις εκθέσεις της ΟΔΕ στη διεύθυνση http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm
([4]) ΕΤΕΑΝ: Εθνικό Ταμείο Επιχειρηματικότητας και Ανάπτυξης.

3. Τον Οκτώβριο του 2012, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ανέθεσε μελέτη ([5]) για τον προσδιορισμό προσωρινών και διαρθρωτικών κενών χρηματοδότησης στην ελληνική αγορά, καθώς και για το κατά πόσον η σύσταση ενός «Οργανισμού για την Ανάπτυξη» μπορεί να προσδώσει προστιθέμενη αξία, συμπληρώνοντας τον ιδιωτικό τομέα στη δημιουργία πρόσθετων πηγών χρηματοδότησης. Η μελέτη και οι συστάσεις ([6]) της διευθύνουσας επιτροπής υποβλήθηκαν στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση, η οποία θα λάβει απόφαση για τα επόμενα βήματα.

4. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει στο έγγραφο E-8378/2012 (παράρτημα) ([7]).

5. Επικεντρώνεται στην ενδυνάμωση των σχέσεων του Ελεγκτικού Συνεδρίου με τη Βουλή, στην προετοιμασία ενός ετήσιου προγράμματος ελέγχου και στη δημιουργία ικανών ελεγκτικών υποδομών. Ο χάρτης πορείας επισυνάπτεται στην παρούσα απάντηση.

6. Η ΟΔΕ μερίμνησε για την εκπόνηση επιχειρησιακού σχεδίου, μέσω της ολλανδικής ΤΒ, για την καλύτερη προώθηση των εξαγωγών (π.χ. εμπορικά σήματα, δημιουργία θεσμών) και έχει παράσχει εκτεταμένη συνδρομή στις αναθεωρήσεις του Κώδικα Βιβλίων και Στοιχείων. Ορισμένες εναπομένουσες ελλείψεις πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστούν μέσω δεύτερης επανεξέτασης, για την οποία θα παρασχεθεί πρόσθετη ΤΒ.

([5]) Τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, ορίστηκε διεθνής εταιρεία συμβούλων διαχείρισης, η οποία ολοκλήρωσε τη μελέτη τον Φεβρουάριο του 2013.

([6]) Οι εν λόγω συστάσεις ανέφεραν ότι η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, για βάσιμους λόγους, θα μπορούσε να εξετάσει τη δημιουργία Οργανισμού για την Ανάπτυξη, στο πλαίσιο των δημόσιων πρωτοβουλιών στήριξης των επενδύσεων στην Ελλάδα, και να αναμένει ότι ο εν λόγω οργανισμός θα μπορούσε να συμβάλει σημαντικά στην ανάπτυξη της οικονομίας της. Επιπλέον, η επιτροπή έχει προτείνει, στην αρχική της έκθεση του Οκτωβρίου 2012, ως πλέον κατάλληλη οργανωτική μορφή για τον Οργανισμό για την Ανάπτυξη, ένα ταμείο με έδρα το Λουξεμβούργο (SICAV) που να λειτουργεί με δομή διαχείρισης και διακυβέρνησης σύμφωνα με τα βέλτιστα διεθνή πρότυπα.

([7]) Ο χάρτης πορείας για την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς είναι διαθέσιμος στη διεύθυνση http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/pdf/roadmap_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000141/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Task Force for Greece: cohesion policy funds, access to finance, efforts to combat money laundering and corruption, business environment, Court of Audit

On the occasion of the completion of the first year of operations of the Task Force for Greece, tasked with providing and coordinating the technical assistance that Greece needs in order to strengthen and accelerate its reform process, could the Commission answer the following.

1. Concerning the acceleration of cohesion policy projects, what kind of support did the Task Force provide to the Greek authorities, and what proposals did it present? Does the Commission consider that the assistance provided has accelerated the absorption of EU funds?

2. What instrument has been developed to guarantee bank lending to small and medium-sized businesses? To what extent has this instrument been implemented, and what are the specific results in terms of lending to small and medium-sized enterprises?

3. According to a Commission press release of 15 October 2012 ([1]), Greece has asked an international committee to examine the opportunity to create an Institution for Growth in the country. At the beginning of October 2012, the committee presented its proposal to the Greek Government. What was the specific content of this proposal? To what extent has it been implemented?

4. Can the Commission provide concrete information on the content of the road map on Anti-Money Laundering and on the agreed action plan on the prevention, detection and prosecution of corruption?

5. What does the road map for the Hellenic Court of Audit include? Can the Commission provide a copy of the document?

6. According to the abovementioned press release, 'promising work is underway on the preparation of a road map for export promotion. The Task Force has contributed to the preparation of legislative reforms for the Code of Books and Records (tax record-keeping)'. Can the Commission explain how the Task Force has contributed to this preparation and what practical effect this contribution has had?

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

1. TFGR and other Commission services mainly work on a) identifying needs and providing TA ([2]); b) simplifying administrative procedures; c) facilitating liquidity to the Greek economy ([3]).

2. Greece put in place a first loss portfolio guarantee instrument by the public agency ETEAN ([4]). This will provide guarantees to banks and will reduce the need for collateral SMEs have to provide for loans. Guarantees of more than EUR 350 million can be issued. Following a tender, ETEAN is negotiating the contracts. In addition Greece implemented measures with the EIB to provide liquidity via banks for up to 1.44 bn EUR and the EIB is currently rolling out a Trade Finance Enhancement EUR 350 million to the Greek SME sector in the form of loans.

3. In Oct' 2012 the Greek Government commissioned a study ([5]) to determine temporal and structural financing gaps in the Greek market and whether an 'Institution for Growth' could add value by supplementing the private sector in creating additional funding sources. The study and recommendations ([6]) from the Steering Committee were submitted to the Greek Government. The decision on the next steps rests with the Greek Government.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-784_en.htm
([2]) Technical Assistance.
([3]) The take up of cohesion policy funds has improved over last 18 months. For details see the TFGR's reports http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm
([4]) ETEAN: Hellenic Fund for Entrepreneurship and Development.
([5]) An international management consultancy firm was appointed in December 2012 and completed the study in February 2013.
([6]) These recommendations stated that there were solid grounds for the Greek Government to consider the establishment of IfG within the framework of public initiatives to support investment in Greece and to expect that it could make a valuable contribution to the development of its economy. In addition, the Committee has proposed in its initial report in October 2012 that the most suitable organisational format for IfG would be a Luxembourg based fund (SICAV) working with a management and governance structure according to best international standards.

4. The Commission refers to E-8378/2012 (annex) ([7]).

5. It focuses on strengthening the relations of the court of audit with the parliament, the preparation of an annual audit programme and building financial audit capacity and the roadmap is attached to this reply.

6. TFGR has arranged for Dutch TA in developing a blue-print for better export promotion (e.g. branding, institution building) and has provided extensive input to the revisions of the Code of Books and Records. Some remaining shortcomings have to be addressed through a second review for which additional TA will be provided.

([7]) The roadmap on anti-corruption is accessible under http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/pdf/roadmap_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000143/13
al Consejo
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Coste de la jubilación anticipada

Las medidas en relación al retraso de la edad para acceder a la jubilación anticipada propuestas por el Gobierno español se han justificado por el coste económico que esta supone para el sistema. A pesar de haberlo solicitado, el Gobierno no ha facilitado los datos del supuesto ahorro, ni la comparación de los costes actuales con los del posible nuevo marco legal para la jubilación anticipada. Dicha medida se ha presentado como el cumplimiento de los compromisos del Gobierno español ante la UE.

1. ¿Es una recomendación del Consejo el retraso de la edad de jubilación en el Estado español?

2. ¿Pude concretar el Consejo cuáles son los costes medios de las jubilaciones anticipadas para el sistema de la seguridad social?

3. ¿Qué fórmula de cálculo ha utilizado el Gobierno para calcular el coste medio de la jubilación anticipada actual y de la jubilación anticipada una vez reformada?

4. ¿Qué criterios ha utilizado el Gobierno para evaluar el coste del retraso de la edad para acceder a la jubilación anticipada?

Respuesta
(4 de marzo de 2013)

La Recomendación del Consejo de 10 de julio de 2012 sobre el Programa Nacional de Reforma de de 2012 de España y por la que emite un dictamen del Consejo sobre el Programa de Estabilidad de España para 2012-2015 ([1]), prevé que España debería: *«asegurar que la edad de jubilación vaya aumentando en función de la esperanza de vida a la hora de regular el factor de sostenibilidad previsto en la reciente reforma del sistema de pensiones y respaldar la Estrategia global para el empleo de los trabajadores y las trabajadoras de más edad con medidas concretas encaminadas a desarrollar más el aprendizaje permanente, mejorar las condiciones laborales y fomentar la reincorporación de este grupo de trabajadores al mercado de trabajo.»*

Encaminada a disminuir el efecto creciente de envejecimiento de la población sobre el gasto público en pensiones, España adoptó reformas de las pensiones en 2011 y 2012. Las reformas incluían disposiciones para retrasar la edad de jubilación anticipada de 61 a 63.

Se espera que España presente información sobre estas reformas a la Comisión en el contexto del Semestre Europeo de 2013. En su caso, el Consejo, por recomendación de la Comisión, puede dirigir una nueva recomendación específica por país a España. Dicha recomendación de la Comisión no puede llegar al Consejo hasta una etapa posterior del procedimiento del Semestre Europeo.

Para más información sobre el impacto en el gasto en pensiones de las reformas aplicadas en cada uno de los Estados Miembros, y en particular en España, remitimos a Su Señoría al amplio trabajo llevado a cabo por el grupo de trabajo sobre el envejecimiento, reflejado en el Informe sobre Envejecimiento de 2012, recientemente publicado por la Comisión Europea y por el Comité de Política Económica ([2]).

([1]) DO C 219 de 24.7.2012, p. 81.
([2]) 9491/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000143/13
to the Council
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Cost of early retirement

The Spanish Government has argued that its proposals for increasing the early retirement age are fair because of the economic cost of early retirement for the pension system. Although the Government has been asked to provide figures showing how much the new early retirement rules would save, it has so far failed to do so. Nor has it provided a comparison between the costs of the current and the proposed new arrangements. The Government's proposal has been presented as necessary under Spain's economic commitments to the EU.

1. Did the Council recommend that Spain raise the retirement age?

2. What is the average cost of early retirement for the social security system?

3. How did the Spanish Government work out the average cost of the current early retirement arrangements and the cost of the new arrangements?

4. What criteria did the Spanish Government use to assess the cost of increasing the early retirement age?

Reply
(4 March 2013)

The Council Recommendation of 10 July 2012 on the National Reform Programme 2012 of Spain and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme for Spain, 2012-2015 ([1]), provides that Spain should 'ensure that the retirement age is rising in line with life expectancy when regulating the sustainability factor foreseen in the recent pension reform and underpin the Global Employment Strategy for Older Workers with concrete measures to develop lifelong learning further, improve working conditions and foster the reincorporation of this group in the job market.'

In order to diminish the increasing effect of an ageing society on public pension expenditure, Spain adopted pension reforms in 2011 and 2012. The reforms included provisions for increasing the early retirement age from 61 to 63.

Any information about these reforms is expected to be submitted to the Commission by Spain in the context of the 2013 European Semester. Where appropriate, the Council, on a recommendation from the Commission, may address a new country-specific recommendation to Spain. Such a recommendation from the Commission may reach the Council only at a later stage of the European Semester procedure.

For details about the impact on pension expenditure of reforms implemented in individual Member States, and in particular in Spain, we would refer the Honourable Member to the comprehensive work carried out by the Ageing Working Group, reflected in the 2012 Ageing Report recently published by the European Commission and the Economic Policy Committee ([2]).

([1]) OJ C 219, 24.7.2012, p. 81.
([2]) 9491/12.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000144/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ελευθερία έκφρασης στην Ελλάδα

Στις 11 Οκτωβρίου 2012, μέλη άτυπων θρησκευτικών ομάδων και βουλευτές της Χρυσής Αυγής προσπάθησαν να αποτρέψουν το ανέβασμα ενός θεατρικού έργου στην Αθήνα, με το αιτιολογικό ότι το θέμα του έργου βλασφημούσε τη Χριστιανοσύνη. Οι άνθρωποι αυτοί κατάφεραν να διαπεράσουν τις ειδικές αστυνομικές δυνάμεις και ξεκίνησαν αντιπαραθέσεις με θεατές, δημοσιογράφους, ηθοποιούς, κ.λπ. ([1]).

Στη διάρκεια αυτών των επεισοδίων, ένας βουλευτής της Χρυσής Αυγής, αμφισβητώντας προφανώς το κράτος δικαίου, ελευθέρωσε έναν διαδηλωτή που είχε συλληφθεί από την αστυνομία. Ταυτόχρονα, κομματικά μέλη και βουλευτές της Χρυσής Αυγής φώναζαν προς το συγκεντρωμένο πλήθος και εκτόξευαν ομοφοβικά συνθήματα και απειλές («θα έρθει και η σειρά σας»)· ένας δημοσιογράφος ισχυρίζεται επίσης ότι ξυλοκοπήθηκε από βουλευτή ανήκοντα στη Χρυσή Αυγή, χωρίς να υπάρξει η δέουσα αντίδραση από την αστυνομία ([2]) ([3]).

Καθώς η Επιτροπή αποτελεί τον θεματοφύλακα των Συνθηκών (άρθρο 211 της Συνθήκης ΕΚ), και λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα άρθρα 10(1), 11(1) και 13 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ, θα ήθελα να ερωτήσω τα εξής:

Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή τα προαναφερθέντα περιστατικά;

Θεωρεί ότι τα επεισόδια αυτά (προσπάθεια παρεμπόδισης του ανεβάσματος θεατρικού έργου, αυθαίρετη ελευθέρωση συλληφθέντων, απειλές με βάση τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό, ξυλοδαρμός δημοσιογράφων, και αποποίηση δημοκρατικών αρχών από βουλευτές) είναι σύμφωνα με τις συνθήκες της ΕΕ και με τον Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων;

Θεωρεί αποδεκτή την αμφισβήτηση του δικαιώματος στην ελεύθερη καλλιτεχνική έκφραση με αποδοκιμασίες και βία;

Πώς θα διασφαλίσει η Επιτροπή ότι το δικαίωμα στην ελευθερία έκφρασης δεν περιορίζεται από ακραία πολιτικά κόμματα ή από οιεσδήποτε άλλες φονταμενταλιστικές δυνάμεις;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει δεσμευθεί πλήρως εντός των ορίων των αρμοδιοτήτων της να διασφαλίζει την πλήρη συμμόρφωση της νομοθεσίας της Ένωσης με τον Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 51 παράγραφος 1 του Χάρτη, οι διατάξεις του απευθύνονται στα κράτη μέλη μόνο όταν αυτά εφαρμόζουν το δίκαιο της Ένωσης. Το νομικό πλαίσιο της διοργάνωσης πολιτιστικών εκδηλώσεων στα κράτη μέλη και της αστυνόμευσης των εκδηλώσεων αυτών δεν εμπίπτει στο πεδίο εφαρμογής του δικαίου της Ένωσης.

Σ' αυτές τις περιπτώσεις, τα κράτη μέλη, και ιδίως οι δικαστικές τους αρχές, πρέπει να διασφαλίζουν την αποτελεσματική τήρηση και προστασία των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων σύμφωνα με την εθνική τους νομοθεσία και τις διεθνείς τους υποχρεώσεις όσον αφορά τα δικαιώματα του ανθρώπου.

([1]) http://www.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_kathremote_1_11/10/2012_465763
([2]) http://www.ethnos.gr/article.asp?catid=22767&subid=2&pubid=63723866
([3]) http://www.newsbeast.gr/greece/arthro/427194/me-akolouthei-gnostos-vouleutis-kai-mou-rihnei-duo-bounies-sto-prosopo/ http://www.iefimerida.gr/news/71793/%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%AF%CF%89%CE%BD%CE%B1%CF%82-%CF%87%CF%81%CF%85%CF%83%CE%B1%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%AF%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%82-%CE%B2%CE%BF%CF%85%CE%BB%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%84%CE%AD%CF%82-%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B9-%CF%80%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%AF-%CE%B5%CE%BC%CF%80%CF%8C%CE%B4%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%BD-%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B7-%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%8E%CF%81%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%BD-%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%86%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%B7

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000144/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Freedom of expression in Greece

On 11 October 2012 members of informal religious groups and Golden Dawn Members of the Greek Parliament tried to prevent the staging of a theatre play in Athens, on the grounds that the play's theme was blasphemous against Christianity. They managed to pass through the special police corps forces and initiated confrontations with viewers, journalists, actors, etc. ([1]).

During these incidents a Golden Dawn MP, obviously contesting the rule of law, freed a protester who had been arrested by the police. At the same time Golden Dawn party members and MPs were shouting at the crowd and firing off homophobic comments and threats ('your turn will come'); a journalist also claims to have been beaten by an MP belonging to Golden Dawn without any adequate response from the police ([2])([3]).

Given that the Commission is the guardian of the Treaties (Article 211 of the EC Treaty), and taking into consideration Articles 10(1), 11(1) and 13 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, I should like to ask the following questions:

Is the Commission aware of the abovementioned incidents?

Does it consider these episodes (trying to prevent a play taking place, arbitrary freeing of arrestees, threats based on sexual orientation, beating of journalists, and MPs renouncing democratic principles) to be compatible with the EU treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

Does it consider it acceptable for the right of free artistic expression to be compromised by jeering and violence?

How will the Commission ensure that the right to freedom of expression is not restricted by extreme political parties or any other kind of fundamentalist forces?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission is fully committed within the boundaries of its competences to ensure that Union legislation fully complies with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

According to its Article 51(1), the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. The legal framework for the organisation of cultural events in the Member States and the organisation of policing of such events does not fall within the competence of Union Law.

In such cases, it is for Member States, including their judicial authorities, to ensure that fundamental rights are effectively respected and protected in accordance with their national legislation and international human rights obligations.

([1]) http://www.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_kathremote_1_11/10/2012_465763
([2]) http://www.ethnos.gr/article.asp?catid=22767&subid=2&pubid=63723866
([3]) http://www.newsbeast.gr/greece/arthro/427194/me-akolouthei-gnostos-vouleutis-kai-mou-rihnei-duo-bounies-sto-prosopo/, http://www.iefimerida.gr/news/71793/%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%AF%CF%89%CE%BD%CE%B1%CF%82-%CF%87%CF%81%CF%85%CF%83%CE%B1%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%AF%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%82-%CE%B2%CE%BF%CF%85%CE%BB%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%84%CE%AD%CF%82-%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B9-%CF%80%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%AF-%CE%B5%CE%BC%CF%80%CF%8C%CE%B4%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%BD-%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B7-%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%8E%CF%81%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%BD-%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%86%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%B7

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000145/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(8 januari 2013)

Betreft: Top vijftig van landen waar christenen worden vervolgd

De organisatie „Open Doors" heeft een top vijftig gepubliceerd van landen waar christenen op grond van hun overtuiging worden vervolgd. De top tien daarvan is als volgt:

1. Noord-Korea
2. Saoedi-Arabië
3. Afghanistan
4. Irak
5. Somalië
6. Malediven
7. Mali
8. Iran
9. Jemen
10. Eritrea

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de door „Open Doors" gepubliceerde top vijftig van landen waar christenen op grond van hun overtuiging worden vervolgd ([1])?

2. Deelt de Commissie de conclusie dat het feit dat Saoedi-Arabië, Afghanistan, Irak, Somalië, de Malediven, Mali, Iran, Jemen en Eritrea op de plekken 2 t/m 10 staan, verband houdt met de aldaar overheersende islamitische ideologie? Zo neen, hoe verklaart de Commissie dan dat deze (islamitische) landen op deze plekken staan?

3. Trekt de Commissie conclusies uit de top vijftig ten aanzien van de EU-ontwikkelingshulp? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat landen waar christenen worden vervolgd géén ontwikkelingsgeld van de EU dienen te ontvangen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(19 maart 2013)

De Commissie is bekend met de „Open Doors World Watch list". De EU volgt de situatie van personen die tot religieuze minderheden behoren over de hele wereld op de voet, ongeacht de heersende religie van het betreffende land, en zet zich in om de discriminatie, de onverdraagzaamheid en het geweld waarmee velen van hen worden geconfronteerd een halt toe te roepen.

EU-delegaties controleren de vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging in hun respectieve gastlanden en brengen verslag uit aan het hoofdkwartier van de Europese Dienst voor extern optreden (EDEO). De EU gebruikt deze informatie om de situatie ter plaatse te beoordelen en in te grijpen waar nodig. De EU stelt geen landenlijsten op en maakt evenmin opmerkingen over zulke lijsten, maar benadrukt dat er in de dialogen, verklaringen en stappen van de EU met betrekking tot mensenrechtensituaties in veel landen op de lijst van Open Doors ook aandacht wordt besteed aan vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging.

([1]) http://www.opendoors.nl/vervolgdechristenen/ranglijst-christenvervolging/.

De EU is het er niet mee eens dat gevallen van vervolging van om het even welke groep gelovigen automatisch de stopzetting van ontwikkelingshulp tot gevolg moeten hebben. De EU tracht steeds praktische verbeteringen van de toepassing van mensenrechten in derde landen te bevorderen, zelfs in landen met de meest autoritaire regimes. Dit vereist een zorgvuldige afweging van stimulansen en sancties die is afgestemd op de omstandigheden van het land in kwestie. De EU is het er niettemin mee eens dat de mix van positieve en negatieve maatregelen ten aanzien van derde landen moet worden geoptimaliseerd. Daartoe is in het Actieplan voor de mensenrechten (actie 33(a)) bepaald dat de EU zal zorgen voor het „Verder ontwikkelen van werkmethoden voor het beste samenspel van dialoog, gerichte steun, stimulansen en beperkende maatregelen".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000145/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(8 January 2013)

Subject: Top 50 countries where Christians are persecuted

Open Doors has published a list of the top 50 countries where Christians are persecuted because of their faith. The top 10 countries on this list are:

1. North Korea
2. Saudi Arabia
3. Afghanistan
4. Iraq
5. Somalia
6. The Maldives
7. Mali
8. Iran
9. Yemen
10. Eritrea

1. Is the Commission familiar with Open Doors' list of the top 50 countries where Christians are persecuted because of their faith? ([1])

2. Does it agree with the conclusion that Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, the Maldives, Mali, Iran, Yemen and Eritrea are listed in places 2-10 due to the dominance of Islamic ideology there? If not, how does it explain these (Islamic) countries' position on the list?

3. Does it draw any conclusions from the top 50 list with regard to EU development aid? Does it agree that countries where Christians are persecuted should not receive EU development aid?

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

The Commission is aware of the Open Doors World Watch list. The EU pays close attention to the situation of people belonging to religious minorities around the world, regardless of the dominant religion of the country at stake, and is working to end the discrimination, intolerance and violence that affect many of them.

EU Delegations monitor the state of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in their respective host countries and report to European External Action Service (EEAS) headquarters. The EU uses this information to assess the situation on the ground and to engage whenever necessary. The EU does not compile lists of countries nor does it comment on any such list, but underlines that dialogues, statements and demarches carried out by the EU on the Human Rights situations of many of the countries mentioned in the Open Doors' list include a focus on freedom of religion or belief.

([1]) http://www.opendoors.nl/vervolgdechristenen/ranglijst-christenvervolging/.

The EU does not agree that instances of persecution of any group of religious believers should lead automatically to the termination of development aid. The EU always aims to promote practical improvements in the implementation of human rights in third countries, even in those with the most authoritarian systems. This requires a careful balancing of incentives and sanctions, tailored to the circumstances of the country in question. The EU nevertheless agrees that the calibration of the correct mix of positive and negative measures towards third countries requires further refinement; to this end, the Human Rights Action Plan (action 33(a)) provides that the EU will: (a) Further develop working methods to ensure the best articulation between dialogue, targeted support, incentives and restrictive measures.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000146/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(9 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Kary grzywny za zdjęcia z portretem Bialackiego

5 stycznia 2013 r. sąd w Grodnie skazał trzech obrońców praw człowieka, którzy sfotografowali się z podobiznami szefa Centrum Praw Człowieka „Viasna" Alesia Bialackiego, na grzywny w wysokości 1,5 mln rubli białoruskich.

Aktywiści: Wiktar Sazonau, Raman Jurhel i Uładzimir Chilmanowicz 10 grudnia ubiegłego roku, z okazji Międzynarodowego Dnia Praw Człowieka, sfotografowali się z deklaracją praw człowieka oraz plakatami przedstawiającymi Bialackiego, jeden z nich miał na sobie dodatkowo koszulkę z podobizną szefa „Viasny". Grodzieńska milicja zakwalifikowała tę akcję jako „nielegalną pikietę". Jak twierdzą dziennikarze obecni na rozprawie, podczas procesu nie przedstawiono żadnych dowodów winy, a podstawą dla wyroku stały się zeznania milicjantów.

Fala represji białoruskich władz wobec działaczy społecznych i przedstawicieli opozycji narasta. Obywatelom odmawia się prawa do manifestowania swoich poglądów i udziału w pokojowych akcjach protestu.

W związku z tym, pragnę zapytać Komisję, czy ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie grzywny dla obrońców praw człowieka z Grodna i wyrazić stanowczy sprzeciw wobec represjonowania aktywistów i przedstawicieli opozycji w tym kraju?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(28 lutego 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wie o sprawie trzech białoruskich obrońców praw człowieka, oskarżonych o udział w nielegalnej pikiecie, w trakcie której sfotografowali się z podobizną uwięzionego obrońcy praw człowieka Alesia Bialackiego, a następnie zamieścili fotografię na stronie internetowej organizacji praw człowieka „Viasna". W dniu 29 stycznia Sąd Okręgowy w Grodnie rozpatrzy odwołanie od wyroku (nakładającego grzywnę w wysokości 1,5 mln rubli, czyli 170 dolarów, na każdego z obrońców). W przypadku jego odrzucenia istnieje możliwość wniesienia sprawy do Białoruskiego Sądu Najwyższego.

Delegatura UE w Mińsku uważnie obserwuje proces sądowy w sprawie oskarżonych obrońców praw człowieka na Białorusi. Podczas każdego spotkania UE z władzami białoruskimi w Mińsku i w Brukseli poruszana jest kwestia regularnych aktów represji wobec obrońców praw człowieka i przeciwników reżimu.

UE jest wciąż bardzo zaniepokojona brakiem wolności wypowiedzi i informacjami o prześladowaniu społeczeństwa obywatelskiego na Białorusi i nieprzerwanie wzywa do odejścia od represyjnej polityki.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000146/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Fines for carrying a portrait of Bialiatski

On 5 January 2013 a court in Grodno imposed a fine of 1.5 million Belarusian roubles on three human rights defenders photographed carrying images of Ales Bialiatski, the head of the Viasna Human Rights Centre.

On 10 December 2012, International Human Rights Day, the three activists — Victor Sazonov, Raman Yurhel and Vladimir Khilmanovitch — were photographed carrying a human rights declaration and banners picturing Bialiatski. One of them was also wearing a shirt with an image of the Viasna leader. The police in Grodno deemed this activity to be an 'unlawful picket'. According to journalists present at the trial, no evidence of guilt was presented during the proceedings and the basis for the judgment was the police officers' testimony.

We are seeing a growing wave of repression by the Belarusian authorities against social activists and opposition representatives. Citizens are refused the right to express their views and to participate in peaceful protests.

In this connection, I would like to ask the Commission if it intends to intervene in the aforementioned case of human rights defenders from Grodno being fined, and to voice its resolute opposition to the repression of activists and opposition representatives in this country?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the case of the three Belarusian human rights defenders who were accused of staging an unauthorised demonstration after posing for a photograph displaying imprisoned human rights defender Ales Bialiatski and posting the photo on the Internet page of the human rights organisation Viasna. An appeal to the sentence (a fine each of 1.5 million rubels — USD 170) is scheduled to be heared in the Hrodna Regional Court on 29 January. In the event where the appeal fails, there remains the possibility to submit the case to the Belarusian Supreme Court.

The EU Delegation in Minsk closely follows court proceedings of accused human rights defenders in Belarus. The EU raises the issue of regular acts of repression against human rights defenders and regime critics during every meeting with Belarusian authorities in Minsk and in Brussels.

The EU continues to be very concerned about the lack of freedom of expression and reports of harassment against civil society in Belarus and continue continues to call for repressive policies to be reversed.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000147/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(9 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – „Ustawa antymagnicka" i kolejne represje wobec rosyjskich NGO

1 stycznia 2013 r. w Rosji weszła w życie tak nazywana „ustawa antymagnicka", która nakłada sankcje na obywateli USA i innych państw, którzy łamią prawa obywateli Federacji Rosyjskiej oraz zakazuje Amerykanom adopcji rosyjskich dzieci.

Nie są to jednak jedyne zmiany, jakie wprowadza ten akt normatywny. „Ustawa antymagnicka" uderza w społeczeństwo obywatelskie Rosji i w funkcjonowanie organizacji pozarządowych w tym kraju. Zgodnie z nowym ustawodawstwem swoją działalność będą musiały zaprzestać organizacje pozarządowe finansowane przez USA, natomiast osoby z podwójnym, rosyjsko-amerykańskim obywatelstwem nie będą mogły działać w NGOsach.

Ustawa ta, jak podkreślają rosyjscy działacze praw człowieka, uderzy w dużą ilość organizacji – zagrożona może zostać działalność, między innymi „Memoriału", Międzynarodowego Młodzieżowego Ruchu na rzecz Praw Człowieka, które otrzymują wsparcie finansowe ze Stanów Zjednoczonych, znanego centrum analitycznego Carnegie, filii organizacji Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, czy też Moskiewskiej Grupy Helsińskiej, której szefowa, Ludmiła Alieksiejewa ma dwa paszporty: rosyjski i amerykański.

Pragnę przypomnieć, że to już kolejna ustawa przyjęta przez władze rosyjskie, która uderza w działalność organizacji pozarządowych w Rosji i w sposób rażący narusza wolności obywatelskie w tym kraju. Pod koniec ubiegłego roku w życie weszła ustawa, na mocy której organizacjom pozarządowym zajmującym się w Rosji działalnością polityczną i korzystającym z zagranicznych grantów jest nadawany status „organizacji pełniących funkcje zagranicznych agentów". Organizacje mają być objęte restrykcyjną kontrolą ze strony państwa.

W związku z tym zwracam się z zapytaniem, czy Wiceprzewodnicząca posiada informacje o „ustawie antymagnickiej" i ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie ograniczania przez rosyjskie władze praw i swobód obywatelskich w tym kraju?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(14 marca 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca uważnie śledzi dyskusję, która doprowadziła do przyjęcia „ustawy antymagnickiej" w Federacji Rosyjskiej. Ustawa ta jest odpowiedzią na przyjętą niedawno w Stanach Zjednoczonych „ustawę Magnickiego", lecz wpisuje się ona także w szerszy trend w ustawodawstwie Federacji Rosyjskiej.

Trend ten jest dla UE bardzo niepokojący, czemu Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca konsekwentnie daje wyraz. Wydała ona oświadczenia w związku z przyjęciem wszystkich nowych ustaw. Ponowiła także ten komunikat w Parlamencie Europejskim, między innymi 11 września 2012 r. w Strasburgu podczas debaty w sprawie wykorzystywania w Rosji wymiaru sprawiedliwości do celów politycznych. Podkreśliła w szczególności, że aktualny trend polegający na zastraszaniu politycznym oraz rygorystycznym ustawodawstwie budzi w UE poważny niepokój.

UE przedstawiła także swe opinie na temat sytuacji w Rosji na różnych forach międzynarodowych, w szczególności w ramach Trzeciego Komitetu Zgromadzenia Ogólnego ONZ oraz OBWE. Ponadto kwestie te były jednym z priorytetów konsultacji UE-Rosja w sprawie praw człowieka, które miały miejsce 7 grudnia 2012 r., oraz szczytu UE-Rosja, który odbył się 21 grudnia 2012 r.

UE zamierza nadal z uwagą śledzić te wydarzenia w Federacji Rosyjskiej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000147/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The 'Anti-Magnitsky Act' and further attempts to stifle Russian NGOs

The 'Anti-Magnitsky Act' which came into force on 1 January 2013 lays down penalties for nationals of the United States and other countries who violate the rights of Russian citizens, and prohibits the adoption of Russian children by US nationals.

However, these are not the only changes brought in by the new law, which also strikes a blow against Russian civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in the country. Under the new provisions, NGOs in receipt of funding from the US will no longer be able to operate in the country and people with dual US-Russian nationality will no longer be able to work for NGOs.

As Russian human rights activists point out, the act could jeopardise the work of a large number of organisations, including Memorial and the International Youth Human Rights Movement, which receive financial support from the United States, the famous Carnegie analysis centre, the Russian branches of Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International and the Moscow Helsinki Group, whose leader, Lyudmila Alexeyeva, has two passports — Russian and US.

This is not the first piece of legislation seeking to curb the activities of NGOs in Russia and showing blatant disregard for civil liberties to have been adopted by the Russian authorities. The new act follows close on the heels of a law under which NGOs engaging in political activities in Russia and receiving foreign grants are required to register as 'foreign agents' and are subjected to restrictive state controls, which was adopted late last year.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the 'Anti-Magnitsky Act', and does she intend to make representations to the Russian authorities regarding the imposition of restrictions on civil rights and liberties?

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

HR/VP has been following the debate which led to the adoption of the 'anti-Magnitsky Act' in the Russian Federation very closely. This law comes in response to the Magtnisky bill recently adopted in the United States, but it also is a part of a broader trend of legistative actions in the Russian Federation.

This trend is of great concern to the EU, and the HR/VP has been very vocal in expressing those concerns. She has issued statements on the occasions of passage of all the new laws. She also reiterated this message in front of the European Parliament, *inter alia* when discussing the political use of justice in Russia on 11 September, 2012, in Strasbourg. In particular, she stressed that the recent trend of political intimidation and restrictive legislation was of serious concern to the EU.

The EU also made its views known on the situation in Russia in various international fora, notably the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly and the OSCE. They were also high on the agenda of the EU-Russia human rights consultations, which took place on 7 December, 2012, and the EU-Russia Summit, which took place on 21 December, 2012.

The EU will continue following these developments in the Russian Federation very closely.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000148/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Trasferimento dei detenuti

La Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo di Strasburgo ha recentemente condannato l'Italia per il sovraffollamento delle proprie carceri.

Il rispetto della dignità dei detenuti in quanto esseri umani va assolutamente tutelato, ma vi sono alcune questioni sulle quali la Commissione potrebbe fare luce.

1. In Italia una grande percentuale di detenuti reclusi è di origine straniera, sia comunitaria che soprattutto extracomunitaria. La decisione quadro del Consiglio 2008/909/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali, proponeva un sistema di trasferimento dei detenuti condannati in un paese europeo allo Stato membro di cui sono cittadini, in cui risiedono abitualmente o con il quale comunque hanno stretti legami: può la Commissione indicare quale sia la situazione attuale e i risultati raggiunti da questa iniziativa?

2. Quanti sono i cittadini stranieri attualmente detenuti nei diversi Stati membri e quanti sono stati i casi in cui questo sistema di trasferimento è realmente entrato in vigore all'interno dell'Unione europea?

3. Per quanto riguarda i detenuti extracomunitari, non ritiene la Commissione di dover intraprendere un'azione congiunta per stabilire accordi globali che permettano ai detenuti arrestati in Europa di scontare la loro pena nei rispettivi paesi d'origine?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(21 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte fornite alle interrogazioni scritte E-2438/2012 dell'onorevole Stoyanov, E-6882/2012 dell'onorevole Childers, E-7035/2012 dell'onorevole Romero López, E-7488/2012 dell'onorevole Griesbeck, E-9607/2012 dell'onorevole Particiello, E-10564/2012 dell'onorevole Angelilli e E-8766/2012 degli onorevoli Romeva i Rueda e altri ([1]).

Il termine di attuazione della decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI relativa al trasferimento dei detenuti è scaduto il 5 dicembre 2011. Attualmente 13 Stati membri (AT, BE, DK, FI, HU, IT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, SK e UK) hanno notificato l'attuazione della direttiva alla Commissione. La Commissione segue attentamente l'attuazione della decisione quadro da parte degli Stati membri. A tal fine, e per velocizzare il processo di attuazione, nel 2012 la Commissione ha organizzato diverse riunioni di esperti e nel primo semestre del 2013 pubblicherà una relazione sull'attuazione delle tre decisioni quadro in materia di detenzione ([2]).

Per quanto riguarda le statistiche, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle statistiche penali annuali del Consiglio d'Europa, che contengono dati sui detenuti stranieri nell'Unione europea (cfr. tabella 3.2), consultabili al seguente indirizzo:

http://www.coe.int/t/DGHL/STANDARDSETTING/CDPC/CDPC%20documents/SPACE-1_2010_English.pdf

La Commissione non possiede ancora dati sull'applicazione della decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI tra gli Stati membri.

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

([2]) La decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali che irrogano pene detentive o misure privative della libertà personale, ai fini della loro esecuzione nell'Unione europea (GU L 327 del 5.12.2008 pag. 27), la decisione quadro 2008/947/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze e alle decisioni di sospensione condizionale in vista della sorveglianza delle misure di sospensione condizionale e delle sanzioni sostitutive (GU L 337 del 16.12.2008 pag. 102), e la decisione quadro 2009/829/GAI, del 23 ottobre 2009, sull'applicazione tra gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle decisioni sulle misure alternative alla detenzione cautelare (GU L 294 dell'11.11.2009 pag. 20).

Per quanto riguarda i detenuti extracomunitari, va osservato che il trasferimento è effettuato secondo le disposizioni vigenti della convenzione del Consiglio d'Europa sul trasferimento delle persone condannate ([3]), di cui tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE sono firmatari, o secondo altri accordi multi o bilaterali conclusi con paesi terzi.

([3]) Convenzione del Consiglio d'Europa sul trasferimento delle persone condannate del 21 marzo 1983 e protocollo addizionale del 18 dicembre 1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000148/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Transfer of prisoners

The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg recently found that Italy's prisons are overcrowded.

The dignity of prisoners as human beings absolutely should be respected, but there are several issues on which the Commission could shed light.

1. In Italy, a large proportion of prisoners in custody are foreign nationals, originating from within the EU and, in particular, from outside the EU. Council Framework Decision 2008/909/GAI of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters proposed a system for transferring prisoners sentenced in a European country to their Member State of origin, the Member State in which they are habitually resident or the Member State with which they have close ties. Can the Commission say what the current state of play is and what results have been achieved by this initiative?

2. How many foreign citizens are currently imprisoned in the various Member States and in how many cases has this transfer system actually come into play in the EU?

3. As regards non-EU prisoners, does the Commission not believe that it should take joint action to conclude global agreements to allow prisoners detained in Europe to serve their sentence in their country of origin?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the answers to the Written Questions E-2438/2012 by Mr Stoyanov, E-6882/2012 by Ms Childers, E-7035/2012 by Ms Romero López, E-7488/2012 by Ms Griesbeck, E-9607/2012 by Mr Particiello, E-10564/2012 by Ms Angelilli and E-8766/2012 by Mr Romeva i Rueda e.o ([1]).

The implementation date of Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA on the Transfer of Prisoners passed on 5 December 2011. To date, 13 Member States (AT, BE, DK, FI, HU, IT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, SK and UK) have notified to the Commission that they have implemented it. The Commission is closely monitoring the implementation of the framework Decision by the Member States. To this effect, and to speed up the implementation process, the Commission organised several Experts' meetings in 2012 and will publish an implementation report on the three Framework Decisions adopted in the field of detention ([2]) by mid-2013.

With respect to statistics, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics, which contain data on foreign prisoners in the EU (see Table 3.2) and can be consulted on:

http://www.coe.int/t/DGHL/STANDARDSETTING/CDPC/CDPC%20documents/SPACE-1_2010_English.pdf

The Commission does not yet have available any figures on the application of Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA between Member States.

As regards non-EU prisoners, it should be noted that transfer is carried out through the existing Council of Europe Convention for the Transfer of Sentenced Persons ([3]) of which all EU Member States are signatories or through other multi- or bilateral agreements concluded with non-EU Member States.

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

([2]) The framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27, the framework Decision 2008/947/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments and probation decisions with a view to the supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions, OJ 16.12.2008, L 337/102, and the framework Decision 2009/829/JHA of 23 October 2009 on the application, between Member States of the European Union, of the principle of mutual recognition to decisions on supervision measures as an alternative to provisional detention, OJ 11.11.2009, L 294/20.

([3]) Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons of 21 March 1983 and the Additional Protocol to the Convention of 18 December 1997.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000149/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: La Commissione tuteli i cittadini dai rischi per la salute causati dai telefoni cellulari

La sentenza della corte d'appello di Brescia su un caso di tumore provocato dall'uso eccessivo del telefono cellulare pone la necessità di promuovere un'azione mirata a tutela della salute dei consumatori per prevenire gli effetti dannosi delle onde elettromagnetiche, soprattutto per gli utenti più giovani. Anche le torri di antenne radio emettono tali onde, ma al momento non sono ancora stati effettuati studi per verificarne la pericolosità.

I parametri attualmente utilizzati per verificare la sicurezza dei telefoni cellulari sono indicati dal SAR (Specific absorption rating) che ha però valutazioni contrastanti.

1. Ha la Commissione intenzione di promuovere una campagna informativa sui rischi che i telefoni cellulari comportano sulla salute degli utenti?

2. Intende la Commissione intraprendere al più presto uno studio approfondito per verificare se gli effetti delle torri con antenne hanno ripercussioni sullo stato di salute di chi risiede nelle vicinanze?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(15 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-011132/12. ([1])

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000149/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: The Commission should protect citizens from health risks caused by mobile phones

The Brescia Court of Appeal's ruling in a case concerning a tumour caused by excessive mobile phone use calls for targeted action to prevent the harmful effects of electromagnetic waves in order to protect consumers' health, particularly for younger users. Radio masts also emit these waves, but to date no studies have been carried out to establish how dangerous they are.

The parameters currently used to ascertain the safety of mobile phones are set out by the specific absorption rate (SAR), although this is interpreted in different ways.

1. Does the Commission intend to promote an information campaign on the risks posed by mobile phones to users' health?

2. Will it undertake, at the earliest opportunity, an in-depth study to establish whether masts affect the health of those who live near them?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011132/12 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000150/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Snellimento da parte della Commissione delle pratiche burocratiche per le aziende europee

In Italia le pratiche burocratiche per avviare la costruzione di un sito industriale senza particolari sensibilità ambientali richiedono almeno tre anni di tempo e il concorso di oltre 15 uffici pubblici. Tale burocrazia scoraggia investimenti e aziende straniere ad operare sul territorio italiano, oltre a influire negativamente anche sulle stesse aziende italiane, che rischiano di partire già svantaggiate sul mercato europeo.

1. Intende la Commissione presentare linee guida per snellire le procedure burocratiche delle autorizzazioni alle aziende degli Stati membri?

2. Non ritiene la Commissione opportuna un'armonizzazione intesa a non svantaggiare le aziende in fase di start-up, rendendo quindi più attraente l'UE per le aziende che intendano effettuare investimenti negli Stati membri?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(8 marzo 2013)

La riduzione degli oneri normativi è una delle priorità chiave per la Commissione ([1]). Vi sono però diverse disposizioni legislative e regolamentari che rientrano nelle responsabilità degli Stati membri dell'Unione e spetta pertanto agli Stati membri decidere se snellire le pratiche burocratiche previste in tali misure. La normativa in tema di licenze per la costruzione di siti industriali è tra quelle che rientrano nelle competenze degli Stati membri.

Le azioni intraprese dalla Commissione riguardano i regolamenti dell'UE legati alla libera circolazione nell'UE. Quella dell'armonizzazione è spesso una soluzione appropriata per eliminare la burocrazia, poiché un'unica misura unionale per il mercato unico rimpiazza 27 leggi nazionali. La Commissione svolge un ruolo nell'agevolare lo scambio di buone pratiche tra gli Stati membri. Il piano d'azione Imprenditorialità 2020 ([2]) (adottato dalla Commissione il 9 gennaio 2013) raccomanda che si offra agli imprenditori un punto di contatto unico per ricevere informazioni complete in tema di licenze, procedure amministrative, finanziamenti e aiuti pubblici. Cosa ancor più importante, il piano d'azione sollecita gli Stati membri a ridurre i tempi per ricevere le licenze e le altre autorizzazioni necessarie per avviare un'attività imprenditoriale portandoli a un solo mese entro la fine del 2015. Anche se la responsabilità in tema di licenze e altre autorizzazioni compete agli Stati membri, la Commissione continuerà a seguire i progressi compiuti dagli Stati membri in tale direzione.

([1]) Cfr. lo Small Business Act per l'Europa e il suo riesame: COM(2008)394 definitivo e COM(2011)78 definitivo. Relazione della Commissione «Ridurre al minimo indispensabile gli oneri normativi che gravano sulle PMI», cfr. COM(2011)803.

([2]) PIANO D'AZIONE IMPRENDITORIALITÀ 2020, Rilanciare lo spirito imprenditoriale in Europa, COM(2012)795 final, 9 gennaio 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000150/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Cutting of red tape by the Commission for European businesses

In Italy, the formalities involved in starting the construction of an industrial site with no specific environmental concerns take at least three years and involve over 15 public bodies. This bureaucracy discourages investment and puts off foreign businesses from operating in Italy. It also has negative consequences for Italian companies, which are in danger of being put at a disadvantage on the European market from the outset.

1. Will the Commission put forward guidelines for cutting red tape in respect of licences for EU businesses?

2. Does is not believe that harmonisation is required so as not to hinder start-ups, thus making the EU more attractive to businesses intending to invest in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2013)

Reduction of regulatory burden is one of the key priorities of the Commission ([1]). However, there are many rules and regulations that fall under the responsibility of the Member States of the Union, and it is up to the Member States then to decide on cutting the red tape contained in those measures. Licensing regulations for the construction of industrial sites are among the regulations that fall within the competence of the Member States.

Actions taken by the Commission concern EU regulations related to free movement within the EU. Harmonisation is very often a solution to cut red tape, as one EU single market measure replaces 27 national laws. The Commission plays a role in facilitating the exchange of good practice between Member States. The Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan ([2]) (adopted by the Commission on 9 January 2013) recommends that entrepreneurs should be able to count on one single contact point to receive comprehensive information on licenses, administrative procedures, finance and public support. Most importantly, the action plan invites Member States to reduce time for receiving licenses and other authorisations necessary to start business activity to one month by the end of 2015. Although the responsibility for action on licenses and other authorisations lies with the Member States, the Commission will continue to monitor the progress of Member State actions.

([1]) See Small Business Act for Europe and its review: COM(2008) 394 final and COM(2011) 78 final. Commission Report on 'Minimising regulatory burden for SMEs', see COM(2011) 803.

([2]) Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe, COM(2012) 795 final, 9 January 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000151/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Necessità che la Commissione garantisca la libertà dell'industria cinematografica europea

L'Unione Internazionale dei Cinema, Art Cinema e Europa Cinemas denunciano l'ingerenza del Commissario Neelie Kroes nello stabilire le date di uscita dei film nei cinema europei e nei canali televisivi on demand, come previsto durante la tavola rotonda svoltasi il 9 ottobre 2012. Inoltre, i finanziamenti previsti dal programma UE Media incoraggiano l'uscita dei film sui canali televisivi a pagamento prima che nelle sale cinematografiche, causando una perdita di valore sia economico che culturale.

1. Alla luce delle richieste delle associazioni di categoria, intende la Commissione rivedere le sue politiche di programmazione del settore cinematografico a tutela del cinema e non della televisione?

2. Intende la Commissione rispettare la libertà di decisione quanto alle date di uscita dei film europei, in modo da lasciare che il mercato sia in grado di utilizzare strategie commerciali appropriate?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(28 febbraio 2013)

In considerazione delle problematiche urgenti connesse alla rivoluzione digitale la Commissione ha ritenuto utile organizzare una tavola rotonda con gli operatori del settore nell'ottobre 2012 per discutere su come Internet ed in particolare il video a richiesta (VOD-video on demand) potrebbero contribuire alla distribuzione dei film europei. A tale proposito sono state pubblicate le dichiarazioni congiunte della Vicepresidente Kroes e della commissaria Vassiliou ([1]). Durante tale incontro si è chiarito che la Commissione non intende imporre una distribuzione simultanea o una riduzione dei periodi di distribuzione. A livello di Unione non è prevista nessuna armonizzazione relativa al metodo di distribuzione dei film. Per quanto riguarda i film europei, ed in particolare le produzioni low budget che non possono beneficiare di un'ampia distribuzione cinematografica, la Commissione intende incoraggiare la libertà di stabilire le strategie di distribuzione più appropriate. Un approccio più flessibile per quanto riguarda i periodi di distribuzione potrebbe permettere a questi film non solo di arrivare più agevolmente al pubblico, ma anche di trovare nuovi metodi di finanziamento.

Attualmente il programma Media dell'Unione Europea non incoraggia la distribuzione dei film tramite i canali televisivi pay-per-view o VOD prima della loro distribuzione cinematografica. L'obiettivo dell'azione preparatoria sulla circolazione delle opere europee adottata dal Parlamento europeo nel 2011 tuttavia è sperimentare l'impatto che avrà la distribuzione simultanea o quasi simultanea dei film tramite più canali di distribuzione (VOD, televisione, cinema) ed in territori diversi. I primi risultati di tale iniziativa sperimentale saranno resi disponibili e comunicati durante un workshop pubblico nella prima metà del 2014.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-752_en.htm?locale=it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000151/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Need for the Commission to guarantee the freedom of the European film industry

The International Union of Cinemas, the International Confederation of Art Cinemas and Europa Cinemas have criticised Commissioner Neelie Kroes's interference in stipulating, at the round-table discussion of 9 October 2012, when films should be released in European cinemas and on on-demand television channels. Furthermore, the funding available under the EU's Media programme encourages the release of films on pay-to-view television channels before their release in cinemas, meaning that some of their financial and cultural value is lost.

1. In the light of the professional associations' requests, does the Commission intend to review its programming policies for the film sector to safeguard cinema rather than television?

2. Does it intend to respect freedom of decision-making regarding European film release dates, in order to allow the market to use appropriate commercial strategies?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

In view of the urgent issues arising from the digital revolution, the Commission considered it useful to organise a round table with the industry in October 2012 on how Internet and notably video on demand (VOD) could better serve the distribution of European films. In this context, joint statements by Vice-President Kroes and Commissioner Vassiliou were published ([1]). It was made clear during this meeting that the Commission does not intend to impose simultaneous release or a shortening of the currently existing release windows. No harmonisation is planned at EU level regarding the way in which films should be released. The Commission's view is that for a number of European films, especially low-budget productions which cannot benefit from an extensive cinema release, freedom to determine the most appropriate distribution strategies should be promoted. A more flexible approach regarding release windows could help these films not only to reach their audience better but also to find new financing methods.

The European Union's MEDIA programme does not currently encourage the release of films on pay-per-view television channels or VOD before their release in cinemas. However, the objective of a preparatory action on the circulation of European works, adopted by the European Parliament in 2011, is to test the impact of the release of films simultaneously or quasi simultaneously on several platforms (VOD, TV, cinema) and in several territories. The first results of this experimental action will be available and shared during a public workshop in the first half of 2014.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-752_en.htm?locale=en.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000152/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Opportunità di un'indagine della Commissione sulle pensioni d'oro dei manager delle banche salvate

In Gran Bretagna gli ex manager di cinque banche — RBS, Lloyds Tsb, Hbos, Northern Rock e Bradford & Bingley — salvate dallo Stato e alla base della crisi finanziaria che ha colpito il paese sono stati liquidati con una pensione a vita di 300 mila sterline annue, senza peraltro aver versato i contributi previdenziali richiesti.

1. Risulta alla Commissione che i soldi elargiti per aiutare le banche in difficoltà siano in realtà stati utilizzati per pagare le buonuscite dei manager responsabili della crisi finanziaria?

2. Può la nuova autorità di supervisione bancaria istituita a livello europeo indagare su operazioni di tale genere avvenute nelle banche monitorate per motivi di liquidità?

3. Non ritiene la Commissione opportuno regolamentare limiti a tali pratiche in modo che le buonuscite non vadano a inficiare la solvibilità già precaria di certi istituti bancari?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(28 febbraio 2013)

Dalle informazioni contenute nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole parlamentare, di cui la Commissione non è stata in grado di verificare l'esattezza, sembrerebbe che le indagini sui casi menzionati spettino principalmente alle autorità nazionali competenti. Fatte salve le competenze della Commissione in quanto custode dei trattati, l'articolo 17 del regolamento (UE) n. 1093/2010, istitutivo dell'Autorità bancaria europea (ABE), conferisce all'ABE il potere di effettuare indagini unicamente sui casi di presunta violazione o di mancata applicazione del diritto dell'Unione da parte delle autorità nazionali.

Si ricorda che la direttiva 2010/76/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 novembre 2010 (CRD III) ([1]), a cui deve conformarsi il diritto nazionale, contiene norme dettagliate in materia di politiche e prassi remunerative nel settore finanziario. Ai sensi della direttiva, la politica remunerativa delle banche, che deve disciplinare anche i benefici pensionistici discrezionali e il trattamento di fine rapporto, deve essere in linea con la strategia aziendale, gli obiettivi, i valori e gli interessi a lungo termine dell'ente creditizio di cui trattasi, e includere misure intese a evitare conflitti di interesse.

Per le banche che hanno beneficiato di intervento governativo straordinario, la direttiva prevede anche che la remunerazione variabile sia rigorosamente limitata a una percentuale dei ricavi netti quando è incompatibile con il mantenimento di una solida base di capitale e con l'uscita tempestiva dal sostegno pubblico. Le autorità nazionali possono inoltre esigere che le banche ristrutturino le remunerazioni in modo da allinearle a una sana gestione dei rischi e alla crescita a lungo termine.

Queste norme sono state riprese nella proposta della Commissione di direttiva sui requisiti patrimoniali (CRD IV ([2])), attualmente in discussione al Consiglio e al Parlamento europeo.

([1]) GU L 329 del 14.2.2010, pag. 3.
([2]) COM(2011)453 definitivo — 2011/0203 (COD) — Proposta di direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sull'accesso all'attività degli enti creditizi e sulla vigilanza prudenziale degli enti creditizi e delle imprese di investimento e che modifica la direttiva 2002/87/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000152/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Scope for a Commission investigation into the gold-plated pensions of the managers of bailed-out banks

In the United Kingdom the former managers of five banks — RBS, Lloyds TSB, HBOS, Northern Rock and Bradford & Bingley — which were bailed out by the State and were at the root of the country's financial crisis — have been paid off with a GBP 300 000-a-year pension for life, without however having paid the necessary social security contributions.

1. Is the Commission aware that the money ladled out to help the struggling banks has in reality been used to pay severance pay to the managers responsible for the financial crisis?

2. Can the new European Banking Authority investigate such deals, which have taken place in banks that are being monitored for liquidity reasons?

3. Does the Commission not believe that such practices should be restricted to ensure that severance pay does not undermine the already precarious solvency of certain banks?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

On the basis of the information provided in the Honourable Member's question, the accuracy of which the Commission has not been able to verify, it would appear that it is first and foremost a matter for the competent national authorities to conduct an investigation. Notwithstanding the competences of the Commission regarding its role as guardian of the Treaties the founding regulation of the EBA (Regulation 1093/2010) provides the EBA in its Article 17 with the power to investigate alleged breach or non-application of Union law by national authorities.

It is recalled that directive 2010/76/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 (CRD III) ([1]), with which national legislation must comply, contains detailed requirements for remuneration policies and practices in the financial sector. In accordance with that directive, the remuneration policy of banks, which covers also discretionary pension benefits and termination payments, must be in line with the business strategy, objectives, values and long-term interests of the institution concerned, and incorporate measures to avoid conflicts of interest.

For banks which have benefited from exceptional state intervention, the directive also provides that variable remuneration should be strictly limited as a percentage of net revenue where it is inconsistent with the maintenance of a sound capital base and timely exit from government support. The national authorities may also require such banks to restructure remuneration in a manner aligned with sound risk management and long-term growth.

These rules have been carried forward into the Commission's proposal for CRD IV ([2]), which is currently subject of discussions with the Council and the European Parliament.

([1]) OJ L 329, 14.02.2010. p.3-35.
([2]) COM(2011) 453 final — 2011/0203 (COD) — Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the access to the activity of credit institutions and the prudential supervision of credit institutions and investment firms and amending Directive 2002/87/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000153/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Livelli consentiti di aflatossina B1 nel mais

L'aflatossina B1 (AFB1) è un metabolita secondario prodotto da alcuni ceppi di funghi microscopici, comunemente denominati «muffe» che, in particolari condizioni di ambiente e di substrato, invadono cereali e semi oleaginosi. L'AFB1 è particolarmente tossica in quanto un suo metabolita è in grado di legarsi a macromolecole cellulari alterandole.

L'attuale legislazione comunitaria, attraverso il regolamento (UE) n. 165/2010 della Commissione, stabilisce a scopo cautelativo limiti massimi di tolleranza per la presenza di AFB1: per quanto concerne il mais, il livello è attualmente fissato a 0,02 mg/kg.

Secondo alcuni autorevoli studi, però, il limite di cui sopra non rappresenterebbe una soglia limite di sicurezza per queste specie. A suffragio di tale tesi, occorre sottolineare che negli Stati Uniti tale limite è fissato a 0,05 mg/kg.

Considerando che nel 2007 un gruppo di lavoro dell'EFSA, composto da esperti scientifici sui contaminanti nella catena alimentare, ha fornito ai gestori del rischio le basi scientifiche necessarie per decidere in merito alla proposta del *Codex Alimentarius* di definire i valori massimi di aflatossine nelle mandorle, nelle nocciole e nei pistacchi pronti al consumo, portandoli a livelli superiori a quelli attualmente in vigore,

considerando i gravi danni che la mancata concessione della deroga potrebbe arrecare all'economia delle aree maggiormente vocate alla produzione di mais,

considerando la precedente deroga accordata già concessa per la frutta da guscio,

secondo la Commissione esistono i margini per giungere a un innalzamento della soglia limite ai livelli di quanto previsto dalla legislazione statunitense?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(31 gennaio 2013)

Nell'UE i livelli massimi di aflatossina B1 e di aflatossina totale (somma dell'aflatossina B1 + B2+G1+G2) nel mais non trasformato destinato al consumo umano sono fissati a 5 e 10 µg/kg, nel mais destinato al consumo umano diretto corrispondono a 2 e 4 µg/kg rispettivamente. Nel mais destinato all'alimentazione degli animali è stato fissato a un massimo di 20 µg/kg mentre non vi è un livello massimo per l'aflatossina totale.

Negli USA non sono stati fissati livelli massimi per l'aflatossina B1, soltanto per l'aflatossina totale. Il livello massimo per l'aflatossina totale è di 20 µg/kg nel mais destinato al consumo umano mentre nel mais destinato all'alimentazione degli animali il livello massimo va da 20 µg/kg a 300 µg/kg a seconda delle specie animali cui esso è destinato.

L'aumento del livello massimo di aflatossina B1 e di aflatossina totale in certa frutta da guscio è stato autorizzato dopo che l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare era giunta alla conclusione, sulla base di un'ampia valutazione del rischio ([1]), che un aumento del livello massimo di aflatossine in questa frutta da guscio avrebbe avuto effetti limitati sulle stime dell'esposizione alimentare, del rischio di cancro e del margine d'esposizione calcolato.

([1]) Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain on a request from the Commission related to the potential increase of consumer risk by a possible increase of the existing maximum levels for aflatoxins in almonds, hazelnuts and pistachios, .The EFSA Journal (2007) 446, 1 - 127, http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/446.pdf

Sebbene la Commissione sia stata informata del manifestarsi di livelli elevati di aflatossine nel mais prodotto nel 2012 in certe aree dell'UE, non sono pervenute informazioni quanto al fatto che l'ottemperanza agli attuali livelli massimi UE possa causare un grave pregiudizio per l'economia. Inoltre, un eventuale aumento del livello massimo di aflatossine nel mais, anche su base temporanea, può essere contemplato soltanto dopo che un'attenta valutazione del rischio abbia dimostrato che tale aumento del livello massimo nel mais non comporterebbe un aumento inaccettabile del rischio sanitario.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000153/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Permitted levels of aflatoxin B1 in corn

Aflatoxin B1 (AFB1) is a secondary metabolite produced by certain strains of microscopic fungi, commonly known as 'moulds', which, in certain substrates and under certain environmental conditions, invade cereals and oilseeds. AFB1 is particularly toxic as one of its metabolites is able to bind to cellular macromolecules and alter them.

Current Community legislation, through Commission Regulation (EU) No 165/2010, lays down, for precautionary purposes, maximum tolerance limits for the presence of AFB1. For corn, the level is currently set at 0.02 mg/kg.

According to a number of authoritative studies, however, this limit is not a safety threshold for these species. In support of this argument, it is worth noting that in the United States the limit is set at 0.05 mg/kg.

In 2007, an EFSA working group, made up of scientific experts on contaminants in the food chain, provided risk managers with the scientific basis needed to decide on the *Codex Alimentarius* proposal to establish maximum levels for aflatoxins in ready-to-eat almonds, hazelnuts and pistachios, raising them to higher levels than those currently in force.

Given that failure to grant a derogation could cause serious damage to the economy of the major corn-producing areas and that a derogation has previously been granted for nuts, does the Commission believe there is any scope for the threshold level to be raised to those required under US law?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

In the EU, the maximum levels for aflatoxin B1 and aflatoxin total (sum of aflatoxin B1 + B2+G1+G2) in unprocessed maize for human consumption are 5 and 10 µg/kg, in maize for direct human consumption 2 and 4 µg/kg respectively. In maize for animal nutrition a maximum of 20 µg/kg is established while there is no maximum level for aflatoxin total.

In the US, no maximum levels have been established for aflatoxin B1, only for aflatoxin total. The maximum level for aflatoxin total is 20 µg/kg in maize for human consumption, in maize for animal nutrition, the maximum level ranges from 20 µg/kg to 300 µg/kg, depending on the animal species for which the maize is intended for.

The increase of the maximum level of aflatoxin B1 and aflatoxin total in certain tree nuts has been agreed after the European Food Safety Authority concluded on the basis of an extensive risk assessment ([1]) that an increase of the maximum level for aflatoxins in these tree nuts would have minor effects on the estimates of dietary exposure, cancer risk and the calculated Margin of Exposure.

Although the Commission has been informed of the occurrence of higher levels of aflatoxins in maize produced in 2012 in certain areas of the EU, no information was received that compliance with the current EU maximum levels could cause serious damage to the economy. Furthermore any increase of the maximum level for aflatoxins in maize, even on a temporary basis, can only be considered after a comprehensive risk assessment has demonstrated that such an increase of the maximum level in maize would not result in an unacceptable increase of health risk.

([1]) Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain on a request from the Commission related to the potential increase of consumer risk by a possible increase of the existing maximum levels for aflatoxins in almonds, hazelnuts and pistachios, .The EFSA Journal (2007) 446, 1-127, http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/446.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000154/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Ahmadi Muslims kidnapped and tortured in Libya

Since November 2012, ten members of Libya's Ahmadiyya Muslim community (six Pakistani citizens and four Libyan citizens) have been kidnapped and then allegedly tortured. An armed jihadi Salafist group called Al-Majalis Al-Askari is reportedly responsible. This seems to have come about after Libya's most senior Mufti, Sheikh Sadiq al-Ghiryani, President of Darul Ifta-Libya, apparently condemned the Ahmadiyya Muslims as being 'outside the pale of Islam'. Ahmadis are now reportedly under pressure and intimidation to recant their religious beliefs and inform on the location of other members of their community.

During Gaddafi's 42-year tyrannical rule, foreign citizens were at risk from indefinite detention and torture. Since the uprising in 2011 which overthrew the regime, the situation has sadly not improved. The lawless climate has encouraged armed extremist militias to grow in power and take the law into their own hands. The majority of foreign citizens are from sub-Saharan countries, often fleeing civil war and extreme poverty, and as they continue to arrive at Libya's poorly guarded borders, they risk detention and violence.

Will the High Representative raise the issue and seek the immediate release of the ten abducted Ahmadis with the Libyan authorities, through the EU Head of delegation in Tripoli? Will she moreover express concerns about safeguarding the fundamental rights of detained foreigners in Libya, and their alleged lack of access to legal representation and due process?

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

The HR/VP Catherine Ashton is following closely the abovementioned case involving members of the Ahmadi community in Libya. The EU has been in contact with NGO representatives on this issue and the EU Delegation in Tripoli has been requested to raise it with the authorities.

The HR/VP remains concerned by regular reports indicating human rights violations taking place in Libya. Despite the governments public commitment to bring detention centers under central control, limited progress has been achieved so far. Continuing reports of torture, illegal detention and executions against migrants, particularly against those of Sub Saharan origin, have been issued by civil society and International organisations. According to the Libyan Humanitarian Agency there are approximately 72 000 Internally Displaced People (IDP) throughout the country. UNHCR has reported cases of mistreatment against IDPs.

The EU is committed to support Libyan democratic transition. The EU will continue to call on the authorities to ensure respect for internationally agreed human rights standards; at the same time, the EU will continue to support the authorities in meeting their responsibilities under international law. To give an example, it is worth recalling that the EU is providing a EUR 20 million support package aimed at improving the protection of vulnerable groups including migrants.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000155/13
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Effetti negativi dell'IMU sui redditi dei cittadini italiani

L'analisi del «Rapporto UE 2012 su occupazione e sviluppi sociali» contiene una parte espressamente dedicata all'introduzione dell'imposta IMU in Italia.

Da quest'analisi risulta che l'IMU abbia avuto effetti negativi aggravando la povertà in Italia e, di conseguenza, il rapporto dell'Unione europea avanza proposte di modifica di questa imposta. Secondo l'Unione, l'IMU dovrebbe essere resa maggiormente legata al criterio della progressività del reddito in modo da risultare più equa, al fine di diminuire i gravi effetti negativi che ha prodotto sui redditi dei cittadini italiani.

Si sottolinea come la Commissione abbia trattato con particolare attenzione il caso dell'IMU in Italia, a differenza degli altri Stati membri dell'UE ai quali invece una simile attenzione non è stata prestata, segno ad avviso dell'interrogante della particolare gravità del caso italiano.

Tuttavia la Commissione non ha mai preso una posizione ben chiara sulla questione dell'IMU, limitandosi a fare delle osservazioni marginali per possibili miglioramenti, quali il succitato rapporto 2012, rispetto al quale si chiede se possa essere considerato una presa di posizione ufficiale della Commissione e con quali effetti.

Dato che la situazione economica italiana sta progressivamente deteriorando, l'interrogante è dell'opinione che la Commissione dovrebbe intervenire urgentemente su questo caso, al fine di evitare ulteriori sacrifici inutili ai cittadini italiani. L'IMU non ha subito ad oggi alcuna modifica, né tali modifiche sono state proposte dall'attuale governo italiano.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione assumere una posizione chiara sull'introduzione dell'IMU in Italia e sulle sue caratteristiche? Potrebbe inoltre indicare espressamente quali aspetti dell'imposta, così come istituita, abbiano causato i maggiori effetti negativi sui redditi e in quali termini dovrebbe essere modificata per renderla compatibile con il succitato criterio della progressività del reddito e dell'equità sociale e con altri principi dei trattati, della Carta europea dei diritti fondamentali e della giurisprudenza comunitaria in materia?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione

(12 febbraio 2013)

L'analisi contenuta nel rapporto 2012 su «Occupazione e sviluppi sociali in Europa» (ESDE) riguarda la situazione della tassazione della proprietà immobiliare in Italia nel 2006 e non quella introdotta nel dicembre 2011 con l'adozione della nuova IMU. I resoconti apparsi su alcuni media italiani che suggerivano che il rapporto ESDE fosse giunto alla conclusione che l'IMU avesse avuto un «effetto negativo esacerbando la povertà» non sono corretti.

Per quanto concerne l'IMU, il rapporto ESDE segnala soltanto che tale imposta avrebbe potuto aver un impatto maggiormente progressivo o equo sulla distribuzione del reddito se il valore approssimativo delle proprietà immobiliari (vale a dire, i valori catastali) fosse stato allineato agli attuali valori di mercato.

È anche importante notare che l'analisi contenuta nel rapporto dei casi italiano e britannico rispecchia il fatto che si disponeva di dati e studi pertinenti per questi due grandi Stati membri e non la particolare «gravità del caso italiano» come suggerisce l'interrogazione.

Di fatto, è importante riconoscere che, innanzi allo scenario della persistente crescita lenta dell'Italia combinata con l'urgenza di far calare il debito pubblico, una più elevata tassazione delle proprietà immobiliari è preferibile ad altre tasse, in quanto nuoce meno alla crescita nel lungo periodo oltre a risultare essenzialmente coerente con gli obiettivi di equità, a patto che sia adeguatamente concepita.

Per tale motivo, nel luglio 2012, il Consiglio ([1]), su istanza della Commissione, aveva raccomandato all'Italia di «(…) Intraprendere ulteriori azioni per spostare il carico fiscale dal lavoro e dal capitale verso i consumi e i patrimoni nonché l'ambiente».

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st11/st11259.en12.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000155/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Negative impact of the IMU property tax on the income of Italian citizens

The analysis provided in the 'Report on Employment and social developments in Europe 2012' contains a section that is specifically devoted to the introduction of the IMU tax in Italy.

From this analysis it would appear that the IMU has had a negative impact and has exacerbated poverty in Italy. Accordingly, the EU report puts forward proposals to change this tax. According to the Union, to make it fairer, the IMU tax should be made more progressive and should be linked to income, in order to reduce the serious negative effects it has had on the income of Italians.

It should be stressed that the Commission has focused its attention particularly on the IMU case in Italy, unlike other EU Member States to which no such attention has been paid. This, in my opinion, is a sign of the particular seriousness of Italy's case.

However, the Commission has never adopted a clear position on the IMU issue, merely making marginal comments on how it might be improved, such as in the abovementioned 2012 report. Can this be considered an official Commission position and what impact might this have?

Since the Italian economic situation is gradually deteriorating, the Commission should take urgent action in this case in order to avoid further unnecessary sacrifices for Italian citizens. To date, the IMU tax has not been changed in any way and neither have any changes been proposed by the current Italian Government.

Can the Commission thus take a clear stand on the introduction of the IMU tax in Italy and its features? Could it also say specifically what aspects of the tax, as it stands, have had the greatest negative impact on income and how it should be amended to make it compatible with the abovementioned criterion of progressiveness and social equity and other principles laid down in the Treaties, the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and the relevant EU case law?

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

The analysis contained in the 2012 Employment and Social Developments in Europe' review (ESDE) concerns the situation of recurrent taxation of property in Italy in 2006 and not the one that was enacted in December 2011 with the adoption of the new IMU. Reports by some Italian media suggesting that the ESDE review concluded that the IMU has a 'negative effect and has exacerbated poverty' were therefore not correct.

With regard to the IMU, the ESDE review only points out that it could have a more progressive, or fairer, impact on income distribution if the properties' approximate values (i.e. cadastral values) were better aligned to their current market values.

It is also important to note that the analysis in the review of the Italian and UK cases reflects the availability of relevant data and studies in these two major Member States, not the particular 'seriousness of the Italian case', as the question suggests.

In substance, it is important to acknowledge that, against the background of Italy's persistent low growth combined with the pressing need to bring the public debt on a declining path, higher taxation of immovable property is preferable to other taxes, in that it is less harmful to long-term growth while appearing broadly consistent with equity objectives, if properly designed.

For this reason, in July 2012, the Council ([1]), under recommendation by the Commission, recommended Italy to '(…) *Take further action to shift the tax burden away from capital and labour to property and consumption as well as environment.*'

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st11/st11259.en12.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000157/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(9 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo de pesca UE-Marruecos

El pasado mes de diciembre de 2011 se tomó la decisión de no prorrogar el acuerdo de pesca que mantenían de forma provisional la Unión Europea y Marruecos y que afecta principalmente al sector pesquero español.

Por ello, esta diputada quisiera conocer el estado actual de las negociaciones entre la UE y el Reino de Marruecos, así como saber dónde se encuentran las mayores dificultades y los cambios de contenido en relación con el acuerdo presentado en 2011 y que rechazó el Parlamento Europeo.

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de marzo de 2013)

Las negociaciones para la celebración de un nuevo protocolo comenzaron oficialmente en noviembre de 2012, tras la visita de la comisaria Damanaki a Rabat en abril de 2012 y del diálogo informal subsiguiente. La quinta ronda de negociaciones tuvo lugar en Rabat los días 11 y 12 de febrero de 2013. Tendrá lugar una sexta ronda en Bruselas.

Se están produciendo avances en relación con los objetivos de negociación, a saber, rentabilidad, sostenibilidad y cumplimiento del Derecho internacional.

La Comisión se propone llegar a un acuerdo en torno a un texto que se ajustaría a las directrices del Consejo de febrero de 2012 ([1]) y tendría además en cuenta la Resolución del Parlamento Europeo de 14 de diciembre de 2011 ([2]).

([1]) Decisión del Consejo por la que se autoriza a la Comisión a entablar negociaciones en nombre de la Unión Europea con vistas a un nuevo protocolo del Acuerdo de colaboración en el sector pesquero con el Reino de Marruecos.

([2]) Resolución del Parlamento Europeo sobre el futuro Protocolo por el que se fijan las posibilidades de pesca y la contrapartida financiera previstas en el Acuerdo de colaboración en el sector pesquero entre la Unión Europea y el Reino de Marruecos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000157/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: EU-Morocco fisheries agreement

In December 2011, a decision was taken not to extend the provisional fisheries agreement between the EU and Morocco, the main beneficiary of which had been the Spanish fisheries sector.

What stage have the latest EU-Morocco negotiations reached? What are the main obstacles to concluding an agreement? What changes have been made to the 2011 agreement rejected by Parliament?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2013)

Negotiations for the conclusion of a new Protocol officially started in November 2012, following Commissioner Damanaki's visit to Rabat in April 2012 and subsequent informal talks. The 5th round of negotiations took place in Rabat on 11 and 12 February 2013. A 6th round will take place in Brussels.

Progress is being made with regard to the negotiation objectives of profitability, sustainability and compliance with international law.

The Commission is seeking to obtain an agreement on a text that will be in line with the Council's directives (February 2012 ([1])and taking into account the European Parliament's resolution (14 December 2011 ([2])).

([1]) Council Decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the European Union for a new Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement with the Kingdom of Morocco.

([2]) European Parliament resolution on the future Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial compensation provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000158/13
an die Kommission
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(9. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Schaffung eines Binnenmarktes für geistiges Eigentum

Die Kommission hat sich in ihrer Mitteilung vom 24.5.2011 KOM(2011)0287 über die Schaffung eines Binnenmarktes für geistiges Eigentum zum Ziel gesetzt,

1. „für nutzergenerierte Inhalte eine Lösung zu finden, so dass die Nutzer alle Vorteile aus den neuen interaktiven Online-Diensten ziehen können". Welche Ergebnisse liegen der Kommission inzwischen vor, und welche Maßnahmen sind geplant? Wurde dabei die Problematik der Territorialität berücksichtigt?

2. „innovative Lizenzierungslösungen zu finden, um den Zugang zum kulturellen Erbe Europas und eine Förderung der Medienpluralität herzustellen". Welche Maßnahmen wurden von der Kommission im Bereich vergriffener Werke getroffen? Welche Lösungen/Maßnahmen sind darüber hinaus geplant, um Einrichtungen im öffentlichen Interesse wie öffentliche Bibliotheken oder nichtkommerziellen freien Medienarchiven die Nutzung zeitgenössischer Werke durch innovative Lizenzierungslösungen zu erleichtern/ermöglichen?

3. „zur Vereinbarkeit von Abgaben für Privatkopien mit dem freien Warenverkehr die Grundlage für eine umfassende Rechtsetzungsinitiative zu schaffen". Zu welchen Ergebnissen ist die Kommission gekommen? Wurden dabei Überlegungen angestellt, Vorkehrungen gegen eine Aushöhlung dieses freien Werknutzungsrechts durch Lizenzvereinbarungen/Geschäftsbedingungen — insbesondere im Zusammenhang mit Cloud-Computing — zu treffen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission

(2. April 2013)

1. In ihrer kürzlich vorgelegten Mitteilung ([1]) stellt die Kommission ihre Strategie für einen effizienten digitalen Binnenmarkt im Bereich des Urheberrechts vor.

Diese verfolgt gleichzeitig zwei Ziele:

Erstens will die Kommission die derzeitige Überarbeitung und Modernisierung des EU-Rechtsrahmens zum Abschluss bringen und sich dabei auch mit der Frage territorialer Regeln im Binnenmarkt befassen.

Parallel dazu hat sie einen Dialog mit den Interessenträgern eingeleitet, der bei einer Reihe von Fragen, zu denen auch „nutzergenerierte Inhalte" zählen, unter Federführung der Branche zu praktischen Lösungen führen soll. Dies soll gewährleisten, dass die Endnutzer besser darüber informiert sind, wann eine Nutzung rechtens ist und wann nicht, und ihnen den Zugang zu legalen Angeboten im Binnenmarkt erleichtern.

2. Die Kommission hat die Aushandlung eines MoU zwischen Bibliotheken, Verlegern, Autoren und Verwertungsgesellschaften ([2]) gefördert, das die Hauptgrundsätze für die Lizenzierung der Rechte auf Digitalisierung und Bereitstellung vergriffener Werke enthält. Damit können Bibliotheken und ähnliche Kultureinrichtungen in Europa vergriffene Bücher und Fachzeitschriften online zur Verfügung stellen. Die Kommission überwacht die Ausarbeitung der daraus resultierenden Lizenzvereinbarungen und geht die Online-Verfügbarkeit von Filmen im Rahmen ihres Dialogs mit den Interessenträgern an.

3. In Bezug auf Abgaben für Privatkopien hat auf Anregung der Kommission unter Federführung von Herrn Vitorino eine Vermittlung stattgefunden. Dieser legte im Anschluss daran Empfehlungen vor ([3]), in denen zweierlei Maßnahmen vorgeschlagen werden:

([1]) „Inhalte im digitalen Binnenmarkt" (KOM(2012)789 endg. vom 18. Dezember 2012).
([2]) Dieses Memorandum of Understanding wurde am 20. September 2011 unterzeichnet und ist abrufbar unter: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/docs/copyright-infso/20110920-mou_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/docs/levy_reform/130131_levies-vitorino-recommendations_en.pdf

— Förderung neuer Geschäftsmodelle, die den veränderten Erwartungen und Vorlieben der Verbraucher gerecht werden,

— Angleichung der unterschiedlichen nationalen Abgabensysteme im Binnenmarkt.

Diese Empfehlungen werden in die oben genannten Diskussionen einfließen und einen wichtigen Beitrag hierzu leisten. Die Kommission wird daraus ihre Schlussfolgerungen zu den zu treffenden Folgemaßnahmen ziehen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000158/13
to the Commission
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Creation of a single market for intellectual property rights

In its communication of 24 May 2011 (COM(2011)0287) on a single market for intellectual property rights, the Commission set itself the following goals:

1. To find a solution for 'user-generated content' to ensure 'that users enjoy the full benefits of new interactive online services'. What progress has the Commission made so far and what measures are planned? Has the problem of territoriality been taken into account too?

2. To find 'innovative licensing solutions' for the purpose of securing 'access to Europe's cultural heritage and fostering media plurality'. What measures has the Commission taken in regard to out-of-commerce works? What solutions or measures are planned over and above this to make it possible or easier for institutions or facilities open to the public, such as public libraries or free non-commercial media archives, to use contemporary works through innovative licensing solutions?

3. To 'lay the ground for comprehensive legislative action' for the 'conciliation of private copying levies with the free movements of goods'. What conclusions has the Commission reached? Has consideration also been given to ways of preventing the right to free use of works being eroded by licensing agreements/terms of business, particularly in connection with cloud computing?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

1. In its recent Communication ([1]) the Commission set out its strategy for an effective digital single market in the area of copyright.

It has two parallel tracks:

The Commission will complete its ongoing effort to review and modernise the legislative framework,, addressing i.a territoriality in the internal market.

The Commission has in parallel launched a stakeholder dialogue to deliver practical industry-led solutions to a number of issues, including 'user-generated content'. The objective is to ensure that end-users have greater clarity on legitimate and non-legitimate uses and easier access to legal offers in the internal market.

2. The Commission has fostered agreement among libraries, publishers, authors, and their collecting societies on a MoU ([2]) which contains Key Principles for licensing the rights to digitise and make available out-of-commerce works. European libraries and similar cultural institutions can thus make available on line the out-of-commerce books and journals in their collections. The Commission is monitoring the development of resulting licensing agreements and is tackling the online accessibility of films in the stakeholder dialogue.

3. The issue of private copying levies has been the subject of a mediation process, fostered by the Commission and led by Mr Vitorino who presented his recommendations ([3]) suggesting two types of actions:

— those aiming to promote new business models, meeting changing consumer expectations and preferences

— measures to reconcile disparate national levy systems with the Single Market.

These recommendations will be important elements feeding into the discussions referred to above. The Commission will draw conclusions to the appropriate follow-up actions for these recommendations.

([1]) Content in the Digital Single Market of 18 December 2012 (COM(2012) 789 final).
([2]) Memorandum of Understanding — signed on 20 September 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/docs/copyright-infso/20110920-mou_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/docs/levy_reform/130131_levies-vitorino-recommendations_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000159/13
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Funding grants for replacement of machinery

Could the Commission outline under which funding streams operators in the manufacturing or engineering sectors can apply for grants from the EU to aid with the replacement of machinery?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

EU cohesion policy provides for possibilities to invest in a wide variety of sectors. In fact, one of the aims of the European Regional Development Fund is to contribute towards the financing productive investment, primarily in small and medium-sized enterprises, thereby creating and safeguarding sustainable jobs.

If a Member State wishes to support such types of investment in the replacement of machinery and has included that option in one of its cohesion policy programmes, a potential applicant could explore its options for securing EU co-financing with the managing authority of the programme concerned.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000160/13
aan de Commissie
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(9 januari 2013)

Betreft: Discriminatie in het lesmateriaal van Pakistaanse scholen (vervolg op schriftelijke vraag E-007891/2012 van Peter van Dalen en het antwoord van de Commissie)

Schoolboeken worden ieder jaar goedgekeurd, wat betekent dat er elk jaar enkele veranderingen worden aangebracht. Volgens een onderzoek uitgevoerd door de Pakistaanse nationale commissie voor gerechtigheid en vrede (NCJP) is de hoeveelheid haatdragende teksten in schoolboeken in de Pakistaanse provincies Sindh en Punjab in het schooljaar 2012-2013 toegenomen ten opzichte van 2011-2012. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de religieuze vooroordelen binnen het onderwijsbeleid en de religieuze haatdragende teksten in Sindh schoolboeken?

Is er in het kader van de in 2012 uitgevoerde evaluaties van door de EU gesponsorde hervormingsprogramma's voor de onderwijssector in Sindh en Khyber Pakhtunkhwa aandacht besteed aan de inhoud van schoolboeken? Welke pogingen zijn er door de provinciale overheid van Sindh ondernomen om haatdragende teksten te beoordelen en uit schoolboeken die in het schooljaar 2013-2014 in die provincie gebruikt gaan worden te verwijderen? Onderzoekers stellen dat radicalisering en aanzetten tot haat nog steeds onderdeel uitmaken van deze schoolboeken ([1]):

hoe bewaakt de Commissie de kwaliteit van het onderwijs als het gaat om de inhoud van schoolboeken?

Op grond van de achttiende wijziging van de Pakistaanse grondwet van april 2010 is de macht overgedragen aan de provincies. Op een conferentie gehouden in Islamabad in 2010 is door de vier eerste ministers en de minister-president van Pakistan een resolutie goedgekeurd over het recht op gratis en verplicht onderwijs ([2]). De wet is in oktober 2012 aangenomen door het parlement van Pakistan en de tenuitvoerlegging van deze wet is nu de verantwoordelijkheid van de provincies. Kan de Commissie meer te weten komen over de vooruitgang die is geboekt bij de regionale overheden van Sindh en Khyber Pakhtunkhwa bij de tenuitvoerlegging van artikel 25-A van de Pakistaanse grondwet? Wat heeft de Commissie ondernomen om de uitingen van haat jegens religieuze minderheden bij de vertegenwoordigers van de EU in Pakistan aan de orde te stellen? Heeft de Commissie iets gedaan met de ongerustheid van het maatschappelijk middenveld over haatdragende teksten?

Zijn er gegevens of vergelijkende onderzoeken die aantonen dat niet-moslimleerlingen ethiek in plaats van islamologie kunnen studeren? Overeenkomstig artikel 22 van de Pakistaanse grondwet en verscheidene bepalingen van het Verdrag inzake de rechten van het kind hebben niet-moslimleerlingen recht op onderwijs over hun eigen godsdienst wanneer moslimleerlingen de islam bestuderen. Zijn er stappen ondernomen om hierin te voorzien?

Antwoord van de heer Piebalgs namens de Commissie
(27 februari 2013)

Sinds de invoering van het nieuwe leerplan in 2006 is het voornaamste punt van zorg de tenuitvoerlegging ervan, met inbegrip van de opleiding van de leraren en de aanpassing van de schoolboeken.

De schoolboeken worden elk jaar herdrukt, maar hun inhoud wordt niet noodzakelijkerwijs aangepast volgens het leerplan van 2006. In 2010-2011 verleende de EU steun aan de regering van Sindh voor een aantal workshops over het leerplan van 2006. Sindsdien heeft de regering van Sindh geen noemenswaardige vooruitgang geboekt inzake de verbetering van de schoolboeken, vanwege capaciteitsproblemen en daarnaast ook vanwege aan de gang zijnde discussies over contractuele kwesties (ontwerp, auteursrechten, druk).

De regering van Sindh voert momenteel participatief overleg om een driejarenplan voor de onderwijssector in Sindh op te zetten (SESP). De EU steunt dit proces dat de oprichting omvat van een groep voor lokaal onderwijs onder leiding van de regering en met medewerking van maatschappelijke organisaties, de particuliere sector en particuliere stichtingen, alsook donoren. De kwaliteit en de leerresultaten worden besproken in een van de beleidspijlers van het SESP dat ook een hoofdstuk omvat over leerplannen en schoolboeken.

([1]) a) Onderzoek door Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) en Baela Raza Jamil dat laat zien dat het curriculum voorbereid in 2006 en goedgekeurd als onderwijsbeleid in 2009 nooit is uitgevoerd, http://itacec.org/document/nep09/NCERT%20Pakistan%20paper%20BRJ.pdf
b) Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), http://www.sdpi.org/publications/publication_details-286-34.html
c) Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), http://crss.pk/downloads/Reports/Research-Reports/Curriculum-of-Hate.pdf
d) Het onderzoek van de NCJP over de inhoud van schoolboeken (in Urdu) oordeelt dat het aantal haatdragende teksten in schoolboeken in Sindh is verdubbeld en in Punjab is verdriedubbeld vergeleken met het jaar ervoor.

([2]) http://www.pid.gov.pk/press16-09-2011.htm

In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) richt de steun van de EU zich op de lerarenopleiding in vijf districten. De opleiding legt aan de leraren uit hoe zij volgens het leerplan van 2006 moeten lesgeven.

Wat betreft artikel 25-A van de grondwet heeft de regering van Sindh het wetsontwerp inzake het recht van kinderen op gratis en verplicht onderwijs in 2013 afgerond. Dit wetsontwerp wordt nu aan het parlement van Sindh voorgelegd. Een vergelijkbaar wetsontwerp werd in KP bij het provinciale parlement ingediend, maar werd daarop teruggestuurd omdat de financiële implicaties ervan nog moesten worden berekend. Naar verwachting zal dit ontwerp binnen enkele weken opnieuw worden ingediend.

Momenteel zijn er geen gegevens beschikbaar waaruit moet blijken of niet-moslims ethieklessen volgen in plaats van islamkunde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000160/13
to the Commission
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Discrimination in the Pakistani school curriculum (follow-up to Written Question E-007891/2012 by Peter Van Dalen and the Commission's answer to it)

School textbooks are approved annually, which means that every year some changes are made. According to analysis carried out by the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), the amount of hate material in the textbooks used in the Sindh and Punjab provinces of Pakistan for the 2012-2013 school year has increased in comparison with 2011-2012. Is the Commission aware of religious biases in education policy and religious hate material in Sindh textbooks?

Did the evaluations of EU-sponsored education sector reform programmes in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa carried out in 2012 include a textbook content analysis component? What efforts have been made by the provincial government of Sindh to assess and remove hate material in textbooks for use in that province during the 2013-2014 school year? Researchers suggest that radicalisation and hate-mongering still form part of these textbooks ([1]): how is the Commission monitoring the textbook issue in relation to quality of education?

Following the 18th amendment to the Pakistani constitution in April 2010, powers have been devolved to the provinces. In 2010, at a conference held in Islamabad, a resolution was passed by the four Chief Ministers and Prime Minister of Pakistan on the right to free and compulsory education ([2]). The law was passed by Pakistan's parliament in October 2012 and it is now the responsibility of the provinces to implement it. Can the Commission find out what progress has been made by the Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regional governments in implementing Article 25-A of the Pakistani constitution? What efforts have been made by the Commission to raise the issue of hate material targeting religious minorities with the EU's representatives in Pakistan? Has the Commission addressed civil society concerns about hate material?

Are there any data or comparative studies available showing that non-Muslim students are able to study ethics instead of Islamic studies? According to Article 22 of the Pakistani constitution and several provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, non-Muslim students are entitled to learn about their own religion while Muslim students are studying Islam. Have any steps been taken to provide for this?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

Since the introduction of the new 2006 curriculum, the main concern is its implementation including teacher training and textbook updating.

Textbooks are printed annually but their content is not necessarily updated in line with the 2006 curriculum. In 2010/11, the EU supported the Government of Sindh in conducting a series of workshops on the 2006 curriculum. Since then the Government of Sindh has made no significant progress in producing improved textbooks because, in addition to capacity constraints, discussions are ongoing on contract modalities (design, royalties, printing).

The Government of Sindh is currently going through a consultative, participatory process to develop a 3-year Sindh Education Sector Plan (SESP). The EU is supporting this process comprising the setting up of the Local Education Group under the leadership of the Government and with the participation of civil society, the private sector and private foundations, and donors. The quality and learning outcomes are dealt with within one of the policy pillars of the SESP which also has a chapter on curriculum and textbooks.

In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the EU assistance focuses on teacher training in 5 selected districts. The training helps teachers to teach according to the 2006 curriculum.

([1]) (a) Study by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) and Baela Raza Jamil showing that the curriculum prepared in 2006 and approved as 2009 education policy was never implemented, http://itacec.org/document/nep09/NCERT%20Pakistan%20paper%20BRJ.pdf; (b) Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), http://www.sdpi.org/publications/publication_details-286-34.html; (c) Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), http://crss.pk/downloads/Reports/Research-Reports/Curriculum-of-Hate.pdf; (d) The NCJP's content identification study (in Urdu) finds that hate material in 2012-2013 textbooks increased twofold in Sindh and threefold in Punjab as compared with the previous year.

([2]) http://www.pid.gov.pk/press16-09-2011.htm

Regarding Article 25-A of the Constitution, the Sindh Government has finalised the draft Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Sindh Bill 2013, to be tabled in the Sindh Assembly. A similar bill was presented to the provincial assembly in KP, which was then returned for its financial implications to be calculated. The bill is expected to be tabled again in a few weeks.

There is no data currently available to show whether non-Muslims are studying ethics rather than Islamiat.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000161/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εν εξελίξει οικολογική καταστροφή στο κατεχόμενο χωριό Λιβερά Κυρήνειας στην Κύπρο

Τον Μάιο του 2008, μια τοποθεσία κοντά στο κατεχόμενο χωριό Λιβερά Κυρήνειας στην Κύπρο προστέθηκε στον ενημερωμένο κατάλογο Τόπων Κοινοτικής Σημασίας (ΤΚΣ) που έχουν επιλεγεί για περαιτέρω ενσωμάτωση στο ευρωπαϊκό δίκτυο Natura 2000. Ωστόσο, αντί να προστατεύεται, η τοποθεσία αυτή έχει υποστεί επανειλημμένες οικολογικές ζημίες στα χέρια των παράνομων τουρκικών δυνάμεων κατοχής. Πέραν της πρόκλησης περιβαλλοντικής ζημίας, οι παράνομες τουρκικές κατοχικές δυνάμεις έχουν προσπαθήσει να μετατρέψουν την τοποθεσία αυτή, καθώς και μια δασική και μη δασική περιοχή κοντά στα Λιβερά, σε μείζονα οικοδομική περιοχή, ανεγείροντας πολυτελείς κατοικίες για τούρκους αξιωματούχους και άλλους, πάνω σε γη που έχει κλαπεί από εκτοπισμένους Ελληνοκυπρίους.

Από τον Νοέμβριο του 2012, το τουρκοκυπριακό ψευδοκράτος επιτρέπει — όπως επέτρεψε και κατά το παρελθόν — και πάλι στις μπουλντόζες να καταστρέφουν τη μοναδική χλωρίδα, πανίδα και βιολογική ποικιλία της τοποθεσίας.

Συνεπώς, ερωτώ την Επιτροπή:

1. Σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί η ΕΕ για να σταματήσει άμεσα τις προκλητικές ενέργειες της Τουρκίας και να θέσει τέρμα στην εν εξελίξει οικολογική καταστροφή στην τοποθεσία αυτή και στον παράνομο σφετερισμό και οικοδόμηση πάνω σε γη που ανήκει νομίμως σε ελληνοκύπριους κατοίκους του χωριού που εκτοπίστηκαν το 1974;

2. Πώς μπορεί η ΕΕ να προστατεύσει μια τοποθεσία που έχει επιλεγεί για ενσωμάτωση στο δίκτυο Natura 2000 από την Τουρκία, μια υποψήφια προς ένταξη χώρα, εάν η τελευταία εξακολουθεί να μη δείχνει κανέναν σεβασμό για τους κανονισμούς και τις αποφάσεις της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαρτίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση P-000084/2013 ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για τις οικοδομικές εργασίες στην περιοχή Κορμακίτη (Κυρήνεια) και παρακολουθεί το θέμα εκ του σύνεγγυς, λαμβανομένων υπόψη των επιπτώσεών του στο περιβάλλον. Ωστόσο, επί όσο διάστημα το κεκτημένο της ΕΕ παραμένει υπό αναστολή στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει νομικό μέσο για την επιβολή της προστασίας του περιβάλλοντος στη συγκεκριμένη περιοχή.

Η Επιτροπή έχει παράσχει τεχνική βοήθεια στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα στο πλαίσιο του χρηματοδοτούμενου από την ΕΕ έργου «Στήριξη της τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας όσον αφορά τη διαχείριση και την προστασία δυνητικών περιοχών Natura 2000 στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου». Προσδιορίστηκαν επτά περιοχές και καταρτίστηκαν σχέδια διαχείρισης. Στο πλαίσιο της προετοιμασίας για τη μελλοντική εφαρμογή του κεκτημένου της ΕΕ εναπόκειται στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα να εφαρμόσει τα αναγκαία μέτρα διατήρησης που είχε ήδη καταρτίσει για τις εν λόγω επτά περιοχές.

Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να εγείρει το θέμα και να ενθαρρύνει τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη να λάβουν τα ενδεδειγμένα μέτρα διατήρησης στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου.

Το θέμα που θέτει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος υπογραμμίζει για μία ακόμη φορά την ανάγκη ταχείας και συνολικής διευθέτησης του κυπριακού προβλήματος. Η Επιτροπή, στην ανακοίνωσή της του Οκτωβρίου 2012 σχετικά με τη στρατηγική διεύρυνσης και τις κυριότερες προκλήσεις για το διάστημα 2012-2013 ([2]), υπογράμμισε την ανάγκη επανέναρξης των διαπραγματεύσεων με στόχο την ταχεία ολοκλήρωση των συνομιλιών, αξιοποιώντας την πρόοδο που έχει επιτευχθεί μέχρι σήμερα, και ενθάρρυνε την Τουρκία να ενισχύσει με συγκεκριμένο τρόπο τη δέσμευση και τη συμβολή της στις συνομιλίες.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/redirect-plenary-archive.html?rewrite=parliamentary-questions
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000161/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Ongoing ecological damage to the occupied village of Livera (Kyrenia District, Cyprus)

In May 2008, a site near the occupied village of Livera (Kyrenia District, Cyprus) was added to an updated list of Sites of Community Importance (SCI) selected for further inclusion in the European Natura 2000 network. Instead of being protected, however, the site has suffered repeated ecological damage at the hands of the illegal Turkish occupation forces. Besides causing environmental damage, the illegal Turkish occupation forces have tried to transform the site, as well as a forest and non-forest area close to Livera, into a major construction site by erecting luxurious homes for Turkish officials and others on land stolen from displaced Greek Cypriots.

Since November 2012, the Turkish-Cypriot pseudostate has — as it has in the past — again allowed bulldozers to destroy the site's unique flora, fauna and biological diversity.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. What actions does the EU intend to take to stop Turkey's provocative actions immediately and bring an end to the ongoing ecological damage to the site and to the illegal usurpation of and construction on land lawfully belonging to the Greek-Cypriot inhabitants of the village that were displaced in 1974?

2. How can the EU protect a site that has been selected for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network from Turkey, a candidate for accession, if the latter continues to show no respect for EU regulations and decisions?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-000084/2013 ([1]).

The Commission is aware of the construction works in the area of Kormakiti (Kyrenia) and follows the issue closely, given its impact on the environment. However, as long as the EU *acquis* remains suspended in the northern part of Cyprus, the Commission does not have any legal instrument to enforce environmental protection in that specific area.

The Commission has provided technical assistance to the Turkish Cypriot community under the EU funded project 'Support to the Turkish Cypriot community as regards management and protection of potential Natura 2000 sites in the northern part of Cyprus'. Seven areas have been identified and draft management plans were prepared. In preparation for the future application of the EU *acquis* it is for the Turkish Cypriot Community to now implement the necessary conservation measures it had already prepared for those seven areas.

Nevertheless, the Commission continues to raise the issue and to encourage interested parties to apply appropriate conservation measures in the northern part of Cyprus.

The issue raised by the Honourable Member once again underlines the need to reach a rapid comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. In its October 2012 Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013 ([2]), the Commission underlined the necessity to re-launch the negotiations with the aim of reaching a swift conclusion of the talks, building on the progress achieved to date, and encouraged Turkey to increase in concrete terms its commitment and contribution to the talks.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/redirect-plenary-archive.html?rewrite=parliamentary-questions.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000162/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(9 januari 2013)

Angående: UEFI:s säkerhetsstart och standardisering inom EU

Som den enda lösningen för att kunna erbjuda kompatibilitet med specifika mjukvaruprogram beslutade sig den 26 oktober 2012 alla hårdvarutillverkare som har produkter som är kompatibla med operativsystemet Windows 8 för att använda sig av ett system för säkerhetsstart (secure boot) som enbart tillverkas och används av företaget Microsoft. Krypteringsnycklar för UEFI:s (Unified Extensive Firmware Interface) säkerhetsstart kan endast erhållas från Microsoft, och endast mot betalning. Detta är i själva verket en form av standardisering som ett amerikanskt företag vill påtvinga alla hårdvarutillverkare.

Rådet och parlamentet har vid upprepade tillfällen uppmanat kommissionen att bidra till att stärka rollen för och visa på fördelarna med europeisk standardisering och europeiska standarder på internationell nivå.

Har kommissionen undersökt, eller planerar den i framtiden att undersöka, huruvida det strider mot de frivilliga standarderna att ålägga hårdvaruförsäljare att inkludera en leverantörsspecifik standard för att dessa ska kunna erbjuda sina kunder specifika alternativ?

Vilka åtgärder har kommissionen vidtagit för att se till att det europeiska standardiseringssystemet är tillräckligt väl representerat på den internationella marknaden och skyddas gentemot störningar från företag som har ekonomiska möjligheter att påtvinga de europeiska företagen standarder?

Svar från Joaquín Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(4 mars 2013)

Kommissionen är medveten om säkerhetskraven i operativsystemet Microsoft Windows 8. De innebär att datortillverkarna (så kallade OEM-företag) måste använda UEFI säkerhetsstart (Unified Extensible Firmware Interface). UEFI-normen har utvecklats och förvaltas av UEFI Forum. Microsoft är bara en av medlemmarna i forumet, tillsammans med andra tillverkare av kretskort, fast programvara och hårdvara. Forumet är öppet för enskilda och företag, som kan ansluta sig kostnadsfritt.

Kommissionen följer tillämpningen av säkerhetskraven i operativsystemet Microsoft Windows 8. Kommissionen har dock för närvarande ingen information som stöder att säkerhetskraven i Windows 8 i praktiken medför en överträdelse av konkurrensbestämmelserna i artikel 101 och 102 i fördraget om Europeiska unionens funktionssätt. Enligt kommissionens uppgifter måste OEM-företagen erbjuda slutanvändarna möjlighet att desaktivera UEFI säkerhetsstart.

Kommissionen kommer att fortsätta bevaka utvecklingen på marknaden för att bevara en fri och lojal konkurrens mellan alla marknadsaktörer.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000162/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: UEFI Secure Boot and European Union standardisation

On 26 October 2012, as the only solution able to provide compatibility with specific software, all hardware manufacturers with products compatible with the Windows 8 operating system chose to adopt a system of secure booting which is created and implemented only by Microsoft Corporation. Keys for the encryption used by the so-called UEFI (Unified Extensive Firmware Interface) Secure Boot can only be obtained from Microsoft Corporation, and only at a price. This is in fact a form of standardisation imposed by a US company on all hardware manufacturers.

The Council and Parliament have on multiple occasions recommended to the Commission that it help to reinforce the role, and demonstrate the benefits, of European standardisation and European standards in the international context.

Has the Commission investigated, or is it planning to investigate in the future, whether obliging hardware vendors to include a specific proprietary standard in order to be able to offer specific options to their customers is an abuse of voluntary standards?

What measures has the Commission taken to ensure that the European standardisation system is sufficiently represented on the global market and protected from disturbances from companies financially able to impose standards on EU companies?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

The Commission is aware of the Microsoft Windows 8 security requirements. According to these requirements, in order to conform to the Windows 8 certification programme, computer manufacturers ('OEMs') have to use Unified Extensible Firmware Interface ('UEFI') secure boot. The UEFI standard is developed and managed by the UEFI Forum. Microsoft is only one member of the UEFI forum, among other chipset, firmware and hardware manufacturers. The UEFI forum is open to any individual or company to join free of cost.

The Commission is monitoring the implementation of the Microsoft Windows 8 security requirements. The Commission is however currently not in possession of evidence suggesting that the Windows 8 security requirements would result in practices in violation of EU competition rules as laid down in Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. In particular, on the basis of the information currently available to the Commission it appears that the OEMs are required to give end users the option to disable the UEFI secure boot.

The Commission will continue to monitor market developments so as to ensure that competition and a level playing field are preserved amongst all market players.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000164/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Costruzione di un passante autostradale a Bologna senza bando di gara d'appalto

Da vari anni si sta tentando di costruire una nuova sezione autostradale, il cosiddetto «Passante di Bologna».

Recentemente, durante una riunione tenutasi tra Anas, Autostrade, Regione Emilia Romagna, Provincia di Bologna, è stato individuato un tracciato più breve di quello originario risalente al 2004, espressamente volto a trasformare il passante da «nuova opera» a «potenziamento dell'autostrada in concessione», con il dichiarato scopo di evitare l'assegnazione mediante bando pubblico europeo.

Considerando che già nel 2008 la Commissione Europea aveva aperto una procedura d'infrazione (2008/4007) circa la costruzione del Passante di Bologna;

considerando che il nuovo tracciato, il cosiddetto «passantino», non differisce sostanzialmente da quello originale;

considerando la violazione della direttiva 2004/18/CE sulle procedure di assegnazione degli appalti tramite bandi di gara, dato che tale opera viene artificiosamente considerata «potenziamento dell'autostrada in concessione»;

si chiede alla Commissione se sia al corrente di quanto sopra descritto e, in tal caso, se abbia intenzione di aprire una nuova procedura d'infrazione al fine di consentire il rispetto della normativa comunitaria.

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(18 febbraio 2013)

L'onorevole parlamentare richiama l'attenzione della Commissione su fatti inerenti al progetto di costruzione di un nuovo tratto autostradale (il cosiddetto «passante di Bologna»).

L'onorevole parlamentare cita la procedura di infrazione 2008/4007 riguardante precedenti progetti relativi alla realizzazione del «passante di Bologna». Tale procedura è stata chiusa sulla base dell'impegno assunto dalle autorità italiane a procedere nella costruzione del passante in questione secondo modalità e progetti diversi da quelli inizialmente previsti, in modo da garantire il rispetto della normativa UE in materia di appalti pubblici.

L'onorevole parlamentare riferisce che le autorità italiane intendono procedere alla realizzazione del passante e hanno identificato un tracciato più breve rispetto a quello originale. La Commissione ha ricevuto una nuova denuncia al riguardo ed è quindi a conoscenza della situazione. Tuttavia, in base alle informazioni a disposizione, la Commissione non dispone, al momento, di elementi sufficienti per ritenere che le autorità italiane stiano violando gli impegni assunti nel 2009 e nel 2010, poi confermati nel 2011, e per avviare una nuova procedura di infrazione. Ad ogni modo la Commissione segue attentamente la situazione al fine di garantire che tali impegni vengano rispettati e, se necessario, è pronta a intervenire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000164/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Construction of a motorway bypass in Bologna without a call for tenders

For several years there have been efforts to build a new section of motorway: the so-called 'Bologna bypass'.

During a recent meeting between the *Azienda Nazionale Autonoma delle Strade Statali* [National Organisation for State Road Maintenance], *Autostrade per Italia*, the Region of Emilia-Romagna and the Province of Bologna, a shorter route than the original 2004 one was identified, with the specific aim of transforming the bypass from a 'new project' into 'the expansion of the motorway concession'. The stated aim was to avoid opening a European call for tenders to award the contract.

As far back as 2008, the Commission opened an infringement procedure (2008/4007) relating to the construction of the Bologna bypass.

The new route, the so-called 'mini bypass', is essentially the same as the original.

Directive 2004/18/EC on procedures for the award of contracts via calls for tender has been breached, since this project has been falsely described as 'the expansion of the motorway concession'.

Is the Commission aware of the above, and if so, does it intend to open a new infringement procedure to ensure compliance with EC law?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

The Honourable Member draws the Commission's attention on facts relating to the plans for the construction of a new section of motorway (the so-called 'Bologna bypass').

The Honourable Member refers to infringement procedure 2008/4007, which concerned earlier plans for the construction of the 'Bologna bypass'. This procedure was closed on the basis of Italian authorities' commitment to proceed to the construction of the 'Bologna bypass' following modalities and projects different from those initially envisaged, in order to ensure compliance with EU public procurement law.

The Honourable Member mentions that the Italian authorities are planning to go ahead with the construction of the bypass and have identified a shorter route than the original one. The Commission has received a new complaint on this matter, and is therefore aware of the situation. However, on the basis of the information available, the Commission does not have, at the moment, sufficient elements to believe that the commitments expressed by the Italian authorities in 2009 and 2010, and confirmed in 2011, are being violated and to open a new infringement procedure. In any case, the Commission is monitoring the situation to ensure that these commitments are respected, and is ready to take action if needed.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000165/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Aumento de precio de los fletes navieros I

La Federación Catalana de Industrias de la Carne (FECIC ([1])) informa de que las empresas cárnicas exportadoras, a ella asociadas, se ven perjudicadas por una subida de precios al contratar sus fletes para el transporte marítimo de sus productos en contenedores de temperatura controlada (REFER) con diversas compañías navieras que efectúan el transporte. Parece ser que, de forma imprevista y simultánea, las compañías navieras, con la colaboración de los transitarios, han decidido incrementar los fletes en la cantidad de 1 500 dólares USA para cada contenedor (GRI), con vigencia a partir del 1 de enero de 2013. Esta subida se ha producido en unas condiciones que reflejarían la existencia de un acuerdo general que los porteadores imponen a los usuarios del servicio de transporte marítimo: se aplica a todos los orígenes, a todos los destinos, a todos los clientes y a los productos perecederos, como la carne. Esta subida es aplicada por todos los porteadores, ya sean los transitarios que contratan los fletes o las compañías navieras que efectúan el transporte.

Un acuerdo entre esas empresas —o, por lo menos, una práctica concertada entre las mismas— afectaría no solamente al mercado catalán y español, sino al comercio entre los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea, pudiendo llegar a producir el efecto de impedir, restringir y falsear el juego de la competencia dentro del mercado interior comunitario, consistente en la fijación directa de los precios de compra o de venta y de las condiciones de las transacciones, a través de esa imposición y subida concertada de precios.

Muy probablemente, también podría producir una explotación abusiva de la posición dominante que las empresas navieras y transitarias puedan tener en el mercado, por no haberse pactado con cada cliente dicho aumento de precios, sino haber sido impuesto, sin ser, además, equitativo.

A la vista de lo anterior,

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de ese aumento de precios desmesurado?

2. ¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre este tema?

3. ¿Qué medidas tomará la Comisión para proteger a las empresas afectadas?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de marzo de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de que, en otoño de 2012, varias compañías de transporte marítimo anunciaron una subida de precios del transporte de contenedores frigoríficos a partir del 1 de enero de 2013.

Atendiendo especialmente al Derecho de la UE en materia de competencia, el mero hecho de que varias empresas competidoras suban los precios de manera similar y paralela no supone necesariamente que hayan incurrido en un acuerdo o práctica concertada prohibidos por el artículo 101, apartado 1, del Tratado, ni tampoco existe una prohibición general de armonizar los precios a los ya cobrados por un competidor ([2]).

En el caso que nos ocupa, la principal compañía de transporte marítimo hizo público en octubre de 2012 su plan de subir los precios a partir del 1 de enero de 2013. A este anuncio siguieron los de otras compañías durante el otoño. A juzgar por la información disponible, no puede determinarse si los anuncios de precios se debieron a una coordinación ilegal o a decisiones independientes de las compañías de transporte marítimo de seguir la decisión de la compañía líder.

([1]) http://www.fecic.es/
([2]) Véase la sentencia en el asunto T-340/06, France Télécom/Comisión, apartado 116, confirmada en casación en la sentencia en el asunto C 202/07 P.

La Comisión hace cumplir activamente las normas de competencia en los mercados del transporte de contenedores. Por ejemplo, ha concluido hace poco una investigación acerca de los transbordadores de contenedores ([3]). También ha llevado a cabo inspecciones sin previo aviso en las instalaciones de las empresas de transporte marítimo de contenedores y prosigue su investigación a este respecto ([4]). Por consiguiente, la Comisión agradece cualquier información de mercado que la ayude en su tarea de defender la competencia en este sector, que reviste gran importancia para la economía europea.

([3]) Véase el comunicado de prensa IP/13/82.
([4]) Véase el comunicado de prensa MEMO/11/307.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000165/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Rise in freight shipping charges I

The Catalan Meat Industry Federation (FECIC ([1])) reports that meat exporters belonging to the Federation are being hit by price rises imposed by the different shipping lines contracted to ship their goods in temperature controlled containers (Reefers). It seems that shipping lines, acting in collaboration with forwarding agents, have simultaneously and without warning decided to raise freight charges by USD 1 500 per container, with effect from 1 January 2013. The way this price rise has come about would suggest a general agreement by carriers to impose this on sea freight users: it applies to all departure points, all destinations, all customers and to perishable goods such as meat. The price rise has been applied by all carriers irrespective of whether contracts are drawn up through forwarding agents or with the shipping lines themselves.

An agreement between the shipping lines -or, at the very least, a concerted practice between them — will not only affect the Catalan and Spanish markets but also trade between EU Member States. It could have the effect of preventing, restricting and distorting competition within the internal EU market, as it entails the direct fixing of purchase or sale prices and trading conditions, through the concerted imposition of a price rise.

It is also very likely that this could lead to abuse of the dominant market position these shipping lines and forwarding agents may enjoy, because the price rise is not a fair one and it has not been negotiated with individual customers, just imposed.

1. Is the Commission aware of this disproportionate rise in prices?

2. What is the Commission's opinion?

3. What steps will the Commission take to protect the companies affected?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

The Commission is aware that during autumn 2012 several shipping companies announced a price increase for the transport of reefer containers effective as of 1 January 2013.

With particular regard to EU competition law, the mere fact that several competitors apparently apply a parallel and similar price increase does not necessarily mean that there is an agreement or a concerted practice prohibited by Article 101(1) of the Treaty, nor is there a general prohibition to align prices on those previously charged by a competitor ([2]).

In the case at hand, a leading shipping company made public in October 2012 its plan to raise prices as of 1 January 2013. This announcement was followed by other operators during autumn. On the basis of the available information it cannot be determined whether the price announcements resulted from unlawful coordination or whether the shipping companies decided independently to follow the leader.

The Commission is active in enforcing competition rules in the container shipping markets. For example, it recently concluded an investigation regarding container feeder vessels ([3]). It also undertook unannounced inspections at the premises of container shipping companies and is continuing its investigation in this respect ([4]). The Commission therefore welcomes any market information that would assist it in its task of safeguarding competition in this sector, which is of great importance for the European economy.

([1]) http://www.fecic.es/.
([2]) See Case T-340/06, France Telecom/Commission, paragraph 116, upheld in appeal in case C202/07 P.
([3]) See press release IP/13/82.
([4]) See press release MEMO/11/307.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000166/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Aumento de precio de los fletes navieros II

La Federación Catalana de Industrias de la Carne (FECIC ([1])) informa de que las empresas cárnicas exportadoras, a ella asociadas, se ven perjudicadas por una subida de precios al contratar sus fletes para el transporte marítimo de sus productos en contenedores de temperatura controlada (REFER) con diversas compañías navieras que efectúan el transporte. Parece ser que, de forma imprevista y simultánea, las compañías navieras, con la colaboración de los transitarios, han decidido incrementar los fletes en la cantidad de 1 500 dólares USA para cada contenedor (GRI), con vigencia a partir del 1 de enero de 2013. Esta subida se ha producido en unas condiciones que reflejarían la existencia de un acuerdo general que los porteadores imponen a los usuarios del servicio de transporte marítimo: se aplica a todos los orígenes, a todos los destinos, a todos los clientes y a los productos perecederos, como la carne. Esta subida es aplicada por todos los porteadores.

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que esta subida de precios está cumpliendo la Ley de Defensa de la Competencia? La Ley 15/07, de 3 de julio, de Defensa de la Competencia (LDC) prohíbe las conductas colusorias que tengan por objeto, produzcan o puedan producir el efecto de impedir o falsear la competencia mediante la fijación de precios y la explotación abusiva por una o varias empresas en todo o en parte del mercado mediante la fijación de precios (artículos 1 y 2 y disposición adicional cuarta). La propia LDC contempla la aplicación de la normativa relativa a la competencia desleal, la Ley 3/91, de 10 de enero, de Competencia Desleal, cuyo artículo 15 prevé expresamente como actuación desleal prevalerse en el mercado de una ventaja competitiva significativa, como podrían ser las subidas de precios aplicadas unilateralmente y de forma acordada, o por lo menos concertada, por navieras y transitarios.

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que esta subida de precios está cumpliendo el Tratado de la Unión Europea? Los actuales artículos 101 y 102 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la UE recogen una serie de conductas prohibidas a las que hace referencia el artículo 53 de la LDC (Reglamento CE n° 1/2003 del Consejo, de 16 de diciembre de 2002).

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de marzo de 2013)

La Comisión no puede opinar sobre la aplicación de la legislación nacional de competencia, porque este tema compete a los Estados miembros y a sus autoridades judiciales.

Atendiendo especialmente al Derecho de la UE en materia de competencia, el mero hecho de que varias empresas competidoras suban los precios de manera similar y paralela no supone necesariamente que hayan incurrido en un acuerdo o práctica concertada prohibidos por el artículo 101, apartado 1, del Tratado, ni tampoco existe una prohibición general de armonizar los precios a los ya cobrados por un competidor ([2]).

En el caso que nos ocupa, la principal compañía de transporte marítimo hizo público en octubre de 2012 su plan de aumentar los precios a partir del 1 de enero de 2013. A este anuncio siguieron los de otras compañías durante el otoño. A juzgar por la información disponible, no puede determinarse si los anuncios de precios se debieron a una coordinación ilegal o a decisiones independientes de las compañías de transporte marítimo de seguir la decisión de la compañía líder.

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-000165/2013.

([1]) http://www.fecic.es/
([2]) Véase la sentencia en el asunto T-340/06, France Télécom/Comisión, apartado 116, confirmada en casación en la sentencia en el asunto C 202/07 P.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000166/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Rise in freight shipping charges II

The Catalan Meat Industry Federation (FECIC ([1])) reports that meat exporters belonging to the Federation are being hit by price rises imposed by the different shipping lines contracted to ship their goods in temperature controlled containers (Reefers). It seems that shipping lines, acting in collaboration with forwarding agents, have simultaneously and without warning decided to raise freight charges by USD 1 500 per container, with effect from 1 January 2013. The way this price rise has come about would suggest a general agreement by carriers to impose this on sea freight users: it applies to all departure points, all destinations, all customers and to perishable goods such as meat. The price rise has been applied by all carriers.

1. Does the Commission believe that this price rise complies with the competition protection law? Law 15/07 of 3 July 2007 on Protection of Competition (LPC) prohibits collusive behaviour that aims to, does or may prevent or distort competition through the fixing of prices, and abuse by one or more companies across the whole of the market or part of it through the fixing of prices (Articles 1 and 2 and fourth additional provision). The LPC provides for implementation of Law 3/91 of 10 January 1991 on Unfair Competition, Article 15 of which expressly provides that availing oneself of a significant competitive advantage constitutes unfair competition. Agreed upon or at least concerted price increases applied unilaterally by shipping lines and forwarding agents could fall under this heading.

2. Does the Commission believe that this price rise complies with the Treaty on European Union? Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union set out a series of actions that are prohibited and which Article 53 of the LPC (Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 of 16 December 2002) refers to.

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

The Commission is not in a position to opine on the application of national competition legislation since such a matter falls within the purview of the Member States' competition and judicial authorities.

With particular regard to EU competition law, the mere fact that several competitors apparently apply a parallel and similar price increase does not necessarily mean that there is an agreement or a concerted practice prohibited by Article 101(1) of the Treaty, nor is there a general prohibition to align prices on those previously charged by a competitor ([2]).

In the case at hand, a leading shipping company made public in October 2012 its plan to raise prices as of 1 January 2013. This announcement was followed by other operators during autumn. On the basis of the available information it cannot be determined whether the price announcements resulted from unlawful coordination or whether the shipping companies decided independently to follow the leader.

The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question E-000165/2013.

([1]) http://www.fecic.es/.
([2]) See Case T-340/06, France Telecom/Commission, paragraph 116, upheld in appeal in case C202/07 P.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000167/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Βία κατά των γυναικών στο Αφγανιστάν

Στις 11 Δεκεμβρίου 2012, η Αποστολή βοήθειας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών στο Αφγανιστάν (UNAMA) δημοσίευσε έκθεση με τίτλο «Still a Long Way to Go: Implementation of the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan (EVAW)» που πραγματεύεται το επίπεδο εφαρμογής του νόμου σχετικά με την αντιμετώπιση της βίας κατά των γυναικών στο Αφγανιστάν. Παρά το γεγονός ότι το σχετικό νομοθετικό πλαίσιο ψηφίστηκε το 2009, τα αποτελέσματα σε αυτό τον τομέα παραμένουν απογοητευτικά. Η πρόοδος που έχει σημειωθεί είναι πρακτικά ελάχιστη και οι υποθέσεις βίας που βλέπουν το φως της δημοσιότητας δεν αποτελούν, σύμφωνα με την έκθεση, παρά ένα ελάχιστο ποσοστό των συνολικών περιστατικών.

Οι πολιτιστικοί περιορισμοί, οι αντιφατικές πρακτικές της αστυνομίας και η παραπομπή της εκδίκασης των υποθέσεων αυτών σε τοπικά φυλετικά συμβούλια αποτελούν τροχοπέδη για τη χρηστή εφαρμογή του νόμου EVAW. Πολλές φορές, μάλιστα, οι γυναίκες που είναι θύματα βίας δέχονται απειλές κατά της ζωής τους, ενώ συμβαίνει ορισμένες γυναίκες να καταδικάζονται άδικα για εγκατάλειψη του συζύγου τους, ακόμα και αν η εγκατάλειψη είναι άμεσο αποτέλεσμα της κακοποίησής τους από αυτούς.

Η έκθεση αυτή δημοσιεύτηκε υπό το φως των πολυάριθμων πρόσφατων περιστατικών βίας κατά γυναικών και μάλιστα μία μέρα μετά τον θάνατο της Νατζία Σεντίκι, προϊσταμένης για τις γυναικείες υποθέσεις στην επαρχία Λαγκμάν του ανατολικού Αφγανιστάν. Η Σεντίκι εκτελούσε καθήκοντα προϊσταμένης, καθώς πριν από 5 μήνες είχε δολοφονηθεί και η προκάτοχός της, Χανίφα Σάφι. Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία, τα κρούσματα κακοποίησης των γυναικών έχουν αυξηθεί τον τελευταίο χρόνο.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Προτίθεται να αναλάβει άμεσα ουσιαστικές δράσεις για την αντιμετώπιση της βίας κατά των γυναικών στο Αφγανιστάν;

— Σκοπεύει να παράσχει τεχνική βοήθεια για την εφαρμογή του νόμου EVAW σε επαρχιακά δικαστήρια, να αυξήσει την ενίσχυση της προς κέντρα και καταφύγια που βοηθούν τις κακοποιημένες γυναίκες ή να χρησιμοποιήσει τους χρηματοδοτικούς της μηχανισμούς προκειμένου να ασκήσει πίεση στις αρχές του Αφγανιστάν με στόχο την καλύτερη εφαρμογή της νομοθεσίας EVAW;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η ΕΕ καταδίκασε δριμύτατα τη δολοφονία των αγωνιστριών για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών Nadia Seddiqi και Hanifa Safi. Η κυβέρνηση του Αφγανιστάν και η διεθνής κοινότητα έχουν καταστήσει σαφές ότι η πρόοδος στο Αφγανιστάν πρέπει να βασίζεται στον σεβασμό του Συντάγματος του Αφγανιστάν, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των διατάξεών του για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα και, ιδίως, για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών. Στο πλαίσιο αμοιβαίας ευθύνης του Τόκιο καθορίζονται διεξοδικά οι δεσμεύσεις αναφορικά με το θέμα αυτό. Ενώ εναπόκειται στις αρχές του Αφγανιστάν να φροντίζουν για την ασφάλεια των υπηκόων τους, η ΕΕ υποστηρίζει το πλαίσιο που παρέχει τις δυνατότητες για να επιτελείται το έργο αυτό: αστυνόμευση, διοίκηση των τομέων της αστυνομίας και της δικαιοσύνης και διακυβέρνηση εν γένει. Η ΕΕ πιέζει τις αφγανικές αρχές να εφαρμόσουν πλήρως τις δεσμεύσεις του Τόκιο.

Η ΕΕ έχει χρηματοδοτήσει τις δραστηριότητες υποστήριξης μέσω διαφόρων μη κυβερνητικών οργανώσεων (ΜΚΟ) ([1]) καθώς και μέσω του UNDP ([2]). Στις δραστηριότητες αυτές συμπεριλαμβάνονται η παροχή νομικής συνδρομής, η στέγαση, η παροχή συμβουλών και η διαμεσολάβηση για τις γυναίκες και τα κορίτσια που είναι θύματα οικογενειακής βίας· η προώθηση των δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών μέσω τοπικών δομών της κοινωνίας των πολιτών· η οικοδόμηση μηχανισμών παροχής ικανοτήτων και οι δραστηριότητες τόνωσης της ευαισθητοποίησης που προορίζονται για τους δικαστικούς υπαλλήλους και τους ενδιαφερόμενους πρωταγωνιστές στις κοινότητες· η προσφορά της δυνατότητας στις οργανώσεις της κοινωνίας των πολιτών και στις τοπικές κοινότητες σε επαρχιακό επίπεδο να λάβουν μέτρα έμπρακτης παρακολούθησης του EVAW ([3]) και του UNSCR ([4]) 1325· η χρηματοδότηση δραστηριοτήτων τοπικής εφαρμογής στον τομέα των μέσων ενημέρωσης σε 15 επαρχίες.

([1]) ΜΚΟ = Μη Κυβερνητικές Οργανώσεις.
([2]) UNDP = Πρόγραμμα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για την Ανάπτυξη.
([3]) EVAW = Νόμος περί εξάλειψης της βίας κατά των γυναικών.
([4]) UNSCR = Ψήφισμα του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών.

Η αστυνομική αποστολή της ΕΕ, η EUPOL AFGHANISTAN, συνεργάζεται με το UNDP για την παροχή εξειδικευμένης κατάρτισης στις αστυνομικές και εισαγγελικές αρχές σε θέματα EVAW και εξακολουθεί να προωθεί την εκστρατεία ευαισθητοποίησης μεγάλης απήχησης μαζί, μεταξύ άλλων, με την IOM ([5]) και το UNFPA ([6]). Έχει επίσης υποστηρίξει τις Μονάδες Επίλυσης Οικογενειακών Προβλημάτων του Υπουργείου Εσωτερικών μέσω προγραμμάτων κατάρτισης στις τεχνικές διεξαγωγής ποινικών ερευνών και τις τεχνικές συνεντεύξεων που απευθύνονται σε γυναίκες και παιδιά.

([5]) IOM = Διεθνής Οργάνωση Μετανάστευσης.
([6]) UNFPA = Ταμείο των Ηνωμένων Εθνών τον Πληθυσμό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000167/13
to the Commission
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Violence against women in Afghanistan

On 11 December 2012, the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) published a report entitled 'Still a Long Way to Go: Implementation of the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan (EVAW)' concerning the implementation of the law to combat violence against women in Afghanistan. Despite adoption of legislative framework provisions in 2009, the results have been disappointing, with very little progress having been made, the number of cases actually coming to public attention representing merely the tip of the iceberg.

Cultural obstacles, inconsistent police procedures and the referral of such cases to local tribal councils are hampering the effective implementation of the EVAW law. Many female victims receive death threats and in certain cases they are unjustly condemned for desertion, even if it was the immediate result of abuse by their husbands.

The UNAMA report was prompted by the recent escalation of violence against women, in particular the death of Nadia Sediqqi, the acting head of Afghanistan's Women's Affairs Department in Laghman province in eastern Afghanistan. Sediqqi's predecessor, Hanifa Safi, had been killed five months previously. All recent evidence points to an increase in violence against women.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission intend to take immediate and effective action to prevent violence against women in Afghanistan?

2. Will it provide technical assistance for the implementation of the EVAW law in provincial courts, step up support for shelters providing care for abused women or use its funding mechanisms to bring pressure to bear on the Afghan authorities to implement the EVAW law more effectively?

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

The EU has strongly condemned the killing of the women's rights activist Nadia Seddiqi and Hanifa Safi. The Government of Afghanistan and the international community have made it clear that progress in Afghanistan must be based on the respect for the Afghan constitution, including its human rights provisions and, notably, the rights of women. The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework defines detailed commitments in this respect. While it is for the Afghan authorities to ensure the safety of their nationals, the EU is supporting the enabling framework: policing, administration of the police and justice sectors, and governance generally. The EU presses the Afghan authorities to implement the Tokyo commitments in full.

The EU has been funding support activities through different non-governmental organisations NGOs ([1]) as well as the UNDP ([2]), including provision of legal support, shelter, counselling and mediation for women and girls affected by family violence; the promotion of women's rights through local civil society structures; capacity building and awareness raising activities for justice personnel and community stakeholders; enabling civil society organisations and local communities at provincial level to follow up on the EVAW ([3]) and UNSCR ([4]) 1325; funding of media activities in the field in 15 provinces.

The EU police mission EUPOL AFGHANISTAN is collaborating with UNDP, providing specialised training for police and prosecutors on EVAW and pursuing a high profile awareness-raising campaign together with, among others, the IOM ([5]) and the UNFPA ([6]). It has also supported the Ministry of the Interior's Family Response Units through training in criminal investigation techniques and interviewing techniques for women and children.

([1]) NGO = Non-governmental organisations.
([2]) UNDP = United Nations Development Programme.
([3]) EVAW = Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women.
([4]) UNSCR = United Nations Security Council resolution.
([5]) IOM = International Organisation for Migration.
([6]) UNFPA = United Nations Population Fund.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000169/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Παραβίαση ανθρωπίνων διακαιωμάτων στο Μπαχρέιν

Τη Δευτέρα 7 Ιανουαρίου 2013, το ανώτατο εφετείο του Μπαχρέιν επιβεβαίωσε τις καταδίκες 13 ακτιβιστών για την υποτιθέμενη συμμετοχή τους στις αντικυβερνητικές διαδηλώσεις του 2011. Επτά εκ των κατηγορουμένων καταδικάστηκαν σε ισόβια φυλάκιση για συνωμοσία κατά του καθεστώτος.

Οργανώσεις ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων αλλά και η εγχώρια αντιπολίτευση ισχυρίζονται ότι η απόφαση του δικαστηρίου ήταν πολιτικά κατευθυνόμενη και την καταδικάζουν, υποστηρίζοντας ότι δεν υπάρχει καμία απόδειξη ότι οι ακτιβιστές χρησιμοποίησαν ή προώθησαν τη χρήση βίας κατά τη διάρκεια των διαδηλώσεων. Πολλοί εκ των συλληφθέντων μάλιστα υπέστησαν βασανιστήρια και υπέγραψαν ομολογίες με τη βία, με αποτέλεσμα η σύλληψη και η δίκη των ακτιβιστών να είναι αντίθετη στο διεθνές δίκαιο.

Η απόφαση αυτή αναμένεται να προκαλέσει θύελλα αντιδράσεων στις κοινότητες και τα χωριά των Σιιτών Μουσουλμάνων, οι οποίοι τον τελευταίο καιρό αντιτίθενται όλο και πιο μαζικά στην «άκαμπτη» ηγεμονία του Σουνίτη βασιλιά Χαμάντ, με αποτέλεσμα να χάνεται μία ακόμη ευκαιρία για την επανέναρξη του διαλόγου συμφιλίωσης ανάμεσα στις δύο πλευρές, που έχει βαλτώσει.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό και υπό το φως του συμφώνου συνεργασίας που έχει υπογραφεί ανάμεσα στην ΕΕ και το Συμβούλιο Συνεργασίας του Κόλπου (μέλος του οποίου είναι το Μπαχρέιν), ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποια είναι η στάση της απέναντι στη νέα διαφαινόμενη παραβίαση ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στο Μπαχρέιν, όπου συστηματικά πλήττονται τα δικαιώματα μεγάλου μέρους του πληθυσμού;

— Προτίθεται να αποφανθεί σχετικά με τη χρηστή ή μη απονομή δικαιοσύνης στις υποθέσεις αυτές; Αν ναι, ποια εργαλεία σκοπεύει να χρησιμοποιήσει ώστε να αποφευχθούν βίαια περιστατικά και ηαποσταθεροποίηση, όχι μόνο στην εν λόγω χώρα, αλλά και στην ευρύτερη περιοχή;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος είναι πλήρως ενήμερη για τη συνολική κατάσταση στο Μπαχρέιν. Από την αναζωπύρωση των ταραχών, τον Φεβρουάριο του 2011, η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος προέβη σε πολλές δηλώσεις με τις οποίες καταδίκαζε τη χρήση βίας από όλες τις πλευρές, τις δεόντως τεκμηριωμένες παραβιάσεις των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, και απηύθυνε εκκλήσεις για επείγουσα έναρξη ουσιαστικού εθνικού διαλόγου, με στόχο τη συμφιλίωση ανάμεσα στην κυβέρνηση και την αντιπολίτευση.

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος εξέφρασε ειδικά τη βαθιά της απογοήτευση για την απόφαση διατήρησης των ποινών των 13 πολιτικών ακτιβιστών, με δήλωση της 10ης Ιανουαρίου 2013. Η ΕΕ παραμένει υπέρμαχος, σε ένα πνεύμα συμφιλίωσης, της επιείκειας έναντι των υπερασπιστών των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και των πολιτικών ακτιβιστών που κρατούνται λόγω των γεγονότων του 2011.

Η πρόσφατη πρόταση διαλόγου του Διαδόχου ήταν ένα πολύ ευπρόσδεκτο διάβημα, καθώς και η ενθαρρυντική απάντηση της αντιπολίτευσης. Η ΕΕ απηύθυνε επανειλημμένα εκκλήσεις προς όλα τα μέρη ώστε να προετοιμαστεί το έδαφος για ουσιαστικές μεταρρυθμίσεις, ιδίως την πλήρη εφαρμογή των συστάσεων της λεγόμενης επιτροπής Bassiouni, καθώς και την τήρηση των δεσμεύσεων που έγιναν κατά τη διάρκεια της καθολικής περιοδικής εξέτασης του Μπαχρέιν, τον Οκτώβριο. Η ΕΕ καλεί επίσης την κυβέρνηση του Μπαχρέιν να αντιμετωπίσει τις κοινωνικο-οικονομικές αδικίες που υφίσταται ο λαός της.

Η ΕΕ είναι πρόθυμη να υποστηρίξει το Μπαχρέιν σε μια διαδικασία συμφιλίωσης, με την παροχή συνδρομής και εμπειρογνωσίας. Αυτή τη στιγμή η ΕΕ εκπονεί πρόγραμμα βάσει του Μηχανισμού Σταθερότητας. Κύριος στόχος της θα είναι, σε πλήρη συμφωνία με τις συστάσεις της επιτροπής Bassiouni, η κατάρτιση δικαστών και εισαγγελέων της ειδικής μονάδας έρευνας για την απαγόρευση της πρακτικής των βασανιστηρίων και της κακοποίησης βάσει του Πρωτοκόλλου της Κωνσταντινούπολης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000169/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Infringement of human rights in Bahrain

On Monday 7 January 2013, the Bahrain Supreme Court upheld the sentences imposed on 13 opposition activists involved in anti-government protests in 2011, seven of them being sentenced to life terms for plotting to overthrow the government.

The sentences have been condemned by human rights organisations and opposition members in Bahrain, who maintain that the decision of the court was politically motivated, arguing that there is no proof that the activists committed or incited others to commit acts of violence during the protests. Many of those arrested were tortured into signing confessions which means that the arrest and sentencing of the activists is inadmissible under international law.

This decision is expected to provoke an outcry within Shiite Muslim communities and villages, adding fuel to the recent groundswell of resentment at the uncompromising rule of the Sunni monarch, Hamad, and thereby causing to be lost yet another opportunity to inject new life into the flagging reconciliation talks.

In view of this and given the cooperation agreement signed between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council (of which Bahrain is a member):

1. What view does the Commission take of this recent human rights infringement in Bahrain, a country in which the rights of a substantial part of the population are being systematically flouted?

2. Will it make known its views on whether or not justice has been properly served in this case? What instruments will it use in order to avert acts of violence and/or destabilisation with repercussions not only in this country but also beyond?

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

The HR/VP is fully aware of the overall situation in Bahrain. Since the resurgence of unrest in February 2011, HR/VP has issued numerous statements condemning the use of violence from all sides, the thoroughly documented human rights violations and calling for the urgent start of a meaningful national dialogue leading to reconciliation between the government and the opposition.

The HR/VP specifically expressed her deep disappointment at the decision to uphold the sentences of 13 political activists through a statement released on 10 January 2013. The EU will continue to advocate, in a spirit of reconciliation, for clemency towards human rights defenders and political activists detained in connection with the 2011 events.

The Crown Prince's recent offer of dialogue was a very welcome step, as was the encouraging reply from the opposition. The EU has consistently been calling on all parties to prepare the ground for sustainable reforms, in particular by fully implementing the recommendations of the so-called Bassiouni Commission, as well as to follow up on the commitments made during Bahrain's Universal Periodic Review in October. The EU also invites the Bahraini Government to address the socioeconomic grievances of its people.

The EU stands ready to support Bahrain towards reconciliation through the provision of assistance and expertise. The EU is currently establishing a programme under the Instrument for Stability. Its main focus will be, fully in line with the recommendations of the Bassiouni Commission, the training of judges and prosecutors of the Special Investigations Unit on the prohibition of torture and ill treatment based on the Istanbul Protocol.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000171/13
al Consejo
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Aumento de precio de los fletes navieros II

La Federación Catalana de Industrias de la Carne (FECIC ([1])) informa de que las empresas cárnicas exportadoras, a ella asociadas, se ven perjudicadas por una subida de precios al contratar sus fletes para el transporte marítimo de sus productos en contenedores de temperatura controlada (REFER) con diversas compañías navieras que efectúan el transporte. Parece ser que, de forma imprevista y simultánea, las compañías navieras, con la colaboración de los transitarios, han decidido incrementar los fletes en la cantidad de 1 500 dólares USA para cada contenedor (GRI), con vigencia a partir del 1 de enero de 2013. Esta subida se ha producido en unas condiciones que reflejarían la existencia de un acuerdo general que los porteadores imponen a los usuarios del servicio de transporte marítimo: se aplica a todos los orígenes, a todos los destinos, a todos los clientes y a los productos perecederos, como la carne. Esta subida es aplicada por todos los porteadores.

1. ¿Cree el Consejo que esta subida de precios está cumpliendo la Ley de Defensa de la Competencia? La Ley 15/07, de 3 de julio, de Defensa de la Competencia (LDC) prohíbe las conductas colusorias que tengan por objeto, produzcan o puedan producir el efecto de impedir o falsear la competencia mediante la fijación de precios y la explotación abusiva por una o varias empresas en todo o en parte del mercado mediante la fijación de precios (artículos 1 y 2 y disposición adicional cuarta). La propia LDC contempla la aplicación de la normativa relativa a la competencia desleal, la Ley 3/91, de 10 de enero, de Competencia Desleal, cuyo artículo 15 prevé expresamente como actuación desleal prevalerse en el mercado de una ventaja competitiva significativa, como podrían ser las subidas de precios aplicadas unilateralmente y de forma acordada, o por lo menos concertada, por navieras y transitarios.

2. ¿Cree el Consejo que esta subida de precios está cumpliendo el Tratado de la Unión Europea? Los actuales artículos 101 y 102 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la UE recogen una serie de conductas prohibidas a las que hace referencia el artículo 53 de la LDC (Reglamento CE n° 1/2003 del Consejo, de 16 de diciembre de 2002).

Respuesta
(25 de marzo de 2013)

De conformidad con el artículo 105 TFUE, corresponde a la Comisión Europea garantizar la aplicación de los principios establecidos en los artículos 101 y 102 del TFUE.

([1]) http://www.fecic.es/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000171/13
to the Council
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Rise in freight shipping charges II

The Catalan Meat Industry Federation (FECIC ([1])) reports that meat exporters belonging to the Federation are being hit by price rises imposed by the different shipping lines contracted to ship their goods in temperature controlled containers (Reefers). It seems that shipping lines, acting in collaboration with forwarding agents, have simultaneously and without warning decided to raise freight charges by USD 1 500 per container, with effect from 1 January 2013. The way this price rise has come about would suggest a general agreement by carriers to impose this on sea freight users: it applies to all departure points, all destinations, all customers and to perishable goods such as meat. The price rise has been applied by all carriers.

1. Does the Council believe that this price rise complies with the competition protection law? Law 15/07 of 3 July 2007 on Protection of Competition (LPC) prohibits collusive behaviour that aims to, does or may prevent or distort competition through the fixing of prices, and abuse by one or more companies across the whole of the market or part of it through the fixing of prices (Articles 1 and 2 and fourth additional provision). The LPC provides for implementation of Law 3/91 of 10 January 1991 on Unfair Competition, Article 15 of which expressly provides that availing oneself of a significant competitive advantage constitutes unfair competition. Agreed upon or at least concerted price increases applied unilaterally by shipping lines and forwarding agents could fall under this heading.

2. Does the Council believe that this price rise complies with the Treaty on European Union? Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union set out a series of actions that are prohibited and which Article 53 of the LPC (Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 of 16 December 2002) refers to.

Reply
(25 March 2013)

Pursuant to Article 105 TFEU, it is for the European Commission to ensure the application of the principles laid down in Articles 101 and 102 of the TFEU.

([1]) http://www.fecic.es/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000172/13
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Concessione, da parte della BEI, di prestiti nel settore dell'energia destinati a progetti di enti locali e regionali dell'UE

Gli enti locali e regionali possono contribuire in maniera significativa al raggiungimento degli obiettivi UE in materia di energia e clima. Le città e le aree urbane, dove si concentra il 50 % dell'intera popolazione mondiale, sono responsabili finanche del 75 % delle emissioni globali di gas a effetto serra e, sebbene ricoprano meno dell'1 % della superficie terrestre, ben il 75 % dell'energia prodotta viene consumata dalla popolazione urbana.

Svariati studi specifici ([1]) dimostrano che gli investimenti in progetti locali di energia sostenibile contribuiscono al raggiungimento degli obiettivi UE in materia di energia e clima, fornendo nuovo impulso alle economie locali, creando nuovi posti di lavoro sul territorio e migliorando la sicurezza energetica dell'Unione. La concessione di prestiti da parte della BEI riveste un ruolo di particolare importanza per lo sblocco di investimenti privati nel settore dell'energia.

La politica della BEI in materia di concessione di prestiti in tale settore dovrebbe accelerare la transizione verso città a basse emissioni di carbonio e garantire maggiore sostegno finanziario a enti locali e operatori privati che intendano investire nel settore dell'energia. Ciò implica investire in progetti locali decentralizzati di energia sostenibile gestiti da enti locali e aumentare gli investimenti nel settore, facendone il principale obiettivo di intervento della BEI. Tali investimenti, quando destinati in particolare al settore abitativo, possono inoltre contribuire al raggiungimento degli obiettivi UE in termini di politiche di coesione sociale, riduzione della povertà ed edilizia sociale.

1. Può la Commissione far conoscere la sua posizione sull'attuale politica della BEI in materia di concessione di prestiti nel settore dell'energia, con particolare riferimento ai progetti di sviluppo locale? Può la Commissione comunicare l'importo dei prestiti concessi nel 2011-2012 a enti locali italiani da parte della BEI?

2. Può spiegare, con riguardo ai progetti locali, come intende ottimizzare gli strumenti della BEI e agganciarli ai fondi strutturali per il periodo 2014-2020? In particolare, quali strumenti saranno disponibili per la diagnosi energetica e la ristrutturazione degli alloggi sociali?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(21 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione sostiene le attività della BEI nel settore energetico. La BEI ha in previsione per l'estate 2013 il varo, a seguito di consultazione pubblica, di una politica di prestito rinnovata in campo energetico che rispecchi la strategia Europa 2020, il pacchetto sulle infrastrutture energetiche e la tabella di marcia per l'energia 2050. Commissione e BEI hanno dedicato grande attenzione all'efficienza energetica a tutti i livelli, sviluppando varie iniziative congiunte che valorizzano il ruolo essenziale delle regioni e degli enti locali, ad. es. ELENA (Assistenza energetica europea a livello locale) e JESSICA (Sostegno europeo congiunto per gli investimenti sostenibili nelle aree urbane).

Nel biennio 2011-2012 sono stati sottoscritti direttamente con enti locali italiani (comuni, province o regioni) prestiti per 465 milioni di EUR, di cui una parte destinata a progetti energetici. I comuni più piccoli possono altresì fruire indirettamente delle linee di credito della BEI incanalate attraverso intermediari bancari.

([1]) Cfr. Energy Cities, «Position on the European Investment Bank's public consultation on its Energy Lending Policy, December 2012: The future EIB energy sector lending policy should accelerate the transition towards low energy cities with a high quality of life for all », http://www.energy-cities.eu/IMG/pdf/EIB_public_consultation_energy_cities_web_2012_en.pdf

Per quanto attiene ai fondi strutturali, l'edilizia popolare e l'efficienza energetica degli immobili ad uso residenziale, *audit* energetico compreso, sono ammessi al sostegno della politica di coesione, sia nel periodo in corso sia nelle proposte formulate dalla Commissione per il 2014-2020. Il quadro futuro proposto affianca alle sovvenzioni il ricorso a strumenti finanziari ([2]) attivati insieme alla BEI o ad altri enti finanziari pubblici o privati, ad esempio nell'ambito degli investimenti nell'efficienza energetica a livello regionale o locale (a condizione che l'obiettivo tematico sia previsto nel pertinente programma operativo). Per favorire la diffusione in tempi rapidi, gli Stati membri sono incoraggiati a ricorrere a strumenti finanziari settoriali standardizzati, ad es. per gli investimenti nell'efficienza energetica degli immobili pubblici o privati.

([2]) Prestiti, garanzie, partecipazioni o altri strumenti di ripartizione del rischio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000172/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Energy sector lending by the European Investment Bank for projects of EU local and regional authorities

Local and regional authorities have enormous potential to contribute to the achievement of the EU energy and climate objectives. Cities and urban areas — home to 50 % of the world's population — are responsible for up to 75 % of global greenhouse gas emissions. They cover less than 1 % of the Earth's surface, but 75 % of all energy produced is consumed by the urban population.

Numerous case studies ([1]) show that investments in local sustainable energy projects contribute to the achievement of the EU energy and climate objectives while boosting local economies, creating local jobs and improving the EU's energy security. European Investment Bank (EIB) lending has a particularly important effect in terms of unlocking private investments in the energy sector.

The EIB energy lending policy should accelerate the transition towards low-carbon cities and provide more financial support to local entities and private operators willing to invest in this field. This entails investing in decentralised local sustainable energy projects run by local authorities, increasing investments in this sector and making it the EIB's top lending objective. Such investments, when applied in particular to the housing sector, can also contribute to the achievement of EU social cohesion, poverty reduction and social housing policy objectives.

1. What is the Commission's position on current EIB lending policy in the energy sector, in particular as regards local development projects? How many EIB loans were awarded in 2011-2012 to Italian local authorities?

2. How does the Commission intend to optimise the EIB instruments and link them to the Structural Funds over the 2014-2020 period with regard to local projects? In particular, which instruments will be available for energy audits and the restructuring of social housing?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission supports EIB activities in the energy sector. During the summer of 2013, following a public consultation, the EIB is expected to issue a reviewed energy lending policy, to reflect the Europe 2020 strategy, the Energy infrastructure package and the Energy 2050 Roadmap. The Commission and the EIB have devoted great attention to energy efficiency at all levels and developed several joint initiatives, recognising the crucial role of regions and local authorities (e.g. ELENA — European Local Energy Assistance, JESSICA — Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas).

In 2011-2012, loans worth EUR 465 million, partly devoted to energy projects, were signed directly with Italian local authorities (municipalities, provinces or regions). Smaller municipalities may also benefit indirectly from EIB credit lines channelled through intermediary banks.

As far as the Structural Funds are concerned, social housing and energy efficiency in housing, including energy audits, is eligible for cohesion policy support in the current period and included in the Commission's proposals for 2014-2020. In addition to grants, the proposed future framework emphasises the use of financial instruments ([2]) implemented together with the EIB or other public or private financial institutions, for example in the area of regional or local energy efficiency investments (provided this thematic objective is covered by the relevant operational programme). To allow for a swift roll-out, Member States are encouraged to use sector-specific standardised financial instruments, e.g. for energy efficiency investments in public or private buildings.

([1]) See Energy Cities, 'Position on the European Investment Bank's public consultation on its Energy Lending Policy, December 2012: The future EIB energy sector lending policy should accelerate the transition towards low energy cities with a high quality of life for all', http://www.energy-cities.eu/IMG/pdf/EIB_public_consultation_energy_cities_web_2012_en.pdf

([2]) Loans, guarantees equity or other types of risk-sharing instruments.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000174/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 janvier 2013)

Objet: Pilule contraceptive 3e génération

Les risques des contraceptifs oraux sont connus de longue date, mais les plaintes déposées par des jeunes femmes ayant eu embolies ou AVC sous pilule de 3e génération ont ravivé le débat. Toutes les pilules, quelle que soit leur génération, augmentent la probabilité d'accident vasculaire, c'est-à-dire de formation d'un caillot dans une veine ou dans une artère. Ce qui peut entraîner une phlébite, une embolie ou un accident vasculaire cérébral (AVC). C'est l'estrogène qu'elles contiennent en plus du progestatif qui est en cause.

En réalité, le risque est faible, et les accidents très rares. Mais ils sont plus fréquents avec les pilules de 3e ou de 4e génération, les plus récentes. Ainsi, selon les études disponibles, le risque d'accident vasculaire est de 1 pour 10 000 chez les femmes qui ne prennent pas la pilule, de 2 pour 10 000 chez celles qui prennent une pilule de 1re ou 2e génération, de 4 pour 10 000 avec une pilule de 3e ou 4e génération. Les médecins doivent donc privilégier les pilules de 1re et 2e génération.

1. La Commission a-t-elle ou va-t-elle mener une étude sur le niveau de risque de chaque génération de pilule contraceptive?

2. Il est assez aberrant que la génération dont sont issues les pilules d'une boîte ne soit pas mentionnée sur celle-ci. Les institutions européennes et, en l'occurrence, la Commission européenne, pourrait-elle réagir pour remédier à cette situation?

3. La pilule n'est pas le seul mode de contraception. Cela vaut peut-être dans certains cas la peine d'envisager un stérilet, possible même chez les femmes n'ayant pas eu d'enfants, ou un implant, qui ne contient pas d'estrogènes. Il existe aussi des pilules qui ne contiennent pas du tout d'estrogènes. Cependant, le déficit d'informations vers le patient est abyssal! La Commission n'envisagerait-elle pas une campagne d'information et de sensibilisation vers le citoyen, mais aussi vers les médecins?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(13 février 2013)

1. En ce qui concerne l'évaluation, au niveau de l'UE, des risques liés aux pilules contraceptives, la Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire aux réponses qu'elle a données aux questions parlementaires 297/2013 et 409/2013 ([1]).

Par ailleurs, l'Agence européenne des médicaments a parrainé une étude intitulée «Patterns and Determinants of Use of Oral Contraceptives in the European Union» (Modes d'utilisation des contraceptifs oraux dans l'Union européenne et leurs déterminants) ([2]). Les résultats de l'étude seront examinés par le Comité pour l'évaluation des risques en matière de pharmacovigilance lors de l'évaluation scientifique des moyens contraceptifs au niveau de l'Union européenne qui est mentionnée dans les réponses susvisées.

2. Les contraceptifs oraux combinés ont une composante d'œstrogènes et de progestagènes. Ce sont les progestagènes qui peuvent être classés par «génération». Les risques associés aux contraceptifs combinés dépendent du type et de la quantité de leurs composantes ainsi que de la forme pharmaceutique du produit (comprimés, patch transdermique, implant ou dispositif intra-utérin). L'étiquetage et la notice d'utilisation des médicaments mentionnent le nom des substances actives qu'ils contiennent, en application de la législation pharmaceutique ([3]). Cette règle, conjuguée aux informations sur les avantages et les risques liés au médicament considéré, garantit à l'utilisateur une information appropriée et compréhensible sur le produit en question.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.encepp.eu/encepp/viewResource.htm?id=3085
([3]) Directive 2001/83/CE instituant un code communautaire relatif aux médicaments à usage humain, JO L 311 du 28.11.2001, telle que modifiée.

3. Les caractéristiques des différentes méthodes de contraception disponibles, auxquelles l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence, sont connues dans la pratique médicale. Le rôle du médecin est précisément de fournir à ses patientes des informations sur les différentes possibilités de contraception en fonction de leur état de santé et de leurs préférences.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000174/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Third generation contraceptive pill

The risks associated with using oral contraceptives have long been known, but the complaints filed by young women who have suffered an embolism or a stroke while taking third generation pills have brought the issue back to the fore. All contraceptive pills, regardless of which generation they are, increase the likelihood of thrombosis occurring, i.e. of a blood clot forming in a vein or an artery. This may lead to phlebitis, an embolism or a stroke. It is the oestrogen in the pills rather than the progesterone which is the problem.

In actual fact the risk is very low and strokes are very rare. But they occur more frequently with third and fourth generation pills, the most recent types. Studies to date show that the risk of thrombosis is 1 in 10 000 for women not on the pill, 2 in 10 000 for women taking a first or second generation, and 4 in 10 000 for third or fourth generation pills. Doctors would do better to prescribe first and second generation pills therefore.

1. Has the Commission conducted a study into the risks associated with each generation of contraceptive pill or will it do so?

2. It is not stated on the box which generation the pills inside are, which seems odd. Could the Commission take EU action to remedy this situation?

3. The pill is not the only method of contraception. In some cases it might be worth while considering an intrauterine device, which even women who have not given birth may use, or an implant, which does not contain oestrogen. There are also pills which do not contain any oestrogen at all. But there is an abysmal lack of information for patients! Would the Commission consider an information and awareness campaign targeting members of the public, and also doctors?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

1. Regarding evaluation of the risks associated with contraceptive pills at EU level, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its replies to Parliamentary Questions 297/2013 and 409/2013 ([1]).

In addition, the European Medicines Agency sponsored a study 'Patterns and Determinants of Use of Oral Contraceptives in the European Union' ([2]). The results of the study will be considered by the Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee during the scientific assessment of contraceptives at EU level referred to in above replies.

2. Combined oral contraceptives (COCs) have an oestrogen and a progestogen component. It is the progestogen, which can be classified by 'generation'. Risks of combined contraceptives depend on the type and amount of the components as well as the pharmaceutical form of the product (tablet, transdermal patch, implant or an intrauterine device). A package labelling and leaflet of a medicinal product contain the name of the active substances, in accordance with the pharmaceutical legislation ([3]). This together with information on benefits and risks related to that particular medicinal product provides the user with adequate and comprehensible information on the specific product.

3. The modalities of available contraception methods, which the Honourable Member refers to, are known in the medical practice. It is the role of a physician to provide information about the different contraceptive choices tailored to the health status and preferences of the woman.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.encepp.eu/encepp/viewResource.htm?id=3085.
([3]) Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000175/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Un passo indietro per il Piemonte: esclusione della candidatura a centro Europe Direct

Il Piemonte è da oltre 15 anni impegnato nel settore delle politiche comunitarie e della progettazione europea e rappresenta un punto di riferimento vitale per gli enti locali, associazioni, scuole e cittadini dell'area del Piemonte Sud. Negli ultimi 4 anni ha anche avuto il merito e l'onore di ospitare il centro d'informazione europea della Commissione «*Europe Direct*» conducendo efficacemente una serie di attività e offrendo un servizio di informazione ad altissimo livello su tutto il territorio, soprattutto nella fase di articolazione prioritaria (*mainstreaming*) e divulgazione, raggiungendo zone e comunità più distanti dai centri urbani principali. Sulla base dell'invito a presentare proposte COMM/ROM/ED/2013-2017, lo scorso 10 settembre scadeva il termine per la presentazione delle candidature per i centri *Europe Direct*, con riferimento al nuovo quinquennio 2013-2017.

La provincia ha rinnovato il suo impegno con i cittadini con la puntuale ed accurata presentazione della proposta di candidatura (identificata al n. 1095845); tuttavia, l'ufficio di rappresentanza della Commissione europea di Roma, con comunicazione protocollata in data 31 dicembre 2012, dava avviso che tale candidatura " non è rientrata tra le proposte selezionate per ospitare ancora i centri di informazione della rete *Europe Direct*" poiché ha ricevuto dal Comitato di valutazione un punteggio di 70.66/100, contro un minimo di 71.33/100.

Considerato che:

— la regione Piemonte con una superficie 25.042,46 km quadrati per un totale di 4.457.335 abitanti (dati censimento 2011) aveva solo 2 centri di dimensione provinciale, invece altre regioni italiane, anche più piccole, sono arrivate ad avere fino a 5 centri;

— le regioni di convergenza beneficiano di numerosi fondi per l'informazione ed animazione territoriale, mentre al contrario, per i territori dell'Italia settentrionale, soprattutto rurali e montani dello spazio alpino, poter usufruire di una rete di informazione europea è fondamentale per assicurare un corretto coinvolgimento dei cittadini e degli enti locali; — è venuta meno l'opportunità di approfondire le motivazioni circa l'esclusione dalla candidatura della suddetta provincia, decorso il termine indicato entro il 31.12.2012 (in pari data alla comunicazione);

— la suddetta esclusione comporta inevitabilmente un ulteriore impoverimento per il territorio del Piemonte del Sud, già caratterizzato da una perdita di competitività secondo i dati forniti dalla stessa Commissione;

può la Commissione, in ottemperanza del principio di motivazione e obbligo di trasparenza dei provvedimenti amministrativi elevato a rango primario nell'ordinamento comunitario, precisare quanto segue:

— è in grado di comunicare i parametri specifici di valutazione per i quali è intervenuta l'esclusione?

— informare se potrebbe essere approfonditi i margini d'intervento onde poter ancora garantire e offrire un servizio di interesse non solo territoriale ma anche europeo?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione attribuisce la massima importanza alla rete dei Centri di informazione Europe Direct (EDIC).

Il processo di valutazione è stato portato avanti da un comitato indipendente. Come previsto nell'invito a presentare propose, ciascun candidato è stato valutato sulla base dei seguenti parametri: conformità agli obiettivi generali stipulati nell'invito a presentare proposte, coerenza con le priorità dell'UE per il 2013, adeguatezza del fabbisogno locale e regionale di informazioni UE, visibilità di EDIC nella regione, collegamenti in rete e capacità di partenariati locali/regionali, qualità dei servizi informativi di base obbligatori, qualità dei prodotti di comunicazione, qualità degli eventi, coerenza della spesa complessiva con le attività previste, coerenza e adeguatezza delle risorse stanziate per il progetto.

In Italia sono stati selezionati 48 EDIC sulla base di detti criteri di valutazione, tenendo anche conto della necessità di assicurare una distribuzione geografica equilibrata dei centri. Il punteggio ottenuto dalla Provincia di Alessandria è stato di 70,66/100, e ciò ha posto la sua proposta in 49ª posizione.

La Regione Piemonte è coperta, nella generazione attuale, da due 2 EDIC, lo stesso numero di centri della generazione precedente.

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alle regole e alle specifiche dell'invito a presentare proposte ([1]), in particolare al punto 3.1 che recita «La decisione della Commissione di rifiutare una proposta o di non assegnare una sovvenzione è definitiva».

([1]) COMM/ROM/ED/2013-2017: http://ec.europa.eu/italia/documents/finanziamenti/ed2012/call_for_proposals.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000175/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Piedmont takes a step backwards following the rejection of its application to host a Europe Direct centre

For over 15 years Piedmont has been in involved in EU policy and planning and is a vital point of reference for the local authorities, associations, schools and citizens of Southern Piedmont. Over the past four years it has also had the merit and honour of hosting the Commission information centre 'Europe Direct' and has efficiently carried out a range of activities, providing an information service at a very high level throughout the region, especially in the field of mainstreaming and dissemination, reaching areas and communities that are more remote from the main urban centres. Under the call for proposals COMM/ROM/ED/2013-2017, the deadline for the submission of applications to host Europe Direct centres, with reference to the period 2013-2017, was 10 September 2012.

The province had renewed its commitment to its citizens with the timely and careful submission of its application (registered under No 1095845). However, the European Commission Representation in Rome, in a letter dated 31 December 2012, stated that the application had not been among the proposals selected to host a Europe Direct information centre, as the Evaluation Committee had given it a score of 70.66/100, against a minimum of 71.33/100.

The Piedmont region, measuring 25 042 46 square km and with a total of 4 457 335 inhabitants (2011 census), only had two provincial centres, when other Italian regions (even smaller ones) managed to have up to 5 centres.

Convergence regions benefit from substantial funding for local information and entertainment, while for regions in northern Italy, especially the rural and mountain areas in or around the Alps, it is vital to be able to take advantage of an EU information network to ensure that citizens and local authorities are properly involved. Once the period indicated had elapsed (i.e. 31.12.2012 — the same date as that of the letter) there was no longer any opportunity to find out why the application from this province had been rejected.

This exclusion will inevitably involve further impoverishment for Southern Piedmont, which is already suffering from a loss of competitiveness according to figures provided by the Commission itself.

In keeping with the transparency requirement for administrative measures, which has now become part of primary EC law, and the requirement to provide reasons, will the Commission answer the following questions:

— Can it provide the specific evaluation parameters which led to such exclusion?

— Can it say whether there might be any room for manoeuvre, in order to be able to continue to provide a service that is of interest not only locally but also to the EU?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission attaches utmost importance to the Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs) network.

The evaluation process was performed by an independent committee. As foreseen in the call for proposals, each application was evaluated on the basis of the following parameters:

Compliance with the overall objectives stipulated in the call for proposals, consistency with the EU's priorities for 2013, adequacy for the local and regional needs for EU information, visibility of the EDIC in the region, networking and local/regional partnership capacities; quality of the mandatory basic information services, quality of the communication products, quality of the events, consistency of the overall expenditure with the foreseen activities, consistency and adequacy of resources allocated to the project.

48 EDICs in Italy were selected on the basis of the evaluation criteria, including the need to establish a balanced geographical distribution of the Centres. The score obtained by Provincia di Alessandria was 70.66/100, which placed the proposal in the 49th position.

Region Piemonte is covered in the current generation with 2 EDICs, which is the same number of Centres of the previous generation.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the rules and specifications of the call for proposals ([1]), in particular to point 3.1 which states that 'The Commission's decision to reject a proposal or not to award a grant is final'.

([1]) COMM/ROM/ED/2013-2017 : http://ec.europa.eu/italia/documents/finanziamenti/ed2012/call_for_proposals.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000176/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(9. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Charterflüge der Kommission

Laut der Antwort der Kommission auf die Frage 24 im Fragebogen zur EDF-Entlastung hat die Kommission im Jahre 2011 mehr als 1,5 Mio. EUR für die Charterflüge der Bediensteten und/oder Mitglieder der Kommission ausgegeben.

Wie viele Passagiere waren an den folgenden Flügen beteiligt? Welche Unternehmen führten die Flüge durch? Wer waren jeweils die Insassen der folgenden Flüge (Name und Funktion)? Warum hat man diese Flüge gechartert, statt Linienflüge zu benutzen?

1. Straßburg-Brüssel — 16.2.2011 (7 954,00 EUR)

2. Lissabon-Straßburg — 14.2.2011 (25 698,00 EUR)

3. Brüssel-Berlin-Brüssel — 25.1.2011 (11 854,00 EUR)

4. Brüssel-Budapest-Brüssel — 7.1.2011 (52 460,00 EUR)

5. Brüssel-Kairo-Berlin-Brüssel — 13.4.2011-14.4.2011 (51 427,00 EUR)

6. Brüssel-Kiew-Brüssel — 18.4.2011-19.4.2011 (37 889,00 EUR)

7. Brüssel-Tunis-Brüssel — 12.4.2011 (40 339,00 EUR)

8. Straßburg-Berlin-Brüssel — 11.5.2011 (11 396,00 EUR)

9. Brüssel-Kairo-Brüssel — 13.7.2011-14.7.2011(85 496,00 EUR)

10. Brüssel-Warschau-Brüssel — 8.7.2011 (53 147,00 EUR)

11. Brüssel-Berlin-Straßburg — 12.9.2011 (19 122,00 EUR)

12. Straßburg-München — 28.9.2011 (8 571,00 EUR)

13. Brüssel-Marseille — 8.12.2011 (25 371,00 EUR)

14. Straßburg-Brüssel — 14.12.2011 (13 748,00 EUR)

15. Brüssel-Warschau-Brüssel — 15.12.2011-16.12.2011 (27 573,00 EUR)

Um die Verwaltungslast zu verringern, wurden diese Fragen in einer Anfrage zusammengefasst und die einzelnen Fragen mit einer laufenden Nummer versehen. Die Kommission wird darum ersucht, die einzelnen Fragen unter Angabe der jeweiligen Nummerierung zu beantworten.

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(5. März 2013)

Eine ausführliche Antwort auf die Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten wäre mit einem unverhältnismäßigen Aufwand verbunden.

Es ist jedoch zu beachten, dass Reisekosten zu den Verwaltungsausgaben zählen, deren Höhe jährlich von der Haushaltsbehörde festgesetzt wird. Diese Ausgaben dürfen die von der Haushaltsbehörde festgesetzten Obergrenzen nicht überschreiten und müssen mit den Anwendungsbestimmungen zum Haushalt im Einklang stehen.

Der Rückgriff auf Charterflüge ist nur begrenzt zulässig und auch nur dann, wenn ein Linienflug aus Termin- oder Sicherheitsgründen nicht infrage kommt. Die Verwendung dieser Transportart wird streng kontrolliert und vom Präsidenten selbst nach sorgfältiger Prüfung und Rücksprache mit dem Amt für die Feststellung und Abwicklung individueller Ansprüche (PMO) genehmigt, wenn erwiesen ist, dass sich die Reise mit einem normalen Linienflug nicht durchführen lässt.

Die Zahl der Flugreisenden variiert von Fall zu Fall und hängt vom Typ des gecharterten Flugzeugs ab.

Die Charterflüge werden vom externen Vertragnehmer der Kommission ABELAG durchgeführt, der anhand einer Ausschreibung in Übereinstimmung mit der Haushaltsordnung ausgewählt wurde. Sollte der Vertragnehmer den Wünschen des Auftraggebers nicht nachkommen können oder gibt es billigere Alternativen, können die Dienste eines anderen Anbieters in Anspruch genommen werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000176/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Commission charter flights

According to its reply to question 24 of the questions on the EDF discharge, the Commission spent more than EUR 1.5 million on charter flights for Commission staff and/or Commissioners in 2011.

How many passengers were involved in the following flights? What airlines were the flights operated by? Who was on the following flights (names and positions)? Why were these flights chartered in preference to scheduled flights being used?

1. Strasbourg-Brussels — 16.2.2011 (EUR 7 954.00)

2. Lisbon-Strasbourg — 14.2.2011 (EUR 25 698.00)

3. Brussels-Berlin-Brussels — 25.1.2011 (EUR 11 854.00)

4. Brussels-Budapest-Brussels — 7.1.2011 (EUR 52 460.00)

5. Brussels-Cairo-Berlin-Brussels — 13.4.2011-14.4.2011 (EUR 51 427.00)

6. Brussels-Kiev-Brussels — 18.4.2011-19.4.2011 (EUR 37 889.00)

7. Brussels-Tunis-Brussels — 12.4.2011 (EUR 40 339.00)

8. Strasbourg-Berlin-Brussels — 11.5.2011 (EUR 11 396.00)

9. Brussels-Cairo-Brussels — 13.7.2011-14.7.2011 (EUR 85 496.00)

10. Brussels-Warsaw-Brussels — 8.7.2011 (EUR 53 147.00)

11. Brussels-Berlin-Strasbourg — 12.9.2011 (EUR 19 122.00)

12. Strasbourg-Munich — 28.9.2011 (EUR 8 571.00)

13. Brussels-Marseilles — 8.12.2011 (EUR 25 371.00)

14. Strasbourg-Brussels — 14.12.2011 (EUR 13 748.00)

15. Brussels-Warsaw-Brussels — 15.12.2011-16.12.2011 (EUR 27 573.00)

For the sake of simplicity, these questions have been submitted as one question for written answer. Each individual question has been given a number. The Commission is kindly requested to answer each question using its respective number.

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

The research required to provide a detailed answer to the Honourable Member's questions would be disproportionate.

However the Commission would remind the Honourable Member that travel expenses are amongst the administrative expenditures whose totals are fixed annually by the budget authority. These expenditures must respect the ceilings set by the budget authority and the rules for the implementation of the budget.

The limited use of chartered air transport is allowed only when scheduling or security constraints do not permit the use of commercial flights. The use of such transport is strictly controlled and authorised directly by the President after careful analysis and consultation of the Paymaster's Office (PMO) in order to determine the non-viability of standard commercial alternatives.

The number of passengers varies according to each individual flight, and the different types of aircraft that are chartered.

The chartered flights are operated by the Commission's contractor, ABELAG, selected via a call for tender in accordance with the Financial Regulation. Other operators may be used should the contractor be unable to fulfil requests or a cheaper, local alternative has been found.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000177/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(9. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Zahlungen von Ruhegältern

1. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhegehalt von weniger als 1 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

2. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 1 000 und 2 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

3. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 2 000 und 3 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

4. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 3 000 und 4 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

5. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 4 000 und 5 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

6. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 5 000 und 6 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

7. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 6 000 und 7 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

8. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 7 000 und 8 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

9. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 8 000 und 9 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

10. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt zwischen 9 000 und 10 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

11. Wie viele Mitarbeiter, die unter das EU-Beamtenstatut fallen, bezogen in den Jahren 2008, 2010 und 2012 monatlich ein Ruhehalt von mehr als 10 000 EUR? Wie viele werden es in den Jahren 2014 und 2020 sein?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(1. März 2013)

Das durchschnittliche Ruhegehalt für alle Organe und Einrichtungen der EU belief sich im Jahr 2012 auf rund 4 200 EUR. Die Höhe des Ruhegehalts variiert zwischen 35 EUR für Bedienstete, die direkt vor ihrem Eintritt in den Ruhestand nur sehr kurze Zeit für die EU gearbeitet haben, und 9 000 EUR für eine sehr kleine Anzahl von Generaldirektoren, die mit vollständigen Ruhegehaltsansprüchen in den Ruhestand getreten sind. Den jüngsten Zahlen zufolge betrug die Zahl der Empfänger einer Pension aus dem Versorgungssystem der Union 19 346 Personen, davon 13 897 aus der Kommission.

Die Kommission ist aufgrund der jährlichen statistischen Schwankungen eng definierter statistischer Klassen nicht in der Lage, zuverlässige Statistiken für die 11 genannten Ruhegehaltsgruppen zu bieten. Zudem müssten für die Überprüfung der Angaben Datenbanken zu sämtlichen Organen, Einrichtungen und Agenturen der EU nach Einzelfällen durchforstet werden. Aus den gleichen Gründen erstellt die Kommission keine Prognosen zur künftigen Höhe individueller Ruhegehälter, schon gar nicht bis zum Jahr 2020.

Die Entwicklung der Ruhegehälter hängt von zukünftigen ungewissen Ereignissen ab. Die Reform des Versorgungssystems der EU im Jahr 2004 führte zu niedrigeren Ruhegehaltsansprüchen für Bedienstete, die nach dem Jahr 2004 eingestellt wurden (die jährliche Steigerungsrate sank von 2,0 % auf 1,9 %), zu einem höheren Mindestruhestandsalter (Anhebung von 60 auf 63 Jahre), zur Abschaffung der Berichtigungskoeffizienten für nach 2004 eingestellte Bedienstete sowie zur Ersetzung der Berichtigungskoeffizienten auf der Grundlage der Hauptstadt durch auf der Basis des ganzen Landes ermittelte Koeffizienten für Ruhegehaltsansprüche, die vor 2004 erworben wurden.

Für weitere Informationen verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf die Arbeitsunterlage der Kommissionsdienststellen „Eurostat study on the long-term budgetary implications of pension costs“ (Untersuchung von Eurostat zur langfristigen Haushaltswirkung der Ausgaben für Versorgungsbezüge — SEK(2010)989) und den Bericht der Kommission an den Rat über die Versorgungsordnung der Beamten und sonstigen Bediensteten der Europäischen Union (KOM/2012/037).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000177/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Payment of pensions

1. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of less than EUR 1000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

2. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 1000 and 2000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

3. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 2000 and 3000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

4. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 3000 and 4000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

5. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 4000 and 5000 in 2008, 2010 und 4000? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

6. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 5000 and 6000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

7. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 6000 and 7000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

8. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 7000 and 8000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

9. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 8000 and 9000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

10. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of between EUR 9000 and 10 000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

11. How many former staff members covered by the EU Staff Regulations received a monthly pension of more than EUR 10 000 in 2008, 2010 und 2012? How many former staff will be in such a position in 2014 and 2020?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

Concerning all the EU institutions and bodies, the average pension in 2012 was around EUR 4200 Euros. The pensions range from as low as EUR 35 for staff who worked for very short time in the EU institutions right before their retirement to about EUR 9 000 for a very small number of retired Directors-General with complete pension rights. According to the most recent figures, the number of beneficiaries of the Union pension scheme was 19 346, of which 13 897 from the Commission.

The Commission is not in the position to provide reliable statistics for the 11 requested bands due to statistical volatility of narrow statistical classes from one year to another. Also, the verification of data would require an extensive study of individual cases in databases concerning all EU institutions, bodies and agencies. The Commission has not forecasted the future levels of individual pensions, in particular by 2020, due to the same reasons.

The level of pensions will evolve and depend on future and uncertain events. The reform of EU pension scheme in 2004 resulted in lower pension rights for staff recruited after 2004 (the annual accrual rate decreased from 2.0% to 1.9%), higher minimum retirement age (increased from 60 to 63), abolition of correction coefficients for staff recruited after 2004, and the replacement of correction coefficients based on the capital city by coefficients based on the whole country for pension rights acquired before 2004.

For further information the Commission refers the honourable Member to Commission staff working document — Eurostat study on the long-term budgetary implications of pension costs (SEC(2010) 989) and the report from the Commission to the Council on the Pension Scheme of European Officials (COM/2012/037).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000178/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Verpackungsärger — Täuschung der Konsumenten

Lebensmittelverpackungen, die mehr versprechen als sie halten, sind für viele Konsumenten in der Europäischen Union ein Ärgernis. Spätestens seit die EU im Frühjahr 2009 die verpflichtenden Standardgrößen kippte, häufen sich die Beschwerden über riesige Flaschen, Kartons und Beutel, die am Ende kaum etwas hergeben. Der österreichische Verein für Konsumenteninformation (VKI) hat das untersucht und 31 Lebensmittel samt Verpackung durch den Computertomographen geschickt und prüfen lassen. Das Ergebnis der Untersuchung war, dass bei 21 von 31 Produkten ein Luftanteil von 30 % und mehr gemessen wurde; bei sechs Produkten lag dieser sogar bei mehr als 50 %. Dazu ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission das Argument vieler Unternehmen, dass es sich bei übergroßen Verpackungen um eine „technologische Notwendigkeit" handelt?

2. Sowohl im Interesse der Verbraucher als auch für einen fairen Wettbewerb der Hersteller wäre eine allgemein gültige Regelung für den Befüllungsgrad von Verpackungen notwendig. Was hält die Kommission davon?

3. Die Größe einer Verpackung oder auch etwaige Sichtfester, die so angebracht sind, dass die Verpackung randvoll erscheint, suggerieren den Verbrauchern „mehr", und dies kann das Kaufverhalten von Verbrauchern massiv beeinflussen. Welche Maßnahmen könnten getroffen werden, um es den Verbrauchern einfacher zu machen, herauszufinden, wie viel sie für ihr Geld tatsächlich bekommen?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(6. März 2013)

Ob es sich bei übergroßen Verpackungen um eine „technologische Notwendigkeit" handelt oder nicht, hängt vom jeweiligen Produkt ab. Chips beispielsweise zerbröseln leicht, was verhindert werden kann, indem die Verpackung entsprechend mit Gas befüllt wird.

Folglich lässt sich hierfür keine allgemeine Regel aufstellen, noch wäre dies sinnvoll. Hingegen gibt es im geltenden EU-Recht umfassendere Vorschriften, die hier herangezogen werden können. So muss gemäß der Richtlinie 94/62/EG ([1]) über Verpackungen und Verpackungsabfälle Verpackungsmaterial auf ein Mindestmaß begrenzt werden, und nach der Richtlinie 2005/29/EG ([2]) über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken, die sich auf den gesamten Geschäftsverkehr zwischen Unternehmen und Verbrauchern bezieht, sind die Gewerbetreibenden gehalten, in Übereinstimmung mit der ihnen obliegenden beruflichen Sorgfaltspflicht wesentliche Informationen klar, verständlich und rechtzeitig bereitzustellen, so dass die Verbraucher informiert Entscheidungen treffen können.

Laut Richtlinie 98/6/EG ([3]) über die Angabe des Preises je Maßeinheit ist der Preis eines Erzeugnisses je Maßeinheit (d. h. der Preis je Kilogramm, Liter usw.) stets „unmißverständlich, klar erkennbar und gut lesbar" anzugeben. Dadurch können die Verbraucher die Preise — gerade bei unterschiedlichen Verpackungsgrößen — einfach und umfassend vergleichen. Da die Mitglied-staaten für die Umsetzung des EU-Rechts verantwortlich sind, sollten Unterlassungen in Bezug auf die Angabepflicht zunächst den zuständigen Behörden in den Mitgliedstaaten angezeigt werden. Dies schließt Fälle ein, in denen der Preis je Maßeinheit fehlt, fehlerhaft angegeben ist oder auch lediglich unleserlich am Supermarktregal steht. Sofern die Behörden hierauf nicht angemessen reagieren, kann die Angelegenheit im Rahmen des Beschwerdeverfahrens an die Kommission herangetragen werden.

Für Lebensmittel enthält die EU-Gesetzgebung ([4]) zudem die Vorschrift, die Nettofüllmenge des Lebensmittels sowie bei Lebensmitteln in einer Aufgussflüssigkeit das Abtropfgewicht anzu-geben, um den Verbraucher über die in der Verpackung enthaltene Produktmenge zu informieren.

([1]) ABl. L 365 vom 31.12.1994.
([2]) ABl. L 149 vom 11.6.2005.
([3]) ABl. L 80 vom 18.3.1998.
([4]) Richtlinie 2000/13/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 20. März 2000 zur Angleichung der Rechtsvorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten über die Etikettierung und Aufmachung von Lebensmitteln sowie die Werbung hierfür, ABl. L 109, 6.5.2000, S. 29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000178/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Misleading packaging — a source of frustration for consumers

Many consumers in the European Union find misleading food packaging a nuisance. Particularly since the European Union scrapped mandatory standard sizes in spring 2009, complaints about huge bottles, boxes and bags with very little inside have been getting louder. The Austrian Consumer Information Association (VKI) has examined this issue and put 31 food products together with their packaging through a CT scanner. The result of the study was that, in 21 of the 31 products tested, the air content was 30 % or more, and in six of these products it was over 50 %. This raises the following questions:

1. How does the Commission view the argument put forward by many companies that oversized packaging is a 'technological necessity'?

2. Both in the interest of consumers and to ensure fair competition between manufacturers, a generally applicable rule about the degree to which packaging must be filled is needed. What is the Commission's view about this?

3. Oversized packaging or a 'window', so arranged that the packaging appears to be full, suggests to consumers that there is more inside the packaging than there actually is, which can profoundly affected consumers' purchasing behaviour. What measures could be taken to make it easier for consumers to find out how much they are actually getting for their money?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2013)

Whether oversized packaging is a 'technological necessity' would depend on the product. For example, crisps can easily crush and inflating the bag with gas prevents such crushing occuring.

Therefore, a general rule cannot be given nor would this be useful. There are more comprehensive rules available within the *acquis* which can be called upon. For example, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive 94/62/EC ([1]) prohibits the use of excess packaging materials and the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29/EC ([2]), which applies to all business-to-consumer transactions, require that traders operate in accordance with professional diligence and that they display in a clear, intelligible and timely manner material information that allows consumers to make informed choices.

The Unit Price Directive 98/6/EC ([3]) requires the unit price of a product (i.e. the price per kilo or litre) to be indicated in an 'unambiguous, easily identifiable and clearly legible' manner. This allows consumers to easily and comprehensively compare prices notably when pack sizes are different. As Member States are responsible for the implementation of EC law, any failure to indicate unit prices should be firstly reported to the competent authorities in the Member States. This also applies to cases in which the unit price is not shown, is shown incorrectly or appears only illegibly on the supermarket shelf. If the reaction of the authorities responsible is insufficient, the situation can be brought to the attention of the Commission by means of the complaints procedure.

Moreover, regarding food, in order to inform the consumer of the amount of product contained in the package, EU legislation ([4]) requires the net quantity of the food and in the case of food presented in liquid medium also the drained net weight, to be indicated on the label.

([1]) OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.
([2]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([3]) OJ L 80, 18.3.1998.
([4]) 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.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-000179/13
aan de Commissie
Johannes Cornelis van Baalen (ALDE)
(9 januari 2013)

Betreft: Criteria voor bedrijven ten behoeve van participatie in het Innovative Medicine Initiative (IMI)

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de toepassing van het begrip „onderneming" in artikel 1 van KMO-aanbeveling 2003/361/EG (hierna te noemen: de aanbeveling) op loutere houdstervennootschappen die geen eigen economische activiteit verrichten maar slechts als holdingvehikel dienen voor een hoger gelegen entiteit?

2. Is de Commissie bekend met de lijst van entiteiten in artikel 3, lid 2, tweede alinea van de aanbeveling die een belang van tussen 25 % en 50 % kunnen houden in een vennootschap?

3. Is de Commissie met mij van mening dat — in het geval van de in vraag 2 bedoelde entiteiten, zonder ten opzichte van die vennootschap als partneronderneming te worden aangemerkt en dus zonder dat de status van de te beoordelen vennootschap als zelfstandige onderneming in de zin van artikel 3, lid 1, van de aanbeveling wordt beïnvloed — het aantal personeelsleden, het balanstotaal en de omzet van die entiteiten niet relevant zijn voor de beoordeling van de drempels van artikel 2 van de aanbeveling? Het gaat dan om: openbare participatiemaatschappijen, risicokapitaalmaatschappijen en „business angels"; universiteiten en onderzoekcentra zonder winstoogmerk; institutionele beleggers, met inbegrip van regionale ontwikkelingsfondsen; kleinere lokale autoriteiten. Zo nee, waarom niet? Kan de Commissie haar antwoord toelichten?

4. Is de Commissie met mij van mening dat de uitsluiting van artikel 3, lid 4, van de aanbeveling voor entiteiten waarin een belang van 25 % of meer wordt gehouden door een overheidsinstantie of openbaar lichaam, niet geldt voor die overheidsinstanties en openbare lichamen die worden genoemd in artikel 3, lid 2, tweede alinea van de aanbeveling, te weten: openbare participatiemaatschappijen; universiteiten en openbare onderzoekcentra zonder winstoogmerk; openbare institutionele beleggers, zoals regionale ontwikkelingsfondsen; kleinere lokale autoriteiten? Zo nee, waarom niet? Kan de Commissie toelichten op welke wijze zij invulling geeft aan deze uitzonderingen en hoe vaak die worden toegepast? Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van gevallen waarin een beroep werd gedaan op deze uitzonderingsgrond en waarin — en op welke gronden — positief of negatief is beslist?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(11 februari 2013)

1. Een houdstervennootschap oefent doorgaans geen economische activiteit uit in de zin van Aanbeveling 2003/361/EG. Het Europees Hof van Justitie heeft echter bij verschillende gelegenheden erkend dat een houdstervennootschap een economische activiteit uit kan oefenen. In zaak C-222/04 Cassa di Risparmiljoen di Firenze verklaart het Hof bijvoorbeeld dat een entiteit die de aandelen van een onderneming beheert kan worden beschouwd als de verrichter van een economische activiteit wanneer zij direct of indirect betrokken is bij het beheer van de onderneming.

2. De Commissie beschikt niet over een dergelijke lijst.

3. In artikel 3, lid 2, van de bijlage bij Aanbeveling 2003/361/EG is bepaald dat een onderneming als zelfstandige onderneming kan worden aangemerkt wanneer een aantal investeerders een deelneming van niet meer dan 50 % van deze onderneming bezitten en er niet aan zijn verbonden. Bij deze investeerders kan het gaan om openbare participatiemaatschappijen, risicokapitaalmaatschappijen, „business angels", universiteiten of onderzoekcentra zonder winstoogmerk, institutionele beleggers en autonome lokale autoriteiten, die een jaarlijkse begroting hebben van minder dan 10 miljoen EUR en minder dan 5 000 inwoners tellen. Wanneer een onderneming wordt beschouwd als autonoom, hoeft zij het aantal werknemers en de financiële gegevens van deze investeerders niet mee te tellen als zij nagaat of zij voldoet aan de drempelwaarden van de aanbeveling.

4. Volgens artikel 3, lid 4, van de bijlage bij Aanbeveling 2003/361/EG, kan een onderneming niet als kmo worden aangemerkt, indien één of meer overheidsinstanties of openbare lichamen gezamenlijk direct of indirect zeggenschap heeft of hebben over 25 % of meer van het kapitaal of de stemrechten. De investeerders uit artikel 3, lid 2, waarnaar in punt 3 wordt verwezen, die de status van een openbare instantie hebben overeenkomstig de nationale wetgeving vallen niet onder dit voorschrift.

De Commissie houdt geen register bij van hoe vaak deze bepalingen worden toegepast en hoe vaak positief is beslist.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000179/13
to the Commission
Johannes Cornelis van Baalen (ALDE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Criteria for participation in the Innovative Medicine Initiative (IMI)

1. Is the Commission aware of use of the term 'enterprise' in Article 1 of Recommendation 2003/361/EC concerning the definition of SMEs (hereinafter referred to as 'the recommendation') to apply to holding companies, that is to say companies not engaged in independent economic activity but simply serving as holding vehicles for upstream entities?

2. Is the Commission acquainted with the list of entities in the second indent of Article 3(2) of the regulation with authorised holdings in an enterprise of between 25% and 50%?

3. With regard to the entities referred to in paragraph 2, does the Commission agree with me that, without reference to whether they are considered as partner enterprises and hence whether their status as autonomous enterprises within the meaning of Article 3(1) is affected, staff headcount, balance sheet totals and turnover are meaningless for the purpose of establishing thresholds under Article 2 of the recommendation?

The enterprises referred to here are public investment corporations, venture capital companies, business angels, universities and non-profit research centres, institutional investors including regional development funds and smaller local authorities. If the Commission does not agree, can it explain why, giving its reasons in detail?

4. Does the Commission agree with me that exclusion from the provisions of Article 3(4) of the recommendation of enterprises in which a government organisation or public body has a holding of 25% or more does not apply to the government organisations or public bodies referred to in the second subparagraph of Article 3(2) of the recommendation, that is to say public investment corporations, universities and non-profit-making research centres, institutional investors including regional development funds and smaller local authorities? If not, why not? Can the Commission indicate how it interprets these exemptions and how frequently the relevant provisions are applied? Can the Commission list the cases in which exemptions have been applied for in this connection, indicating whether or not the applications were successful and why?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

1. A holding does not generally perform an economic activity in the sense of Recommendation 2003/361/EC. However, the European Court of Justice has recognised that a holding can perform an economic activity on a number of occasions. For example, in Case Law C-222/04 *Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze* the Court states that a holding entity which controls the shares of an enterprise may be considered to perform an economic activity when they are involved directly or indirectly in the management of the enterprise.

2. The Commission does not have such a list.

3. Article 3.2 of the annex to Recommendation 2003/361/EC states that an enterprise may be considered as autonomous when a number of investors hold a stake of no more than 50% in that enterprise and are not linked to it. Those investors are public investment corporations, venture capital companies, business angels, universities, non-profit research centres, institutional investors and autonomous local authorities with an annual budget of less than EUR 10 million and fewer than 5 000 inhabitants. When an enterprise is considered as autonomous, it does not need to include the number of employees and the financial data of those investors to check if it respects the ceilings of the recommendation.

4. According to Article 3.4 of the annex to Recommendation 2003/361/EC, an enterprise cannot be considered SME if 25% or more of its capital or voting rights are directly or indirectly controlled, jointly or individually, by one or more public bodies. Investors of Article 3.2 referred in point 3 above which have the status of a public body under national law are not concerned by this rule.

The Commission does not keep a record of how often these provisions are applied and their success rate.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-000180/13
до Комисията
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(9 януари 2013 г.)

Относно: Непридружени малолетни и непълнолетни

Пристигането на непридружени малолетни и непълнолетни лица в Европейския съюз е дългогодишна характеристика на миграцията към ЕС. Непридружените малолетни и непълнолетни лица мигрират по различни и разнообразни причини, които могат да включват въоръжени конфликти, войни, природни бедствия, дискриминация или преследване. Освен това не всички деца напускат по своя собствена свободна воля, понякога те са изпращани далеч от домовете и семействата си с оглед избягване на политическо преследване, получаване на достъп до образование или преодоляване на бедността и намиране на работа в ЕС. Непридружените малолетни и непълнолетни са уязвими по отношение на трафика на хора.

С оглед приемането на общ подход, основан на принципа на висшия интерес на детето (Конвенция на ООН за правата на детето), Комисията прие план за действие относно непридружените малолетни и непълнолетни лица (2010—2014 г.). Това беше последвано от приемането на заключенията на Съвета относно непридружените малолетни и непълнолетни лица.

Комисията подчертава необходимостта от общ подход спрямо непридружените малолетни и непълнолетни и, по-специално, да се подобри разбирането на това, което се случва с непридружените малолетни и непълнолетни след влизането им на територията на ЕС. С оглед на това бих искала да зная какви мерки възнамерява да приеме тя.

ЕС цели да подобри законодателния и административния капацитет на трети държави да идентифицират децата, които са търсещи убежище и жертви на трафик на хора. Може ли Комисията да изясни как възнамерява да изпълни това? Възнамерява ли тя да установи някакви процедури за мониторинг?

Накрая бих искала да зная дали съществува някаква разпоредба за споразумения за партньорство, планове за действие или други политически мерки за насърчаване на сътрудничеството с държави, които не са членки на ЕС.

Отговор, даден от г-жа Малмстрьом от името на Комисията
(20 февруари 2013 г.)

Изпълнението на Плана за действие на ЕС относно непридружени непълнолетни лица е важно действие, което позволи да се разработи общ за ЕС подход към тази група на деца мигранти, основан на спазването на правата им. Чрез прилагането на общ за ЕС подход стана възможно да се обмислят по-ефективно хоризонталните политики за справяне с положението на децата независимо от техния статут на мигранти. Комисията продължава да подкрепя и улеснява обсъжданията между институциите на ЕС, националните органи, междуправителствените и неправителствените организации на различни политически форуми, които позволяват обмен на знания и практики за непридружените малолетни и непълнолетни лица.

В неотдавна публикувания Работен документ на службите на Комисията относно изпълнението на Плана за действие относно непридружени непълнолетни лица ([1]) Комисията докладва за финансирани от ЕС проекти, насочени към подобряване на законодателния и административния капацитет на трети страни да идентифицират децата, които са кандидати за убежище и жертви на трафик на хора, чрез специфични програми за помощ ([2]). По отношение на децата, жертви на трафик на хора, в Директива 2011/36/ЕС ([3]) и стратегията на ЕС ([4]) се предвиждат мерки за по-голяма защита, дейности за подобряване на превенцията, съдебното преследване и партньорствата. Приет е списък на трети държави и региони, които са приоритетни за по-нататъшно сътрудничество ([5]). ЕС също редовно разглежда въпросите на международната закрила, и по-специално защитата на уязвими групи като малолетните и непълнолетните, в двустранния и многостранния диалог с трети държави относно правата на човека и миграцията.

([1]) SWD(2012) 281 final, стр. 17.
([2]) SWD(2012) 281 final, Работен документ на службите на Комисията относно изпълнението на Плана за действие относно непридружени непълнолетни лица, стр. 19-20.
([3]) Директива 2011/36/ЕС относно предотвратяването и борбата с трафика на хора и защитата на жертвите от него и за замяна на Рамково решение 2002/629/ПВР на Съвета.
([4]) Стратегия на ЕС за премахване на трафика на хора за периода 2012-2016 г., COM(2012) 286 final.
([5]) Документ за действие за укрепване на външното измерение на ЕС за борба с трафика на хора — втори доклад за изпълнението/актуализиране на информацията за външните действия на държавите членки (3 декември 2012 г., 13661/3/12 rev 3).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000180/13
to the Commission
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Unaccompanied minors

The arrival of unaccompanied minors in the European Union is a longstanding feature of migration to the EU. Unaccompanied minors migrate for diverse and miscellaneous reasons, which may include armed conflicts, wars, natural catastrophes, discrimination or persecution. Furthermore, not all children leave of their own free will, sometimes they are sent away from their homes and families in order to avoid political persecution, to get access to education, or to escape poverty and find employment in the EU. Unaccompanied minors are vulnerable to human trafficking.

In order to adopt a common approach based on the principle of the best interests of the child (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child), the Commission adopted the action plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010-2014). This was followed by the adoption of the Council conclusions on unaccompanied minors.

The Commission stresses the need for a common approach to unaccompanied minors and, especially, to improve understanding of what happens to unaccompanied minors once they are within EU territory. In view of this, I would like to know what measures it intends to adopt.

The EU aims to improve the legislative and administrative capacity of third countries to identify children who are asylum-seekers and victims of human trafficking. Could the Commission clarify how it intends to implement this? Does it intend to establish any monitoring procedures?

Finally, I would like to know whether there is any provision for partnership agreements, action plans or other political measures to foster cooperation with non-EU countries.

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The implementation of the EU Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors has been an important catalyst in shaping a common, rights-based EU approach to this group of migrant children. The common EU approach has enabled more effective cross-cutting policy reflections on how to address the situation of children, regardless of their migratory status. The Commission continues to support and facilitate discussions among EU institutions, national authorities, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations in different policy arenas, allowing exchange of knowledge and practices concerning unaccompanied minors.

In the recent Staff Working Document on the implementation of the action plan on Unaccompanied Minors ([1]), the Commission reported on EU-funded projects aimed at improving the legislative and administrative capacity of third countries to identify children who are asylum-seekers and victims of trafficking in human beings through specific assistance programmes ([2]). Regarding child victims of trafficking in human beings the directive 2011/36/EU ([3]) and the EU Strategy ([4]) foresee measures for increased protection, actions to step up prevention, prosecutions and partnerships. A list of priority third countries and regions for further cooperation has been adopted ([5]). The EU also regularly addresses international protection issues, and in particular protection of vulnerable groups such as minors, in human rights and migration dialogues with third countries, both bilaterally and multilaterally.

([1]) SWD(2012) 281 final, p. 17.
([2]) SWD(2012) 281 final, Commission Staff Working Document on the implementation of the action plan on Unaccompanied Minors, pp. 19-20.
([3]) Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA.
([4]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 COM(2012)286 final.
([5]) Action-Oriented Paper on strengthening the EU external dimension on action against trafficking in human beings — second implementation report/update of information on Member States' external action (3 December 2012, 13661/3/12 REV 3).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000181/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(9. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Wettbewerbspolitik/Überwachung des selektiven Vertriebs hinsichtlich Online-Plattformen

Als am 20. April 2010 die überarbeiteten Wettbewerbsregeln für den Waren- und Dienstleistungsvertrieb verabschiedet wurden, gab die Kommission bekannt, dass damit Händlern eine solide Grundlage und ein konkreter Anreiz für den Ausbau ihres Online-Geschäfts gegeben wird, damit sie so einen größeren Kundenkreis innerhalb der Europäischen Union erreichen (und auch von mehr Kunden erreicht werden können) und die Vorteile des Binnenmarkts in vollem Umfang nutzen können. Die Kommission versprach, die Anwendung der neuen Regeln sorgfältig zu überwachen.

In der Mitteilung über den elektronischen Handel vom 11. Januar 2012 (KOM(2011)0942) heißt es, dass kleine und mittlere Unternehmen mit Sorge auf einige Fälle von Selektivvertrieb bei Produkten hinwiesen, die ihrer Auffassung nach nicht unter diese Vertriebsform fallen dürften, und dass von etablierten Marktteilnehmern Versuche unternommen würden, die Tätigkeiten neuer Marktteilnehmer zu behindern. Die Kommission verspricht in dieser Mitteilung sicherzustellen, dass die Vorschriften über den selektiven Vertrieb strikt angewandt werden.

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass Hersteller weitverbreiteter Konsumgüter zugelassene Vertriebshändler daran hindern, ihre Waren und Dienstleistungen über Webshops auf Online-Plattformen zu verkaufen und damit ihren Zugang zu einem Vertriebskanal einschränken, der den grenzüberschreitenden Handel erleichtert und den Verbrauchern die Möglichkeit gibt, das beste Produkt zum besten Preis zu finden?

2. Die Kommission wird gebeten, einen kurzen Bericht zu den bisher unternommenen Überwachungstätigkeiten vorzulegen.

3. Was unternimmt die Kommission, um sicherzustellen, dass die Vorschriften über den selektiven Vertrieb von den nationalen Wettbewerbsbehörden strikt und auf eine „internetfreundliche“ Weise, so wie es die Kommission bei Verabschiedung der Vorschriften beabsichtigt hat, angewandt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(21. Februar 2013)

2010 hat die Kommission die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 330/2010 ([1]) erlassen und die dazugehörigen Leitlinien für vertikale Beschränkungen ([2]) verabschiedet. Die neuen Vorschriften erleichtern und schützen den Verkauf über das Internet ([3]).

Die neuen Vorschriften erleichtern den Vertragshändlern zwar die Nutzung des Internets, dies bedeutet aber nicht, dass ein Hersteller jedem Händler erlauben muss, seine Produkte zu verkaufen. Ein Hersteller kann gute Gründe haben, sein Vertriebssystem zum Nutzen der Verbraucher zu beschränken.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 330/2010 der Kommission vom 20. April 2010 über die Anwendung von Artikel 101 Absatz 3 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union auf Gruppen von vertikalen Vereinbarungen und abgestimmten Verhaltensweisen (ABl. L 102 vom 23.4.2010, S. 1).

([2]) Leitlinien für vertikale Beschränkungen (ABl. C 130 vom 19.5.2010, S. 1).

([3]) In den Leitlinien wird klargestellt, dass „es jedem Händler erlaubt sein [muss], das Internet für den Verkauf von Produkten zu nutzen“ (Randnummer 52). Hierbei handelt es sich nicht um eine neue Politik, sondern um die Fortsetzung des Ansatzes, der bereits mit der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2790/1999 und den dazugehörigen Leitlinien eingeleitet und von 2000 bis 2010 verfolgt wurde. Diese Vorschriften haben sich bewährt und in diesem Zeitraum nur zu sehr wenigen Beschwerden geführt.

Vertriebsvereinbarungen fallen nur dann in den geschützten Bereich („safe harbour“) der Verordnung, wenn der Marktanteil sowohl des Anbieters als auch des Abnehmers 30 % nicht überschreitet, so dass unter dem Strich negative Auswirkungen für die Verbraucher unwahrscheinlich sind. Außerhalb dieses geschützten Bereichs können die Kommission sowie die Wettbewerbsbehörden und Gerichte der Mitgliedstaaten Artikel 101 AEUV unmittelbar anwenden. Darüber hinaus können sowohl die Kommission als auch die Wettbewerbsbehörden der Mitgliedstaaten im Einzelfall den Rechtsvorteil des geschützten Bereichs entziehen, wenn die betreffende Vertriebsvereinbarung per Saldo doch negative Auswirkungen für die Verbraucher hat. Wie die Durchsetzungsmaßnahmen der letzten Jahre belegen ([4]), bieten die Verordnung und die Leitlinien geeignete und ausreichende Möglichkeiten einzugreifen, wo und wann immer dem Wettbewerb oder den Verbrauchern ein Schaden droht.

Die Kommission überwacht die Anwendung der EU-Wettbewerbsvorschriften kontinuierlich im Wege ihrer Durchsetzungsmaßnahmen und ihrer Gespräche mit den mitgliedstaatlichen Wettbewerbsbehörden über deren Durchsetzungsmaßnahmen. Zudem befasst sich eine Arbeitsgruppe im Rahmen des Europäischen Wettbewerbsnetzes (European Competition Network — ECN) mit Fragen, die Vertriebsvereinbarungen betreffen. Die jüngsten Erörterungen zum Thema Online-Verkauf deuten zwar nicht auf ein weitverbreitetes Problem hin, die Kommission wird jedoch wachsam bleiben und sicherstellen, dass die EU-Wettbewerbsvorschriften weiterhin konsequent angewandt werden.

([4]) Siehe zum Beispiel das Vorgehen der französischen Wettbewerbsbehörde gegen die Unternehmen Pierre Fabre und Bang & Olufsen oder das Vorgehen der deutschen Wettbewerbsbehörde gegen das Unternehmen Dornbracht. In der Rechtssache Pierre Fabre hat der EuGH auch entschieden, dass eine Klausel, die Händlern den Verkauf über das Internet verbietet, gegen Artikel 101 AEUV verstößt, sofern sie nicht objektiv gerechtfertigt ist (Rechtssache Pierre Fabre Dermo-Cosmétique SAS/Président de l'Autorité de la concurrence and Ministre de l'Économie, de l'Industrie et de l'Emploi, C-439/09).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000181/13
to the Commission
Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Competition policy/monitoring selective distribution as regards online platforms

When the revised competition rules for the distribution of goods and services were adopted on 20 April 2010, the Commission announced that 'dealers will now have a clear basis and incentives to develop online activities to reach, and be reached, by customers throughout the EU and fully take advantage of the internal market'. The Commission pledged to monitor the application of the new rules very carefully.

The E-Commerce Communication of 11 January 2012 (COM(2011)0942) noted that SMEs express concerns over cases where selective distribution is wrongly applied to products, and that there are attempts by stakeholders in traditional trade to obstruct the activity of new online operators. The Commission undertakes in that communication to ensure that the rules on selective distribution are rigorously applied.

1. Is the Commission aware that manufacturers of popular consumer goods are hindering authorised distributors from selling through web shops on online platforms, thereby restricting their access to a channel that facilitates cross-border commerce and consumers' ability to find the best product at the best price?

2. Could the Commission provide a brief report on the monitoring activities that it has been undertaking?

3. What is the Commission doing to ensure that the rules on selective distribution are rigorously applied by national competition authorities and applied in the 'Internet-friendly' way the Commission intended when it adopted the rules?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

In 2010, the Commission adopted Regulation 330/2010 ([1]) and the accompanying Guidelines on Vertical Restraints ([2]). The new rules facilitate and protect Internet sales ([3]).

While the new rules facilitate selected distributors to use the Internet, this does not mean that every distributor should be allowed to sell a manufacturer's products. A manufacturer may have good reasons, benefiting consumers, to restrict its distribution system.

The regulation provides a safe harbour for such distribution agreements only if both the supplier's and the buyer's market share do not exceed 30%, making it unlikely that net negative effects will result for consumers. Outside this safe harbour the Commission, the national competition authorities (NCAs) and the national courts can directly apply Article 101 TFEU. In addition, both the Commission and the NCAs may withdraw the benefit of the safe harbour if in a particular case a distribution agreement nonetheless has net negative effects for consumers. The regulation and Guidelines thus provide appropriate and sufficient possibilities to intervene where and when competition and consumers are likely to be harmed, as shown by recent enforcement action ([4]).

The Commission continuously monitors the application of the EU competition rules through its enforcement action and its discussions with NCAs on their enforcement action. There is also a working group within the European Competition Network (ECN) that discusses issues related to distribution agreements. While the current discussions on online sales issues do not indicate a widespread problem, the Commission will remain vigilant to ensure that the EU competition rules continue to be rigorously applied.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 330/210 of 20 April 2010 on the application of Article 101(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to categories of vertical agreements and concerted practices, OJ L 102, 23.4.2010, p. 1.

([2]) Guidelines on Vertical Restraints, OJ C 130, 19.5.2010, p. 1.

([3]) The Guidelines make it clear that 'every distributor must be allowed to use the Internet to sell products' (point 52). This is not new policy but a continuation of the policy that was started with the previous Regulation 2790/1999 and its Guidelines, which applied from 2000 to 2010. These rules are considered to have worked very well and led to very few complaints during this period.

([4]) See, for instance, the cases brought by the French competition authority against Pierre Fabre and Bang & Olufsen and by the German competition authority against Dornbracht. The ECJ in Pierre Fabre has also held that, unless objectively justified, a clause preventing distributors from selling via the Internet constitutes a violation of Article 101 TFEU. Case C-439/09 Pierre Fabre Dermo-Cosmétique SAS v Président de l'Autorité de la concurrence and Ministre de l'Économie, de l'Industrie et de l'Emploi.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000182/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(9 januari 2013)

Betreft: Nieuwe moskeeën in Turkije

In Turkije wordt momenteel het ene grote bouwproject na het andere uit de grond gestampt: er worden vooral veel grote moskeeën gebouwd, waardoor Turkije zogezegd „sterker" en „vromer" zou worden.

Vooral Turkse niet-moslims en Turkse niet-belijdende moslims zien met argwaan hoe bijvoorbeeld het hart van Istanbul rigoureus wordt verbouwd: op het Taksimplein aldaar, dat wordt gezien als „het plein van de seculiere republiek" volgens Atatürk, is de opera, waar Turken voorheen naar Westerse klassieke muziek luisterden, gesloten en zal een gigantische nieuwe moskee worden gebouwd — volledig naar wens van premier Erdoğan, zonder inspraak van de Turkse bevolking.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het nieuwsbericht „Istanbul verdeeld over verbouwing Taksimplein", afkomstig uit het NOS Journaal van 8 januari 2013 om 20:00 uur ([1])?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat met de bouw van grote moskeeën in Turkije — in dit geval nota bene op het Taksimplein, „het plein van de seculiere republiek" volgens Atatürk — de islamiseringsagenda van de huidige Turkse regering resp. van premier Erdoğan duidelijk wordt? Verwerpt de Commissie deze ontwikkeling, die in strijd is met het kemalisme volgens Atatürk? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de bouw van grote moskeeën in Turkije zonder inspraak van de Turkse bevolking het ondemocratische karakter van Turkije aantoont? Verwerpt de Commissie deze ontwikkeling? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije hiermee aantoont almaar verder af te glijden? Welke gevolgen heeft dit voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen van de EU met Turkije?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(1 maart 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde plannen en projecten.

Als land dat onderhandelt over toetreding tot de EU, moet Turkije vooruitgang boeken op het vlak van onder andere de stabiliteit van de democratische instellingen, de rechtsstaat, de mensenrechten en respect voor en bescherming van minderheden. Deze inspanningen moeten Turkije in staat stellen het vreedzaam samenleven van verschillende levenswijzen en overtuigingen te garanderen, met respect voor religieuze en niet-religieuze gevoeligheden.

De Commissie heeft haar algemene beoordeling van de vorderingen van Turkije in oktober 2012 ([2]) gepresenteerd met de publicatie van het jaarlijks uitbreidingspakket. Overeenkomstig de conclusies van de Raad van december 2012 is de Commissie van mening dat enkel door middel van actieve en geloofwaardige toetredingsonderhandelingen de relatie tussen de EU en Turkije haar volle potentieel kan bereiken, en dat de beide partijen er belang bij hebben dat de toetredingsonderhandelingen opnieuw op tempo komen en ervoor wordt gezorgd dat de EU het ijkpunt blijft voor hervormingen in Turkije.

([1]) http://nos.nl/video/459682-turken-verdeeld-over-verbouwing-taksimplein-istanbul.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000182/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: New mosques in Turkey

These days, major new construction projects keep popping up in Turkey one after another. Many of these projects are large new mosques, which are supposed to make Turkey 'stronger' and 'more pious'.

It is Turkey's non-Muslims and non-practising Muslims in particular who feel suspicious about the rigorous rebuilding of the heart of Istanbul. The opera house in Taksim Square, once described by Atatürk as 'the square of the secular republic', has been closed down. Where Turks used to go to listen to Western classical music, a gigantic new mosque will be built — in accordance with Prime Minister Erdoğan's wishes — without any consultation with the Turkish people.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the news report 'Istanbul divided over the rebuilding of Taksim Square', shown on NOS Journaal at 20.00 on 8 January 2013? ([1])

2. Does it agree that the building of large mosques in Turkey — in this case in Taksim Square, of all places, 'the square of the secular republic' as Atatürk put it — highlights the Islamisation agenda of the current Turkish Government and Prime Minister Erdoğan? Does it condemn this development which is in conflict with Atatürk's Kemalism? If not, why not?

3. Does it agree that the construction of large mosques in Turkey without consulting the Turkish people demonstrates Turkey's undemocratic character? Does it condemn this trend? If not, why not?

4. Does it agree that this shows that Turkey is deteriorating? How will this affect the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission is aware of the plans and projects mentioned by the Honourable Member.

As a country negotiating its accession to the EU, Turkey needs to make progress on issues including the stability of its democratic institutions, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities. These efforts should enable Turkey to ensure the peaceful co-existence of different lifestyles and beliefs, respecting both religious and secular sensitivities.

The Commission presented its overall assessment on Turkey's progress in October 2012 ([2]) with the publication of the annual enlargement package. In line with the Council conclusions of December 2012, the Commission takes the view that only active and credible accession negotiations will enable the EU-Turkey relationship to achieve its full potential and that it is in the interest of both parties that accession negotiations regain momentum, ensuring that the EU remains the benchmark for reforms in Turkey.

([1]) http://nos.nl/video/459682-turken-verdeeld-over-verbouwing-taksimplein-istanbul.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000183/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(9 januari 2013)

Angående: Uppföljning av skyddet av EU-medborgarnas personuppgifter inom ramen för EU:s föreslagna djupgående och omfattande frihandelsavtal med Ukraina

Med anledning av det djupgående och omfattande frihandelsavtal mellan kommissionen och Ukrainas regering som nyligen ingicks har jag uppmärksammat frågan om huruvida den person vars uppgifter överförs och behandlas måste ge sitt samtycke på förhand och frågan om skyddet av EU-medborgarnas rättigheter.

I kommissionens svar på den skriftliga frågan E-008065/2012 uppgav Karel De Gucht att ”skyddsåtgärderna [fastställs] i direktiv 95/46/EG, och [att] alla överföringar ska äga rum enligt lagstiftningen om införlivande av direktivet”.

Den text jag hänvisade till, nämligen artikel 129.2 i det djupgående och omfattande frihandelsavtalet, måste ses mot bakgrund av att Ukraina inte har fastställt någon tidsfrist för att anta nationell lagstiftning om införlivande av direktiv 95/46/EG. Det nödvändiga skyddet kommer därför inte att finnas förrän en sådan lagstiftning har antagits. Samtidigt kommer uppgifter om EU-medborgare att överföras till Ukraina och behandlas utan att skyddas av EU:s regelverk.

Kommissionen hävdade visserligen att skyddet förblir det ursprungliga finanstjänstföretagets ansvar, men klargjorde inte hur skyddet av EU-medborgarnas rättigheter ska göras rättsligt bindande, mot bakgrund av att EU:s privata organisationer inte kan anses vara skyldiga att tillämpa bestämmelser som inte är rättsligt bindande i Ukraina.

Kan kommissionen klargöra hur EU-medborgarnas rättigheter skyddas när deras uppgifter behandlas i Ukraina och det inte finns några rättligt bindande skyldigheter för företag som är belägna i Ukraina och som handlar i enlighet med Ukrainas nationella lagstiftning?

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000235/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(10 januari 2013)

Angående: Följdfråga om upprätthållandet av de garantier för EU:s medborgare som ges av EU:s regelverk i det föreslagna djupgående och omfattande frihandelsavtalet med Ukraina

I samband med det djupgående och omfattande frihandelsavtal som nyligen ingicks efter förhandlingar mellan kommissionen och Ukrainas regering tog jag i min skriftliga fråga E-008089/2012 upp avsaknaden av en tidsfrist i avtalet för genomförandet av EU:s rättsliga standarder och skydd, framför allt i fråga om de EU-medborgare vars uppgifter överförs och behandlas enligt avtalet.

I kommissionens svar på frågan hänvisade Karel De Gucht till situationen för EU-företag som är etablerade i Ukraina och ukrainska företag som är etablerade i EU – båda kategorierna omfattas av EU:s regelverk.

Men de viktigaste punkterna som togs upp i frågan avsåg de fall där EU-företag överför uppgifter för behandling av ukrainska företag som är etablerade i Ukraina, som inte omfattas av EU:s regelverk och som enligt det djupgående och omfattande frihandelsavtalet har rätt att driva sin verksamhet enligt nationell lagstiftning som inte garanterar samma skyddsnivå förrän en ändring gjorts i det avseendet. I detta fall finns det inget avtalsenligt ansvar som ersätter bristen på rättsliga bestämmelser.

I ljuset av att Ukrainas befintliga lagar och framtida lagstiftning gradvis kommer att anpassas så att de blir förenliga med EU:s regelverk ombeds kommissionen att klargöra vilka skyddsåtgärder den överväger att vidta för att se till att EU-medborgarnas rättigheter respekteras, med tanke på det lagstiftningsmässiga vakuum som det fördjupade och omfattande frihandelsavtalet har skapat för en obestämd period?

Samlat svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(27 februari 2013)

I enlighet med direktiv 95/46/EGfår personuppgifter föras över till tredje land om landet i fråga säkerställer en adekvat skyddsnivå enligt direktivets artikel 25. I artikel 26 räknar man upp de undantagsfall då överföringar också får göras trots att skyddsnivån i artikel 25 inte är uppfylld. Det rör sig om följande undantagsfall: Den registrerade har uttryckligen samtyckt till den planerade överföringen, överföringen är nödvändig för att fullgöra ett avtal som ingåtts i den registrerades intresse eller överföringen är nödvändig för att skydda den registrerades viktiga intressen.

Det är det EU-baserade finanstjänsteföretagets ansvar att se till att de här kraven är uppfyllda, innan några personuppgifter får överföras. Direktiv 95/46/EG gäller också då den registeransvarige inte har sitt säte i EU (se artikel 4). I den föreslagna förordningen om dataskydd förtydligas i artikel 3 att EU-rätten ska tillämpas på registeransvariga som inte har sitt säte i EU om behandlingen har anknytning till utbjudande av varor eller tjänster till registrerade i EU.

Om EU:s dataskyddsregler inte följs finns enligt frihandelsavtalet möjligheten att anta och tillämpa åtgärder som är ”nödvändiga för skyddet av enskildas privatliv i samband med bearbetning och spridning av personuppgifter samt skyddet av sekretess för individuella register och konton” [artikel 141 i frihandelsavtalet mellan EU och Ukraina].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000183/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Follow-up on the protection of personal data belonging to EU citizens in the context of the EU's proposed Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with Ukraine

With reference to the recently concluded Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) negotiated between the Commission and the Government of Ukraine, I have raised the issues of prior consent of the individual whose data is being transferred and processed and the protection of the rights of EU citizens.

The Commission answer to Written Question E-008065/2012, given by Mr De Gucht, stated that 'safeguards are provided under Directive 95/46/EC and any transfer should take place in accordance with national laws implementing the directive'.

The text I was referring to, Article 129(2) of the DCFTA, must be viewed in the light of the fact that Ukraine does not have a set deadline for issuing national legislation implementing Directive 95/46/EC. The necessary protection will therefore be lacking until such legislation is in place. In the meantime, data belonging to EU citizens will be transferred to Ukraine and processed without the protection afforded by the EU *acquis*.

Moreover, while claiming that the protection remains the responsibility of the original financial service supplier, the Commission did not in fact clarify how the protection of the rights of EU citizens is to be legally enforced, given that EU private organisations cannot be considered responsible for applying rules that are not legally binding in Ukraine.

Can the Commission clarify how EU citizens' rights are protected when their data is processed in Ukraine, in the absence of legally binding obligations for entities situated in Ukraine and acting in accordance with Ukrainian national law?

Question for written answer E-000235/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question on maintaining safeguards for EU citizens, as guaranteed by the *acquis*, in the proposed DCFTA with Ukraine

In connection with the recently concluded Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) negotiated between the Commission and the Government of Ukraine, in my Written Question E-008089/2012 I raised the issue of the absence of a deadline in the DCFTA for implementation of European legal standards and protection, in particular as regards European citizens whose data are transferred or processed under the agreement.

The Commission's answer to that question, by Mr De Gucht, referred to the situation of EU companies established in Ukraine and Ukrainian companies established in the EU, both of which are subject to the provisions of the EU *acquis*.

However, the main concerns expressed in the question refer to the case of EU companies transferring data to be processed by Ukrainian companies established in Ukraine that are not subject to the EU *acquis* and, according to the DCFTA, are free to operate under a national legislation that does not ensure the same level of protection until revision to that effect takes place. In this case, contractual responsibility does not provide a substitute for the lack of legal texts.

As the existing laws and future legislation of Ukraine will be gradually made compatible with the EU *acquis*, in the absence of a set deadline in the DCFTA can the Commission clarify what safeguards it is considering for the rights of EU citizens to be respected ,given the legislative void that has been created for an unspecified period of time by the DCFTA?

Joint answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

In line with the Directive 95/46/EC ([1]), a transfer of personal data to a third country may take place if the third country in question ensures an adequate level of protection as defined in Article 25 of the directive. By way of derogation from Article 25 a transfer may take place also in situations enumerated in Article 26 of the directive. These situations include the following instances: the data subject has given his consent unambiguously to the proposed transfer, the transfer is necessary for the conclusion or performance of a contract concluded in the interest of the data subject, or the transfer is necessary in order to protect the vital interests of the data subject.

It is the responsibility of the financial services supplier established in the EU to comply with these criteria, before any transfer of personal data can take place. The Directive 95/46/EC applies also in situations (defined in Article 4) when the data controller is not established in the EU. The recently proposed regulation on data protection ([2]) further clarifies in Article 3 the application of EC law to data controllers not established in the Union, when the processing activities are related to the offering of goods and services to data subjects in the Union.

Furthermore, in situations of failures in complying with EU data protection law, the DCFTA Agreements preserve the right to adopt and enforce measures 'necessary for the protection of the privacy of individuals in relation to the processing and dissemination of personal data and the protection of confidentiality of individual records and accounts' [Article 141 of the EU-Ukraine DCFTA].

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995.
([2]) COM(2012) 11 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000184/13
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Enti locali italiani e l'emergenza della finanza derivata

Lo scorso dicembre a Milano è stata emessa una sentenza di condanna nei confronti di quattro banche per la presunta truffa da 100 milioni di euro sui derivati stipulati dal Comune di Milano nel 2005.

Questa sentenza ha un significato storico, perché dimostra le responsabilità delle banche nell'aver esposto il comune di Milano a rischi finanziari e perdite enormi, proponendo pacchetti di derivati ad altissimo rischio senza un'adeguata informazione.

Sulla base della fiducia riposta negli enti bancari, non solo il comune di Milano, ma anche centinaia di enti locali italiani hanno stipulato negli scorsi anni contratti simili.

Sebbene questi contratti abbiano garantito finanziamenti nel breve termine, tuttavia già al momento della firma questi o erano gravemente in perdita, oppure contenevano prodotti ad altissimo rischio finanziario.

Giustamente in Inghilterra questo tipo di finanza è stato del tutto vietato, ma dalla sentenza di Milano emerge oggi uno scenario inquietante per le finanze degli enti locali italiani firmatari di questi derivati.

Si è arrivati a questa situazione a causa, da un lato, della spregiudicatezza delle banche nei confronti degli enti locali, privi della capacità tecnica di capire questi derivati, e, dall'altro, della mancanza di regole che esigano dalle banche e possano garantire una maggiore trasparenza ed informazione.

Tuttavia il punto più grave è che ad oggi non sappiamo esattamente in quale situazione versino gli enti locali firmatari di questi pacchetti di derivati, né quale sia la grandezza dei danni provocati.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione in cui versano gli enti locali italiani a causa della finanza derivata? Vi sono rapporti dettagliati dell'Unione europea che esaminano questa grave emergenza?

2. Quali azioni intende adottare a livello italiano ed europeo per prevenire casi simili e garantire maggiore trasparenza da parte delle banche, al fine di evitare un ulteriore aggravamento della crisi finanziaria?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(14 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione ritiene che la situazione descritta dall'onorevole parlamentare si riferisca a contratti finanziari derivati conclusi prima del 2008, poiché la sottoscrizione o la rinegoziazione di detti contratti da parte delle amministrazioni regionali e locali italiane sono state sospese alla fine del 2007 e da allora non sono riprese.

Per quanto riguarda la seconda domanda, la direttiva sui mercati degli strumenti finanziari 2004/39/CE ([1]) (di seguito «MiFID») disciplina la fornitura di servizi e attività di investimento nell'Unione. La direttiva diversifica la tutela a seconda del tipo di cliente (dal più protetto al meno protetto: il cliente al dettaglio, il cliente professionale in quanto tale, il cliente professionale «su richiesta», la controparte qualificata) e del tipo di servizio (gli standard più elevati si applicano alla consulenza in materia di investimenti). Nelle proposte legislative di revisione della MiFID ([2]), la Commissione propone di non permettere di classificare le autorità locali come controparti qualificate e come clienti professionali in quanto tali. Le autorità locali potrebbero tuttavia chiedere di essere trattate come professionisti, ma gli Stati membri dovrebbero essere in grado di adottare criteri rigorosi per la valutazione delle loro conoscenze tecniche. Inoltre, la fornitura di consulenza ai clienti, comprese le autorità pubbliche, è sempre soggetta all'obbligo di valutare l'idoneità dell'investimento per il cliente. Le proposte di revisione della MiFID sono attualmente negoziate nel contesto della procedura legislativa ordinaria.

([1]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/internal_market/single_market_services/financial_services_general_framework/l24036e_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/isd/mifid_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000184/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Italian local authorities and the financial derivatives crisis

In December 2012, four banks were sentenced in Milan for allegedly making EUR 100 million in illicit profit on derivatives bought by the municipality of Milan in 2005.

This judgment is of historic importance, because it demonstrates the responsibility of the banks for having exposed the municipality of Milan to financial risks and huge losses, offering very high risk derivatives packages without adequate information.

Putting their trust in the banks, not only the municipality of Milan, but hundreds of local authorities in Italy have signed similar contracts over the last few years.

Those contracts may have guaranteed finance in the short term but at the time they were signed they were already seriously loss-making or contained very high risk financial products.

In the United Kingdom, quite rightly, this type of finance has been completely banned, but a worrying scenario for the finances of the Italian local authorities that purchased these derivatives has today emerged as a result of the Milan judgment.

This situation has occurred, on the one hand, because of the banks' unscrupulous conduct towards the local authorities, which do not have the technical capability to understand these derivatives, and, on the other hand, because of a lack of rules guaranteeing greater transparency and information, and demanding the same from banks.

However, the most serious aspect is that, so far, we do not know exactly what state the local authorities that signed these derivatives packages are in, nor the extent of the losses caused.

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation that the Italian local authorities are in because of financial derivatives? Are there any detailed EU reports examining this major crisis?

2. What measures does it intend to take at Italian and European levels to prevent similar cases and to guarantee greater transparency on the part of banks, in order to stop the financial crisis becoming worse?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Commission believes that the situation described by the Honourable Member refers to financial derivative contracts stipulated before 2008, as the issuance or re-negotiation of such contracts by regional and local administrations in Italy had been suspended at the end of 2007 and has not resumed since.

Concerning question 2, Markets in Financial Instruments Directive 2004/39/EC ([1])(MiFID) regulates the provision of investment services and activities in the Union. The directive calibrates the protections depending on the type of clients (from the most to the least protected: retail clients, professional clients 'per se', professional clients on request, eligible counterparties) and the type of service (the highest standards apply to investment advice). In the legislative proposals for the review of the MiFID ([2]), the Commission proposes not to allow classifying local authorities as eligible counterparties and professional clients 'per se'. However, local authorities could still request the treatment as professionals but Member States should be able to adopt strict criteria for the assessment of their expertise and knowledge. Furthermore, the provision of advice to clients, including public authorities, is always subject to the obligation to assess the suitability of the investment for the client. The proposals for the review of the MiFID are currently negotiated in the context of the ordinary legislative procedure.

([1]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/internal_market/single_market_services/financial_services_general_framework/l24036e_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/isd/mifid_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000185/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Uccisione di 15 fedeli cristiani in Nigeria

Il 28 dicembre sono stati sgozzati nel sonno quindici cristiani. L'episodio è accaduto nel nordest della Nigeria, nel villaggio di Musari, vicino a Maiduguri, zona abitata prevalentemente da musulmani e roccaforte del fondamentalismo islamico. Secondo le informazioni raccolte da fonti umanitarie e da testimonianze locali, i responsabili dell'attacco sarebbero le milizie islamiste di Boko Haram.

— Considerando che si tratta dell'ennesimo episodio della spirale di violenza provocata dalle milizie di Boko Haram;

— viste le vicende esposte nell'interrogazione n. E-011100/2012;

— considerando che l'Unione europea è uno dei maggiori donatori in Nigeria, finanziando altresì progetti finalizzati alla pace, alla sicurezza ed al rispetto dei diritti umani;

— vista la risoluzione (P7_TA(2012)0090) del Parlamento europeo del 7 marzo 2012 in cui si invitavano i governi statali e federale della Nigeria a proteggere le comunità più vulnerabili;

— vista la risposta all'interrogazione n. E-001594/2012, in cui si assicurava la futura collaborazione tra l'Unione europea e lo Stato nigeriano al fine di ridurre la minaccia alla vita dei cittadini;

— vista la risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 6 maggio 2010 sugli eccidi a Jos, Nigeria (GU C 81 E del 15.3.2011, pag. 143);

In quale modo intende intervenire la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per la tutela dei diritti umani, con particolare riferimento alla minoranza religiosa cristiana nel nord del paese?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 marzo 2013)

In alcune zone della Nigeria settentrionale l'inasprirsi delle violenze che hanno preso di mira civili innocenti, sia musulmani che cristiani, e le istituzioni dello Stato è fonte di crescenti preoccupazioni per quanti si trovano all'interno e all'esterno del paese. La collaborazione tra UE e Nigeria mira a sostenere il paese nel difficile tentativo di creare condizioni di sicurezza duratura, agendo sui fattori che conducono alla radicalizzazione e alla violenza, sia attraverso un costante dialogo politico sulle strategie più idonee ad affrontare tali problemi, sia con interventi di aiuto mirati. Nel corso di una recente missione in Nigeria sono state esaminate forme specifiche di sostegno alla lotta al terrorismo. Il nostro obiettivo è aiutare le autorità nigeriane ad assicurare lo stato di diritto e il rispetto dei diritti dell'uomo.

L'UE ha già avviato una serie di programmi di assistenza sociale, ad esempio nel settore della maternità e in materia di risorse idriche nel nord del paese. Tuttavia, nell'ambito dell'11° Fondo europeo di sviluppo (FES), l'UE sta valutando la possibilità di concentrarsi maggiormente su programmi integrati volti a far fronte all'insieme dei problemi economici e sociali all'origine della violenza.

Inoltre, nel luglio 2012, l'UE ha sostenuto il rafforzamento delle capacità di mediazione in una delle aree più sensibili, ricorrendo ai fondi di un'iniziativa speciale del Parlamento (EEAS BL 2238). È infine in corso di elaborazione un altro progetto incentrato sulla prevenzione dei conflitti e sull'occupazione giovanile in questa regione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000185/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Killing of 15 Christians in Nigeria

On 28 December, 15 Christians had their throats slit in their sleep. This event occurred in the north-east of Nigeria, in the village of Musari, near Maiduguri, a predominantly Muslim area and an Islamic fundamentalist stronghold. According to the information received from humanitarian sources and local witness accounts, the Islamist militia group Boko Haram was responsible for the attack.

Considering:

— that this is yet another episode in the cycle of violence created by the Boko Haram militia;

— the events outlined in Question E-011100/2012;

— that the European Union is one of Nigeria's main donors, also funding projects to promote peace, security and respect for human rights;

— the European Parliament Resolution (P7_TA(2012)0090) of 7 March 2012, calling on Nigeria's state and federal governments to protect the most vulnerable communities;

— the answer to Question E-001594/2012, guaranteeing that the European Union and Nigeria would work together in future to reduce the threat to people's lives;

— the European Parliament Resolution of 6 May 2010 on the mass atrocities in Jos, Nigeria (OJ C 81 E, 15.3.2011, p.143),

what measures does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to take in order to safeguard human rights, with particular reference to the Christian religious minority in the north of the country?

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

The escalating violence in parts of northern Nigeria are a growing cause of concern for those inside and outside the country, and targets innocent civilians, both christians and muslims, and the institutions of the state. The EU is working with Nigeria to help it tackle the challenges of creating durable security and dealing with the factors conducive to radicalisation and violence, through both continuous political dialogue on appropriate approaches to the problems, as well as targeted aid interventions. A mission was recently in Nigeria to examine specific forms of support to fight terrorism. Our objective is to help the Nigerian authorities ensure the rule of law and the respect of human rights principles.

The EU already undertakes a number of programmes providing social assistance, e.g. through maternal care, and water resources in the North. It is considering, however, focusing more attention under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) on integrated programmes that tackle the full range of economic and social challenges that give impetus to the violence.

In addition, in July 2012 the EU provided capacity building for mediation in one of the most fragile areas, using funds from a special initiative by Parliament (EEAS BL 2238). We are also preparing another project focusing on conflict prevention and youth employment for this area.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000186/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Zugriff von US-Behörden auf europäische Cloud-Daten

Cloud-Anbieter versuchen mit der Versicherung, dass die Daten ihrer Kunden die EU nicht verlassen würden, ernst zu nehmende Datenschutzbedenken aus dem Weg zu räumen. Datenschützer haben jedoch wiederholt darauf hingewiesen, dass Cloud-Computing und Datenschutz bislang kaum kompatibel sind und hier alles andere als Klarheit herrscht. Denn wenn der Cloud-Betreiber seinen Firmensitz in den USA hat, können auch US-Behörden auf europäische Server zugreifen, wie etwa der britische Microsoft-Chef und wenig später auch Google einräumen mussten. Es ergeben sich daraus folgende Fragen:

1. Nach Einschätzung von Thilo Weichert, Chef des Unabhängigen Landeszentrums für Datenschutz Schleswig Holstein (ULD), steht eine solche Datenweitergabe aus dem EU-Gebiet heraus im Widerspruch zu europäischem Datenschutzrecht; wie beurteilt die EU-Kommission das?

2. Cloud-Betreiber wie Google und Microsoft forderten Medienberichten zufolge im Rahmen von EU-Konsultationen „flexiblere Regeln“ für die Datenspeicherung und -übermittlung; stimmt das und was hält die Kommission davon?

3. Das Risiko einer illegalen und nicht gewünschten Datenweitergabe stellt laut Experten die Vertraulichkeit der auf Microsoft-Rechenzentren gehosteten Daten und Anwendungen in Frage; wie beurteilt die Kommission dieses Risiko?

4. Nach Auffassung von Datenschutzexperten sollen Unternehmen sich daher bei der Nutzung von Cloud-Diensten für personenbezogene Daten ausschließlich auf rein europäische Service-Provider beschränken; wie beurteilt die Kommission diese Empfehlungen?

5. US-Gesetze wie der Patriot Act bieten „weitreichende Möglichkeiten“ für Justiz, Polizei oder Geheimdienste der Vereinigten Staaten, um die Herausgabe von Daten in der Cloud zu verlangen und europäische Schutzbestimmungen zu umgehen. Zu diesem Ergebnis kommt eine aktuelle Studie des Instituts für Informationsrecht der Universität Amsterdam. Ist diese Studie der Kommission bekannt und wie beurteilt sie die Studienresultate?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(21. Februar 2013)

Die Kommission achtet besonders aufmerksam auf in Drittländern geltende Rechtsvorschriften, durch deren etwaige extraterritoriale Anwendung das Grundrecht der Bürger auf Schutz ihrer personenbezogenen Daten möglicherweise untergraben werden könnte. Nach den Regeln des Völkerrechts kann ein ausländischer Rechtsakt als solcher das einschlägige EU-Recht oder die Gesetze der Mitgliedstaaten nicht außer Kraft setzen, auch nicht im Bereich des Datenschutzes. Bei jeder Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten in der EU müssen deshalb die geltenden EU-Datenschutzvorschriften eingehalten werden. Es ist in erster Linie Sache der nationalen Behörden, vor allem der unabhängigen Datenschutzbehörden, die Einhaltung des Datenschutzrechts zu beobachten und etwaige Verletzungen zu untersuchen. Dieses Thema wird von der Kommission auch regelmäßig im Zuge der zu verschiedenen Fragen ständig laufenden Gespräche mit den US-amerikanischen Behörden zur Sprache gebracht, so auch im Rahmen der Verhandlungen über ein umfassendes Abkommen EU-USA über den Austausch personenbezogener Daten zwischen Justiz- und Polizeibehörden, das den zur Verbrechensbekämpfung notwendigen Datenaustausch unter Wahrung eines hohen Schutzes der Privatsphäre aller Personen erleichtern soll.

Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission ein neues Datenschutzpaket vorgeschlagen ([1]), in dem auf diese Frage im Erwägungsgrund 90 eingegangen wird. Überdies wird in der Cloud-Computing-Mitteilung ([2]) auf einige Aspekte der internationalen Datenübertragung im Zusammenhang mit Cloud-Computing-Diensten eingegangen. Dabei geht es um die Überprüfung der für die Übertragung personenbezogener Daten in Drittländer geltenden Standard-Vertragsklauseln und deren Anpassung an Cloud-Dienste. Außerdem werden die nationalen Datenschutzbehörden aufgerufen, verbindliche unternehmensinterne Vorschriften für Cloud-Diensteanbieter aufzustellen.

([1]) KOM(2012)9 endg., KOM(2012)10 endg. und KOM(2012)11 endg.

([2]) Mitteilung der Kommission „Freisetzung des Cloud-Computing-Potenzials in Europa“ (KOM(2012)529 endg.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000186/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Access by US authorities to EU cloud data

Cloud providers try to overcome serious misgivings over data protection by assuring their customers that their data will not leave the EU. However data protectionists have repeatedly pointed out that cloud computing and data protection have never really been compatible up until now and that this is an area that is far from being transparent. As Microsoft's UK Managing Director and more recently Google too have had to concede, US authorities can access European servers if the company operating the cloud has its headquarters in the USA. This gives rise to the following questions:

1. Thilo Weichert, Head of Schleswig Holstein's independent data protection authority, the ULD, is of the opinion that transmission of data in this way to countries outside of the European Union is contrary to European data protection law. What is the Commission's opinion?

2. According to media reports, during EU public consultations cloud operators such as Google and Microsoft have asked for rules on data storage and transmission to be 'more flexible'. Is this so and what is the Commission's view?

3. Experts say that the risk that data will be illegally passed on, contrary to the owner's wishes, calls into question the confidentiality of data and applications hosted at Microsoft computer centres. How does the Commission view this risk?

4. Data protection experts say that for this reason, businesses should only use wholly European-owned cloud service providers for storage of personal data. What is the Commission's opinion of these recommendations?

5. US laws such as the Patriot Act give the courts, the police and the security services in the United States 'wide ranging possibilities' to demand that data in the cloud be handed over and to circumvent the EU's regulations on data protection. This is the conclusion of a report ([1]) by Amsterdam University's Institute for Information Law ([2]). Is the Commission aware of this report and what is its opinion of the report's findings?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission is particularly mindful of third countries' legislation, whose possible extraterritorial application could jeopardise the individuals' fundamental right to protection of their personal data in the EU. As a matter of international public law, no foreign legal act as such can overrule relevant EU legislation or Member States laws, including the data protection *acquis*. Any processing of personal data in the EU has therefore to respect applicable EU data protection law. It is primarily for national authorities, in particular the independent data protection authorities, to monitor compliance with data protection rules and monitor and investigate any violations thereof. This subject is also being regularly raised by the Commission with the US authorities in the context of ongoing dialogue on different matters, including in the framework of the negotiation of a comprehensive EU-US agreement on the exchange of personal data between judicial and police authorities that should provide a high level of privacy protection for all individuals, while facilitating the exchange of data needed to fight crime.

The Commission also proposed a new Data Protection Package ([3]), which addresses this question in Recital (90). Moreover, the Cloud Computing Communication ([4]) addressed some aspects of international data transfers in the context of cloud computing services. It aims to review standard contractual clauses applicable to the transfer of personal data to third countries, adapt these to cloud services and call upon national data protection authorities to approve Binding Corporate Rules for cloud service providers.

([1]) http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2181534.
([2]) http://www.ivir.nl/.
([3]) COM/2012/09 final; COM/2012/010 final and COM(2012) 11 final.
([4]) The communication 'Unleashing the Potential of Cloud Computing in Europe', COM(2012) 529 final.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000187/13
til Kommissionen
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(9. januar 2013)

Om: Tilstedeværelse af en dyrlæge under lastning og losning af dyr (opfølgning på skriftlig forespørgsel E-007176/2012)

Kommissionen bekræftede i sin besvarelse af forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007176/2012, at forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 ikke kræver tilstedeværelsen af en offentlig myndighed under lastning og losning af dyr, end ikke ved langdistancetransporter. Som bekræftet i Kommissionens beretning om virkningen af denne forordning (KOM(2011)0700), forekommer der imidlertid »dårlig overholdelse og forkert håndtering« af bestemmelserne, hvilket fører til »dårlig dyrevelfærd«. I samme beretning anførte Kommissionen, at »en stigning i antallet af inspektioner (…) bør føre til bedre håndhævelse«, og erklærede, at den ville vedtage »gennemførelsesforanstaltninger vedrørende den kontrol, der skal udføres af de kompetente myndigheder i medlemsstaterne«. Men Kommissionen anførte i sin besvarelse af forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007176/2012, at den ikke har til hensigt at ændre forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005, således at det kræves, at en dyrlæge er til stede under lastning og losning af dyr, der transporteres over længere distancer.

Kommissionen bedes i forlængelse af ovenstående besvare følgende spørgsmål:

1. Hvor stor en procentdel af de langdistancedyretransporter, der begynder inden for EU, kontrolleres i praksis af en dyrlæge ved lastning, dvs. kontrolleres for uregelmæssigheder med hensyn til lastbilen og de forhold, som dyrene lastes under?

2. Hvorledes har Kommissionen tænkt sig at forbedre overholdelsen af forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005?

3. Vil de »gennemførelsesforanstaltninger vedrørende den kontrol, der skal udføres af de kompetente myndigheder i medlemsstaterne«, som Kommissionen har anbefalet dem at vedtage, indeholde et krav om, at de kompetente myndigheder skal være til stede under lastning og losning? Hvis dette er tilfældet, vil disse gennemførelsesforanstaltninger da være juridisk bindende for myndighederne, og hvornår vil de blive vedtaget? Hvis det ikke er tilfældet, hvad er årsagen da til, at et sådant krav ikke blev medtaget?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(27. februar 2013)

1. Kommissionen har ikke tilstrækkelig information til at besvare dette spørgsmål, eftersom medlemsstaterne ikke er forpligtede til at informere Kommissionen om yderligere kontroller under lastning.

2. Kommissionen henviser til kapitel 3 i Kommissionens beretning om dyrevelfærd under transport ([1]), hvori de tiltag, der anses for at kunne rette op på de identificerede problemer, er beskrevet.

3. Kommissionen forventer inden for de næste måneder at vedtage en gennemførelsesafgørelse vedrørende medlemsstaternes årlige rapporter om deres kontroller af dyrevelfærd under transport. Afgørelsens hovedformål er at indsamle bedre og mere sammenlignelige data fra medlemsstaterne om deres udførte kontroller, og den vil ikke indeholde et krav om, at kompetente myndigheder skal være til stede under lastning og losning, eftersom forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 ikke giver Kommissionen beføjelse til at vedtage gennemførelsesafgørelser om sådanne kontrolforanstaltninger.

Ifølge artikel 3 i forordning (EF) nr. 882/2004 om offentlig kontrol ([2]) skal kontrol derudover udføres regelmæssigt på basis af en risikovurdering og med passende hyppighed, efter at have taget hensyn til kriterier som identificerede risici forbundet med dyrevelfærd og registrerede oplysninger om den erhvervsdrivende.

([1]) Beretning fra Kommissionen til Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet om virkningen af Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport. KOM(2011)0700 endelig.

([2]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 882/2004 om offentlig kontrol med henblik på verifikation af, at foderstof- og fødevarelovgivningen samt dyresundheds- og dyrevelfærdsbestemmelserne overholdes. EUT L 165 af 30.4.2004, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000187/13
to the Commission
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Presence of veterinarian during loading and unloading of animals (follow-up to Written Question E-007176/2012)

In its answer to Written Question E-007176/2012, the Commission confirmed that regulation (EC) No 1/2005 does not require the presence of an official authority during the loading or unloading of animals, even when the animals are transported over long distances. However, as confirmed by the Commission's report on the impact of that regulation (COM(2011)0700), there is 'poor compliance and improper enforcement' of its provisions, leading to 'poor animal welfare'. In the same report, the Commission stated that 'an increase in the number of inspections (…) should lead to improved enforcement' and announced that it would 'adopt implementing measures concerning the controls to be performed by the competent authorities of the Member States'. Yet in its answer to Written Question E-007176/2012 the Commission stated that it does not intend to amend Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 to require the presence of a veterinarian during loading and unloading of animals transported long distances.

In connection with the above, could the Commission please answer the following:

1. In practice, what percentage of long-distance animal transports departing within the EU are physically checked by a veterinarian at the moment of loading, i.e. checked for irregularities as regards the truck and the loading conditions?

2. How does the Commission intend to improve compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1/2005?

3. Will the 'implementing measures concerning the controls to be performed by the competent authorities of the Member States', the adoption of which was recommended by the Commission, include a requirement for the competent authorities to be present during loading and unloading operations? If so, will these implementing measures be legally binding on the authorities, and when will they be adopted? If not, why was it decided not to include such a requirement?

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

1. Since Member States are not obliged to inform the Commission on additional checks during loading, the Commission does not have sufficient information to answer this question.

2. The Commission would refer to Chapter 3 of the Commission report on animal welfare during transport ([1]), where the actions considered to correct the problems identified are described.

3. A Commission implementing Decision concerning the Member States' annual reports on their inspections on animal welfare during transport is planned to be adopted within the next months. The decision's main objective is to retrieve better and more comparable data from the Member States on their performed controls and will not include a requirement for competent authorities to be present during loading and unloading, since Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 does not empower the Commission to adopt implementing decisions on such control details.

Furthermore, according to Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls ([2]), controls shall be carried out regularly, on a risk basis and with appropriate frequency, taking account of criteria such as identified risks associated with animal welfare and the operator's past records.

([1]) 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.

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000188/13
do Komisji
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(9 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Stosowanie rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1/2005 w Polsce

Zgodnie z rocznym sprawozdaniem w sprawie ochrony zwierząt podczas transportu przedłożonym Komisji przez polskie władze w 2010 r. jedynie 0,07 % transportów zwierząt skontrolowanych przez polskie władze na drogach uznano za niezgodne z rozporządzeniem (WE) nr 1/2005.

Ten niski odsetek wydaje się być bardzo nierealistyczny, szczególnie że inne państwa członkowskie podały o wiele wyższe dane dla niezgodnych z przepisami transportów skontrolowanych na drogach. Na przykład Niemcy – 34 %, Słowenia – 33 %, Litwa – 32 %, Finlandia – 20 %, a Portugalia – 49 %.

Skrajnie niski wskaźnik wykrywalności Polski w 2010 r. nie jest wyjątkiem: w 2009 r. wyniósł on bowiem 0,18 %, w 2008 r. – 0,06 %, a w 2007 r. – 0,11 %.

1. Czy Komisja uważa wskaźnik wykrywalności nieprzepisowych transportów zwierząt w Polsce za adekwatny, szczególnie w porównaniu z wynikami w innych państwach członkowskich?

2. Czy Komisja uważa, że jakość przeprowadzanych w Polsce kontroli na zgodność z rozporządzeniem (WE) nr 1/2005 w sprawie ochrony zwierząt podczas transportu jest odpowiednia?

3. Jeżeli nie, to czy Komisja może zagwarantować, że jakość przeprowadzanych w Polsce kontroli związanych z ochroną zwierząt ulegnie znaczącej poprawie w najbliższej przyszłości, mimo że wskaźniki wykrywalności były w poprzednich latach skrajnie i nierealistycznie niskie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(25 lutego 2013 r.)

1. Komisja zgadza się z opinią, że odsetek niezgodności stwierdzonych podczas transportu drogowego w Polsce w latach 2007-2010 jest niski. Porównanie tych wyników ze zgłoszeniami z innych państw członkowskich jest jednak niewłaściwe, gdyż sprawozdania z państw członkowskich nie są przedstawiane w zharmonizowany sposób.

Stwierdzono to również w sprawozdaniu Komisji na temat dobrostanu zwierząt podczas transportu ([1]), które zostało przyjęte w listopadzie 2011 r. W związku z tym w najbliższej przyszłości Komisja przyjmie decyzję wykonawczą w sprawie harmonizacji sprawozdań państw członkowskich w zakresie prowadzonych przez nie kontroli dobrostanu zwierząt podczas transportu. Głównym celem decyzji jest uzyskiwanie od państw członkowskich dokładniejszych i bardziej porównywalnych danych na temat przeprowadzonych kontroli.

2. Komisja ocenia stopień spełnienia wymagań przez państwa członkowskie na podstawie przekazanych przez nie rocznych sprawozdań oraz kontroli przeprowadzonych przez Biuro ds. Żywności i Weterynarii Dyrekcji Generalnej Komisji Europejskiej ds. Zdrowia i Konsumentów.

Podczas ostatniej kontroli Biura ds. Żywności i Weterynarii ([2]) stwierdzono, że od czasu poprzedniego audytu przeprowadzonego w 2010 r. sytuacja uległa poprawie, ale nadal wymaga podjęcia dalszych kroków. Dodatkowe informacje ([3]) można znaleźć w wymienionym sprawozdaniu z kontroli.

3. Komisja odnotowała, że w odniesieniu do 2011 r. Polska powiadomiła, że niezgodności stwierdzono ([4]) w przypadku 2,29 % kontroli podczas transportu drogowego. Komisja będzie w dalszym ciągu nadzorować wyniki działań Polski w zakresie kontroli, zgodnie z opisem zawartym we wspomnianym powyżej sprawozdaniu z kontroli Biura ds. Żywności i Weterynarii.

([1]) Sprawozdanie Komisji dla Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie wpływu rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1/2005 w sprawie ochrony zwierząt podczas transportu, COM(2011) 700 final.
([2]) Kontrola Biura ds. Żywności i Weterynarii w celu oceny wdrażania kontroli w zakresie dobrostanu zwierząt w gospodarstwach, jak i podczas transportu (sprawozdanie z kontroli Biura ds. Żywności i Weterynarii 2011-6049).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2779
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/transport/inspections_reports_reg_1_2005_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000188/13
to the Commission
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 in Poland

According to the 'Annual report on the protection of animals during transport' provided by the Polish authorities to the Commission in 2010, only 0.07 % of animal transports checked by the Polish authorities during transport by road were found to be in violation of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

This low percentage appears to be very unrealistic, particularly as other Member States have reported far higher percentages of irregular transports checked on the road: for example, Germany reported 34 %, Slovenia 33 %, Lithuania 32 %, Finland 20 % and Portugal 49 %.

Poland's extremely low detection rate in 2010 is no exception: the percentage was 0.18 % in 2009, 0.06 % in 2008 and 0.11 % in 2007.

1. Does the Commission consider the rate of detection of irregular animal transports in Poland to be adequate, particularly in comparison with the rates of detection of irregular transports in other Member States?

2. Does the Commission consider the quality of checks carried out in Poland in relation to compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport to be appropriate?

3. If not, can the Commission guarantee that the quality of checks carried out in Poland in relation to the protection of animals will rise significantly in the near future, even though Poland's detection rates were extremely and unrealistically low in previous years as well?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

1. The Commission agrees that the reported percentage of non-compliances during transport by road in Poland for 2007-2010 appears low. However, comparison to what is reported by other Member States is not relevant, as the reports from Member States are not presented in a harmonised manner.

This was also concluded in the Commission report on animal welfare during transport ([1]) adopted in November 2011. The Commission will therefore, within the near future, adopt an implementing Decision concerning the harmonisation of Member State's reports on their controls of animal welfare during transport. The decision's main objective is to achieve more accurate and more comparable data from the Member States on the controls performed.

2. The Commission evaluates the quality of compliance of a Member State through the annual reports submitted by that Member State and through audits carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO).

During the last FVO audit ([2]) it was concluded that, although the situation had improved since the previous audit carried out in 2010, there was still a need for further action. Reference is made to the report from that audit for further details ([3]).

3. The Commission notes that for 2011 Poland reported that 2.29% of the inspections during transport by road showed non-compliance ([4]). The Commission will continue to audit Poland's performance on controls, as described in the report from the FVO audit referred to above.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the 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.
([2]) FVO audit in order to evaluate the implementation of controls for animal welfare on farms and during transport (FVO Audit report 2011-6049).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2779.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/transport/inspections_reports_reg_1_2005_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000189/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(9 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Projekt nowelizacji dyrektywy tytoniowej

Komisja Europejska przyjęła 19 grudnia br. projekt nowelizacji dyrektywy tytoniowej. Projekt przewiduje zakaz sprzedaży papierosów smakowych, co obejmuje m.in. zakaz sprzedaży papierosów mentolowych oraz papierosów typu slim. Dodatkowo opakowania papierosów i innych produktów tytoniowych będą musiały być w 75 % pokryte ostrzeżeniami zdrowotnymi, zarówno wizualnymi, jak i słownymi. Nowe przepisy mogą wejść w życie w 2015 lub 2016 r., jeżeli zostaną zatwierdzone przez kraje Unii Europejskiej i Parlament Europejski.

W związku z tym pragnę zapytać:

1. Czy Komisja przeprowadziła analizę dotyczącą ilości miejsc pracy, które zostaną zlikwidowane w związku z wprowadzeniem nowelizacji dyrektywy tytoniowej (np. w Polsce, która jest jednym z największym producentów papierosów slim)?

2. Czy ostrzeżenia o szkodliwości zdrowotnej, które mają pokrywać w 75 % opakowania papierosów, będą zamieszczane także na opakowaniach słodyczy, których nadmierne spożycie, jak wiemy, prowadzi do wielu chorób, a nawet śmierci?

3. Czy ostrzeżenia o szkodliwości zdrowotnej, które mają pokrywać w 75 % opakowania papierosów, będą również obejmować samochody, gdyż, jak wiemy, prowadzenie samochodu może zakończyć się śmiercią kierowcy i pasażerów (np. w Polsce w wypadkach samochodowych corocznie ginie prawie pięć tysięcy osób). Ponadto częste używanie samochodu prowadzi do otyłości, która jest przyczyną wielu chorób układu krążenia. Czy nie lepiej byłoby, żeby Europejczycy chodzili, a nawet biegali, zamiast jeździć samochodem?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(12 lutego 2013 r.)

W dniu 19 grudnia 2012 r. Komisja przyjęła wniosek dotyczący przeglądu dyrektywy w sprawie wyrobów tytoniowych ([1]). Do wniosku załączona jest dogłębna analiza skutków gospodarczych, rynkowych, społecznych i zdrowotnych. Komisja przeprowadziła szeroko zakrojone konsultacje z zainteresowanymi podmiotami i dokładnie przeanalizowała wyrażane obawy.

W odniesieniu do pierwszej kwestii Komisja obliczyła oczekiwane skutki proponowanych środków w poświęconej im części oceny skutków ([2]). W przypadku ewentualnego spadku konsumpcji tytoniu o 2 % w ciągu pięciu lat od wejścia w życie dyrektywy, szacuje się, że 5 700 miejsc pracy zostałoby utraconych w sektorze tytoniu. Jednakże byłoby to kompensowane stworzeniem około 8 000 nowych miejsc pracy w innych sektorach, ze względu na wzrost wydatków konsumentów na inne towary lub usługi. Ludzie, którzy zaprzestaną palenia, przeznaczą prawdopodobnie swój „budżet na papierosy" na zakup innych towarów i usług, wymagających zatrudnienia większej liczby pracowników niż zautomatyzowana produkcja papierosów.

Zgodnie z wnioskiem produkcja papierosów „slim" z przeznaczeniem na wywóz do państw trzecich nadal będzie możliwa.

Jeśli chodzi o pozostałe dwa pytania, tytoń pozostaje największym możliwym do uniknięcia zagrożeniem dla zdrowia w UE i jest odpowiedzialny za prawie 700 000 zgonów w UE rocznie. Około 50 % palaczy umiera przedwcześnie i średnio o 14 lat wcześniej niż osoby niepalące. Z perspektywy zdrowotnej celem dyrektywy jest zniechęcanie młodzieży do rozpoczęcia palenia, biorąc pod uwagę, że 70 % palaczy zaczyna palić w wieku poniżej 18 lat. Wyroby tytoniowe jako takie nie są w żaden sposób porównywalne z innymi produktami na rynku, z punktu widzenia możliwych skutków zdrowotnych.

([1]) COM(2012) 788 final.
([2]) SWD (2012) 452 final, część 6.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000189/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Proposed revision of the Tobacco Products Directive

On 19 December 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal on the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive. The proposal seeks to ban the sale of flavoured cigarettes, including menthol cigarettes, as well as 'slim' cigarettes. The proposal will also require that written and pictorial health warnings cover 75% of the surface area of cigarette packets and the packaging of other tobacco products. If they are approved by the Member States and the European Parliament, the new rules could enter into force in 2015 or 2016.

In the light of the above:

1. Has the Commission carried out an assessment of the number of jobs that will be lost with the introduction of the revised Tobacco Products Directive (for example in Poland, which is one of the leading producers of 'slim' cigarettes)?

2. Will health warnings like those that are to cover 75% of the surface area of cigarette packets also be placed on the packaging of sweets, the excessive consumption of which, as we know, can cause many illnesses and even death?

3. Will health warnings like those that are to cover 75% of the surface area of cigarette packaging also cover cars? As we know, driving a car can result in the death of the driver and passengers (for example, in Poland, almost 5 000 people are killed in car accidents every year). Furthermore, frequent car use leads to obesity, which causes many kinds of cardiovascular disease. Would it not be better for the public in Europe to walk or run rather than travel by car?

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

On 19 December 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive ([1]). The proposal is accompanied by a thorough analysis of the economic, market, social and health impacts. The Commission has carried out extensive stakeholder consultations and has carefully considered the concerns expressed.

Regarding the first question, the Commission has calculated the expected effects of the proposed measures in a dedicated part of the impact assessment ([2]). Based on a possible drop in tobacco consumption of 2% in five years after the entry into force of the directive, it is estimated that 5 700 jobs would be lost in the tobacco sector. However, this would be compensated by the creation of approximately 8 000 new jobs in other sectors that would result from consumers' increased expenditure in other goods or services. People who stop smoking are expected to use their 'cigarettes budget' to buy other goods and services that require more workers than the automated production of cigarettes.

Under the proposal, production of slim cigarettes to export to third countries remains possible.

Regarding the other two questions, tobacco remains the largest avoidable health threat in the EU, responsible for almost 700 000 deaths in the EU every year. Approximately 50% of smokers die prematurely and on average 14 years earlier than non-smokers. From a health perspective, the directive aims at discouraging young people from starting to smoke, taking into account that 70% of smokers start below the age of 18. As such, tobacco products are not in any way comparable with other products on the market with possible health effects.

([1]) COM(2012) 788 final.
([2]) SWD (2012) 452 final, Part 6.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000190/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αίτημα αποζημίωσης σε αμπελοκαλλιεργητές για ζημιές από ασθένεια

Το 2011 οι αμπελοκαλλιεργητές της περιοχής της Κορινθίας επλήγησαν από περονόσπορο. Σε παλαιότερη σχετική ερώτησή μου (E-008179/2011), η Επιτροπή μου είχε απαντήσει ότι δεν είχε ακόμη δεχθεί αίτηση για αποζημίωση των πληγέντων παραγωγών. Τον περασμένο Οκτώβριο, ο υφυπουργός Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και Τροφίμων της Ελλάδας δήλωσε από το βήμα του Ελληνικού Κοινοβουλίου ότι «Ο ΕΛΓΑ έχει καταθέσει στο Υπουργείο Οικονομικών πλήρη φάκελο για πρόγραμμα κρατικών οικονομικών ενισχύσεων ΠΣΕΑ ύψους 40,8 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ για ζημιές του 2011. Για την αποζημίωση των αμπελοκαλλιεργητών για τον περονόσπορο, το ύψος της πρότασης φθάνει τα 23 εκατομμύρια ευρώ. Μόλις έχουμε τη σύμφωνη γνώμη από το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών, θα κατατεθεί για έγκριση στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει δεχθεί η Επιτροπή το αίτημα αυτό από τις ελληνικές αρχές για αποζημίωση των παραγωγών από το Πρόγραμμα Πολιτικής Σχεδίασης Έκτακτης Ανάγκης;

2. Αν ναι, πότε; Είναι πλήρης ο φάκελος; Έχει απαντηθεί το αίτημα των ελληνικών αρχών;

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

1. Η Ελλάδα κοινοποίησε στην Επιτροπή, στις 22 Οκτωβρίου 2012, καθεστώς κρατικών ενισχύσεων για την αποζημίωση των αγροτών για ζημίες λόγω δυσμενών καιρικών συνθηκών κατά το έτος 2011. Αυτό το καθεστώς ενισχύσεων περιλαμβάνει επίσης ενίσχυση για ζημίες σε αμπελώνες λόγω περονόσπορου.

2. Η Επιτροπή ζήτησε από την Ελλάδα συμπληρωματικές πληροφορίες σχετικά με το καθεστώς ενισχύσεων που διαβίβασε η Ελλάδα στις 11 Ιανουαρίου 2013. Σε αυτό το στάδιο, η Επιτροπή εξετάζει τις συγκεκριμένες πληροφορίες προκειμένου να λάβει απόφαση σχετικά με τη συμβατότητα αυτού του καθεστώτος ενισχύσεων με την εσωτερική αγορά. Μόλις η συγκεκριμένη κοινοποίηση θεωρηθεί πλήρης, η απόφαση της Επιτροπής θα ληφθεί εντός δύο μηνών από την επόμενη της ημερομηνίας παραλαβής όλων των απαραίτητων σχετικών πληροφοριών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000190/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: claims for losses sustained by vine growers as a result of plant disease <

In 2011, vineyards in the province of Corinth were damaged by mildew. In reply to my previous question regarding this matter (E-008179/2011), the Commission indicated that it had not yet received any compensation claims from affected vine growers. In October 2012, the Deputy Minister for Agricultural Development and Food, addressing the Greek Parliament, indicated that the ELGA (Greek Farmers Insurance Organisation) had submitted to the Finance Ministry a comprehensive file seeking PSEA (Civil Emergency Plan) assistance amounting to EUR 40.8 million for 2011, a figure of EUR 23 million being quoted for losses sustained by vine growers as a result of mildew. The Deputy Minister indicated that, as soon as approval had been received from the Finance Ministry, the matter would be referred to the Commission.

In view of this:

1. Has the Commission received an application from the Greek authorities for compensation payments to producers under the emergency civil planning programme?

2. If so, when? Is the file complete? Have the Greek authorities been given a reply?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(28 février 2013)

1. La Grèce a notifié à la Commission le 22 octobre 2012 un régime d'aides d'État destinées à indemniser les agriculteurs pour des pertes à cause de mauvaises conditions climatiques pendant l'année 2011. Ce régime d'aides inclut également une aide pour des dommages causés aux vignobles par la maladie de mildiou.

2. La Commission a demandé à la Grèce des renseignements complémentaires concernant ce régime d'aides que la Grèce a fourni le 11 janvier 2013. La Commission examine à ce stade les renseignements en question en vue de prendre une décision quant à la compatibilité de ce régime d'aides avec le marché intérieur. Dès que la notification en question est considérée comme complète, la décision de la Commission sera prise dans un délai de deux mois, à compter du jour suivant celui de la réception de tous les renseignements nécessaires qui y sont relatifs.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000191/13
an die Kommission
Silvana Koch-Mehrin (ALDE)
(9. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Finanzhilfe für Zypern

Nach Darstellung des Bundesnachrichtendienstes haben russische Investoren 20,33 Mrd. EUR bei zyprischen Banken deponiert, was über dem BIP Zyperns (17,3 Mrd. EUR) liegt. Der Großteil dieser Gelder ist offensichtlich illegal ins Ausland verschafft worden, um die russischen Steuerbehörden zu umgehen.

Nach Darstellung der Zentralbank der Russischen Föderation stammten im Jahre 2011 29 % der ausländischen Direktinvestitionen in Russland aus Zypern. Zypern ist der größte ausländische Direktinvestor in Russland, was auf seine umfangreichen Einlagen von Geld aus Russland zurückzuführen ist. Auf Zypern registrierte Unternehmen zahlen einen Steuersatz von lediglich 10 %.

Im Dezember 2011 erklärte sich das russische Finanzministerium bereit, Zypern einen Kredit in Höhe von 2,5 Mrd. EUR zu einem Zinssatz von 4,5 % zur Verfügung zu stellen. Dies ist der Grund dafür, warum Zypern bisher zahlungsfähig geblieben ist.

Allerdings beantragte Zypern im Juni 2012 wegen der Eurokrise ein Rettungspaket. Zypern soll einen Betrag in Höhe von 17,5 Mrd. EUR erhalten, was im Vergleich zu anderen europäischen Rettungsmaßnahmen ein kleiner Betrag ist, jedoch gleichzeitig ungefähr dem BIP des Landes entspricht.

Am 13. Dezember 2012 gelangte die Eurogruppe zu der Auffassung, dass Fortschritte im Hinblick auf ein mögliches makrofinanzielles Hilfsprogramm für Zypern — mit einer beträchtlichen finanziellen, fiskalischen und strukturellen Anpassung — erzielt worden seien. Die Eurogruppe begrüßte die Tatsache, dass die zyprischen Behörden ihr Engagement für die Durchführung solcher Reformen bekundeten.

1. Welche konkreten Maßnahmen beabsichtigt die Kommission, um die Geldwäsche zu bekämpfen und die Steuerschlupflöcher auf Zypern zu schließen?

2. Wie wird die Kommission sicherstellen, dass die für Zypern bereitgestellten Mittel nicht von russischen Investoren missbraucht werden, die in erheblichem Umfang Mittel auf zypriotischen Banken deponiert haben?

3. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Bewertung, dass ein Rettungspaket für zyprische Banken im Wesentlichen auf die Rettung russischer „Oligarchen" hinausläuft?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(26. Februar 2013)

Die EU verfügt mit der Richtlinie zur Bekämpfung der Geldwäsche ([1]) über einen soliden Rechtsrahmen, der in das Recht der Mitgliedstaaten umzusetzen ist und festlegt, wie Finanzinstitute die Identität ihrer Kunden festzustellen haben. In der Richtlinie wird zudem festgelegt, dass die Institute den Grund einer Geschäftsbeziehung/Transaktion und gegebenenfalls die Herkunft von Geldern prüfen müssen. Die Richtlinie wird durch den Vorschlag für eine vierte Geldwäscherichtlinie ([2]) weiter gestärkt. Mit dem Vorschlag werden die Maßnahmen verschärft, die Verpflichtete ergreifen müssen, um risikoorientiert (auch hinsichtlich geografischer Risiken) gegen die Gefahr der Geldwäsche und der Terrorismusfinanzierung vorzugehen.

Was den Rechtsrahmen zur Bekämpfung der Geldwäsche in Zypern angeht, schreiten die technischen Arbeiten der Troika auf der vom Vorsitzenden der Eurogruppe am 11. Februar 2013 erläuterten Grundlage voran.

([1]) Richtlinie 2005/60/EG.
([2]) Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Verhinderung der Nutzung des Finanzsystems zum Zwecke der Geldwäsche und der Terrorismusfinanzierung, KOM(2013)45 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000191/13
to the Commission
Silvana Koch-Mehrin (ALDE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Financial assistance to Cyprus

According to the German Federal Intelligence Service, banks in Cyprus hold around EUR 20.33 billion in deposits by Russian investors, which is more than Cyprus's GDP of EUR 17.3 billion. Most of this money seems to have been illegally moved abroad to evade Russian tax authorities.

According to the Central Bank of the Russian Federation, 29 % of foreign direct investment in Russia came from Cyprus in 2011. Cyprus is the biggest foreign direct investor in Russia thanks to its huge holdings of Russian money. Companies registered in Cyprus pay taxes of just 10 %.

In December 2011 Russia's Ministry of Finance agreed to provide Cyprus with a loan of EUR 2.5 billion at an interest rate of 4.5 %. This is why Cyprus has remained solvent until now.

However, in June 2012 Cyprus applied for a bailout on account of the euro crisis. Cyprus is expected to receive about EUR 17.5 billion, a small amount by comparison with other European rescues but a sum roughly equal to the country's GDP.

On 13 December 2012 the Eurogroup considered that progress had been made towards a possible macro-financial assistance programme for Cyprus, providing for a significant financial, fiscal and structural adjustment. The Eurogroup welcomed the fact that the Cypriot authorities were demonstrating their commitment to such reforms.

1. What concrete action does the Commission envisage taking to fight money laundering and close tax loopholes in Cyprus?

2. How will the Commission ensure that the money given to Cyprus is not misused by Russian investors who hold major deposits in Cypriot banks?

3. How does the Commission view the assessment that bailing out Cypriot banks essentially means bailing out Russian 'oligarchs'?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The EU has a robust Anti-Money Laundering Directive ([1]) whose provisions, to be transposed into the law of the Member States, set out the steps that must be followed by financial institutions to identify their clients and to take measures to check the reason for the business relationship/transaction and, where appropriate, the source of their funds. This directive is being further enhanced by a proposal for a Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive ([2]), which will strengthen the measures that obliged entities have to take in order to have risk-focused (including geographical risk) measures to combat the threat of money laundering and terrorist financing.

Regarding the issue of anti-money laundering framework in Cyprus, the technical work is underway in the Troika on the basis outlined by the President of the Eurogroup on 11 February 2013.

([1]) Directive 2005/60/EC.
([2]) COM(2013) 45 /3: Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000193/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Loans to terminally ill persons

1. Could the Commission clarify whether it is legal to extend a loan to a terminally ill person, with that person's assets used as collateral?

2. Should there be no EU legislation applicable in this context, could the Commission further indicate whether it is competent to legislate on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission proposed a directive on credit agreements relating to residential property ([1]) with a view to promote responsible behaviour by lenders and borrowers. Apart from pre-contractual information obligations, it provides for a careful consideration of the consumer's ability to repay the loan and for an obligation to act honestly, fairly and professionally in accordance with the best interests of the consumer when granting a mortgage credit.

The proposal is currently under negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament.

Directive 2008/48/EC on credit agreements for consumers may apply in the case where the asset used as a collateral is not immovable property or an item deposited as security in the creditor's safe-keeping. In such a case, the creditor is obliged to assess the creditworthiness of the consumer on the basis of sufficient information, where appropriate obtained from the consumer. In the case where the consumer discloses his state of health, this could have an impact on the assessment of his creditworthiness and on the decision to grant credit.

([1]) COM(2011) 142.a.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000194/13
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(9 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Teatro sacro italiano (Sezze, provincia di Latina) e fondi europei

L'Unione europea ha cofinanziato nel 2003, con il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, a titolo del documento unico di programmazione (DOCUP) Obiettivo 2 2000/2006 per la regione Lazio, la ristrutturazione dell'Anfiteatro Italiano di Sezze (LT), con un contributo pubblico di 1.162.027,80 euro (Unione europea e fondi nazionali).

Dalla stampa locale lo scorso ottobre si è appreso che la Commissione (Docup) ha sollecitato risposte in merito all'utilizzo dei finanziamenti erogati.

Visto che l'operazione di ristrutturazione del Teatro non risulta né ultimata né resa operativa e che non si è trattato di una ristrutturazione bensì della costruzione di una nuova opera rispetto al complesso originario dell'Anfiteatro, che è stato inoltre demolito, si chiede alla Commissione:

— se fosse a conoscenza delle varianti al progetto originario e dello stato di abbandono dell'opera,

— se siano stati già presi provvedimenti in merito al recupero dei contributi erogati e se gli stessi siano stati restituiti,

— se sia prevista un'indagine per verificare responsabilità europee e/o degli enti locali interessati.

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(28 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione del progetto menzionato dall'onorevole deputato. Il progetto è stato indicato quale incompleto e non operativo nella relazione finale del programma regionale Lazio 2000-2006 cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.

Gli Stati membri dispongono di due anni, dopo la scadenza per la presentazione della relazione finale, per completare o rendere operativi i progetti in questione e fornire alla Commissione le informazioni pertinenti sullo stato di avanzamento di queste operazioni.

Il 31 ottobre 2012 le autorità regionali del Lazio hanno presentato un elenco di progetti non completati e non operativi comprendente anche la ristrutturazione dell'*Anfiteatro Italiano di Sezze*.

Pertanto, la Commissione ha avviato la procedura di recupero del contributo UE versato per il progetto (220 917,27 euro) conformemente ai regolamenti sulla politica di coesione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000194/13
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Teatro Sacro Italiano (at Sezze in the province of Latina) and EU funding

In 2003, with the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Union co-financed the restructuring of the *Anfiteatro Italiano di Sezze* in Latina. The project came under Single Programming Document (SPD) Objective 2 2000/2006 for the region of Lazio and received a public contribution of EUR 1 162 027.80 (European Union and national funds).

In October 2012, the local press reported that the SPD committee had called for answers regarding the use of the disbursed funds.

Given that the *Teatro* restructuring project has not been implemented or completed and that it is not about restructuring but about building a new structure, compared with the original amphitheatre complex, which has, moreover, been demolished, can the Commission say:

— whether it was aware of the changes to the original project and of the abandonment of the works,

— whether steps have already been taken to recover the disbursed funds, and whether those funds have been recovered,

— whether an investigation is planned to verify those responsible at European level and/or from the local authorities concerned.

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the status of the project mentioned by the Honourable Member. The project was listed as unfinished and non-operational in the final report on the 2000-2006 Lazio regional programme, co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

Member States have a two-year period after the deadline for submission of the final report to complete or render such projects operational and to provide the Commission with the relevant information concerning the status of those operations.

On 31 October 2012, the Lazio regional authorities submitted a list of unfinished and non-operational projects, which included the restructuring of the *Anfiteatro Italiano di Sezze*.

Therefore, the Commission initiated the procedure to recover the EU contribution to the project (EUR 220 917.27) in compliance with cohesion policy regulations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000195/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(9 de janeiro de 2013)

Assunto: Lagoa dos Salgados II

O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010322/2012.

Na resposta dada por Janez Potocnik em nome da Comissão é dito que «as informações comunicadas por Portugal estão a ser examinadas».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Quais foram, em concreto, as informações comunicadas por Portugal, a este propósito?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(21 de fevereiro de 2013)

A Comissão ainda está a debater o assunto com as autoridades portuguesas e as partes interessadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000195/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Salgados Lake II

I submitted Question No E-010322/2012 for written answer to the Commission.

The answer given by Janez Potočnik on behalf of the Commission says that 'the information supplied by Portugal is currently under evaluation'.

I would ask the Commission:

What specific information did Portugal supply in this respect?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission is still discussing this issue, both with the Portuguese authorities and with the stakeholders concerned.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000196/13
an die Kommission
Joachim Zeller (PPE)
(9. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Aufbau Kompetenzzentrum Kaukasus — Europäische Fördermittel

Die Universität Bamberg plant, im Rahmen ihres Lehrauftrages ein Kompetenzzentrum Kaukasus einzurichten. Mit Hilfe dieses Kompetenzzentrums soll in Deutschland und Europa das Interesse an der Region geweckt bzw. vertieft werden. Der wissenschaftliche Austausch soll gefördert, gemeinsame Studiengänge entwickelt und Forschung angeregt werden. Dadurch soll zum Aufbau einer rechtsstaatlichen Zivilgesellschaft in den kaukasischen Ländern und der Entwicklung friedensstiftender nationaler und regionaler Identitäten in diesen Ländern der „Östlichen Partnerschaft" beigetragen werden.

Gibt es vonseiten der Europäischen Union Möglichkeiten einer finanziellen Förderung dieses Projekts und wenn ja, in welchem Rahmen kann eine solche Förderung konkret angestrebt werden?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(8. Februar 2013)

Die Kommission ist bemüht, die akademische Zusammenarbeit mit ihren Nachbarstaaten, darunter den Kaukasusländern, zu stärken. Entsprechende Unterstützung steht über die Programme Tempus und Erasmus Mundus zur Verfügung.

Über das Programm Erasmus Mundus wird die Lernzwecken dienende Mobilität nach Europa gefördert, und zwar mittels gemeinsamer Abschlüsse und entsprechender Stipendien. Die Programmmittel werden auch für Universitätspartnerschaften eingesetzt, die Mobilität — vom Typ Erasmus — aus verschiedenen Teilen der Welt und zum Erwerb von Leistungspunkten organisieren. Weitere Informationen finden Sie auf folgender Website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/programme/about_erasmus_mundus_en.php

Die Kaukasusländer beteiligen sich aktiv am Programm Tempus. Im Rahmen von Tempus wird die Modernisierung der tertiären Bildungssysteme gefördert und ein Raum für die Zusammenarbeit mit Nachbarländern geschaffen. Das Programm begleitet Hochschulreformen und hilft Partnereinrichtungen, Erfahrungen und Expertise der EU in diesem Bereich zu nutzen. Weitere Informationen finden Sie auf folgender Website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/index_en.php

Die Universität Bamberg kann unter beiden Programmen einen Antrag einreichen. Für die bereits veröffentlichten Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen gelten folgende Fristen: 26. März 2013 für Tempus und 15. April 2013 für Erasmus Mundus.

Die Kommission möchte den Herrn Abgeordneten auch darauf hinweisen, dass es im neuen, von der Kommission für den nächsten Programmplanungszeitraum (2014-2020) vorgeschlagenen Programm im Bereich Bildung und Jugend mit dem Titel „Erasmus für alle" eine eigene Aktion für Nachbarländer geben wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000196/13
to the Commission
Joachim Zeller (PPE)
(9 January 2013)

Subject: Establishment of a Caucasus centre of excellence — European funding

The University of Bamberg is planning to establish a Caucasus centre of excellence, to help to perform its education role. It is intended that the centre of excellence should arouse or increase interest in the region both in Germany and in Europe in general. Academic exchanges are to be promoted, joint courses developed and research encouraged. In this way, it is hoped that a contribution can be made towards developing a civil society with implications for the rule of law in the Caucasian countries and developing national and regional identities which will promote peace in these 'Eastern Partnership' countries.

Are there any ways in which the European Union could support this project financially and if so, in which specific context could an application be made for such funding?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Commission is committed to strengthening academic cooperation with its neighbours, including the Caucasus countries. The Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes are providing support in this respect.

The Erasmus Mundus programme finances learning mobility to Europe through joint degrees of excellence with related scholarships. The programme also funds university partnerships which organise Erasmus-type credit mobility from different parts of the world. For further information please visit the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/programme/about_erasmus_mundus_en.php

Caucasus countries actively participate in the Tempus programme. Tempus supports the modernisation of higher education systems and creates an area of cooperation with neighbourhood countries. The Tempus programme accompanies higher education reforms and helps partner institutions benefit from EU experience and expertise in the field. For further information please visit the following website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/index_en.php

The University of Bamberg can submit an application under both programmes. Calls for proposals were published with the following deadlines: 26 March 2013 for Tempus and 15 April 2013 for Erasmus Mundus.

The Commission would also like to inform the Honourable Member that 'Erasmus for All', the new education, training and youth programme, proposed by the Commission for the next programming period (2014-2020), will offer a special action for Neighbouring countries.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000197/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Sperimentazione animale per cosmetici

Il prossimo luglio 2013 entrerà in vigore, in sostituzione dell'attuale direttiva «cosmetici», un nuovo regolamento volto a garantire una migliore tutela per la salute e l'informazione dei consumatori.

Il regolamento dovrebbe finalmente vietare il ricorso alle sperimentazioni animali all'interno dell'Unione europea, sia per la realizzazione di prodotti finiti che per la creazione di ingredienti o combinazioni di ingredienti; sarà inoltre vietata l'immissione sul mercato europeo di prodotti la cui formulazione finale sia stata oggetto di una sperimentazione animale e di prodotti contenenti ingredienti o combinazioni di ingredienti che siano stati oggetto di una sperimentazione animale.

È stata tuttavia prevista una deroga per quanto riguarda gli esperimenti concernenti la tossicità da uso ripetuto, la tossicità riproduttiva e la tossicocinetica dei prodotti, per i quali non sono ancora disponibili metodi alternativi; era stabilito che il periodo di esclusione dovesse comunque terminare l'11 marzo 2013.

Da più parti giungono voci circa la possibilità di un ulteriore rinvio di questa data limite, continuando così a permettere la sperimentazione animale in questo ambito specifico.

Può la Commissione indicare se sia effettivamente prevista una proroga alla deroga?

Quali risultati sono stati ottenuti in questi anni nella ricerca di metodi alternativi in questo settore?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2013)

Per quanto concerne la scadenza dell'11 marzo 2013 la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione P-011412/2012 dell'onorevole Seeber ([1]).

Per quanto concerne i progressi realizzati in relazione a metodi alternativi, la relazione della Commissione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio sulla messa a punto, sulla convalida e sulla legalizzazione di metodi alternativi alla sperimentazione animale nel settore dei cosmetici ([2])del settembre 2011 ha fornito un ampio quadro della situazione. La Commissione sta preparando un aggiornamento di tale informazione.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Relazione sulla messa a punto, sulla convalida e sulla legalizzazione di metodi alternativi alla sperimentazione animale nel settore dei cosmetici (2009), 13.9.2011, COM(2011)558 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000197/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Testing cosmetics on animals

A new regulation guaranteeing greater protection of consumer health and information will come into force in July 2013. This will replace the current Cosmetics Directive.

The regulation should finally ban animal testing within the European Union, both for finished products and in the creation of ingredients or combinations of ingredients. The regulation will also ban the marketing of products in the EU whose final formulation was tested on animals and of products containing ingredients or combinations of ingredients tested on animals.

There was a derogation however for testing for repeated use toxicity, reproductive toxicity and toxicokinetics, where no alternative methods were as yet available. But it was stipulated that this derogation would end on 11 March 2013.

It is now rumoured that this deadline may be further deferred, allowing animal testing in this specific field to continue.

Could the Commission state whether there are indeed plans to extend this derogation?

What progress has been made in recent years on finding alternative methods of testing for this sector?

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

With respect to the deadline of 11 March 2013, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question P-011412/2012 by Mr Seeber ([1]).

As regards the progress which has been made in relation to alternative methods, the Commission's report to the Parliament and the Council on the Development, Validation and Legal Acceptance of Alternative Methods to Animal Tests in the Field of Cosmetics ([2])of September 2011 has provided a comprehensive overview on that matter. The Commission is in the process of preparing an update of that information.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Report on the Development, Validation and Legal Acceptance of Alternative Methods to Animal Tests in the Field of Cosmetics (2009), 13.9.2011, COM(2011) 558 final.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa P-000198/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(10 Eanáir 2013)

Ábhar: Teacht a bheith ag an bpobal faoi mhíchumas ar eolas i dtaca le traschomhlíonadh.

An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún eolas a thabhairt maidir leis na hoibleagáidí agus na freagrachtaí dlíthiúla atá ar údaráis na mBallstát i dtaca lena chinntiú go bhfuil tuiscint cheart ag an bpobal ar an reachtaíocht sin a bhaineann lena gcásanna féin agus go bhfuil teacht ag feirmeoirí go háirithe ar eolas faoi na critéir chomhlíonta atá i bhfeidhm do na scéimeanna a bhaineann leo?

An bhfuil an ceart ag feirmeoirí, mar shaoránaigh Eorpacha, an t-eolas sin a bheith ar fáil go héasca acu agus an t-eolas sin a bheith intuigthe, fiú dóibh siúd atá faoi mhíchumas, amhail an disléicse?

An bhfuil dualgas ar na húdaráis comhoibriú le feirmeoirí d'fhonn a chinntiú go bhfuil tuiscint cheart ag feirmeoirí ar na freagrachtaí atá orthu sula ngearrtar pionós nó fíneáil ar bith orthu?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Cioloş thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(5 Feabhra 2013)

1. De réir Rialacháin (CE) Uimh. 73/2009 ón gComhairle ([1]) atá ann faoi láthair, soláthróidh an t-údarás inniúil náisiúnta liosta don fheirmeoir de na ceanglais bhainistíochta reachtúla (CBR) agus an dea-riocht talmhaíochta agus comhshaoil (DRTC) atá le hurramú, *inter alia* trí mhodhanna leictreonacha a úsáid. Lena chois sin, oibreoidh na Ballstáit córas comhairleoireachta feirme (CCF) a chumhdóidh ar a laghad na CBRanna agus an DRTC. Sa togra ón gCoimisiún le haghaidh Rialacháin maidir le maoiniú, bainistiú agus faireachán a dhéanamh ar an gcomhbheartas talmhaíochta, leathnaíodh raon feidhme an CCF (e.g. chun ceanglais nó gníomhartha a chur san áireamh freisin a bhaineann le maolú agus oiriúnú don athrú aeráide, le bithéagsúlacht, le huisce a chosaint agus le nuálaíocht).

2. Is faoi na Ballstáit agus faoina gcuid údarás bainistíochta atá sé a áirithiú go ndéanfar faisnéis leormhaith faoin reachtaíocht is infheidhme, faoi na cláir agus faoi na hoibríochtaí dá bhforáiltear a sholáthar do shaoránaigh an AE agus do thairbhithe chistí an AE. Ba cheart rochtain ar an bhfaisnéis a bheith ag gach duine, lena n-áirítear daoine faoi mhíchumas. Más rud é nach bhfuil an fhaisnéis agus/nó na treoracha soiléir do shaoránach, ba cheart don té sin an méid sin a chur in iúl don údarás bainistíochta ábhartha in am trátha agus faisnéis a iarraidh i bhformáid áisiúil inrochtana.

3. Tá roinnt rialacha i Rialachán (CE) Uimh. 73/2009 ón gComhairle agus i Rialachán (CE) Uimh. 1122/2009 ón gCoimisiún ([2]) araon a chuireann ar chumas na mBallstát comhar a dhéanamh le feirmeoirí i dtaobh rialuithe um thras-chomhlíonadh. Foráiltear do rialacha sonracha i gcás ina ndéanann Ballstát cinneadh úsáid a bhaint as an riail *de minimis* nó má mheastar mionchás neamh-chomhlíonta a bheith i gceist. Sna cásanna seo, tugtar deis d'fheirmeoir a thabharfar fógra dó/di maidir leis na torthaí agus na hoibleagáidí an scéal a réiteach laistigh de spriocdháta sonrach sula ngearrfar aon phionós.

([1]) IO L 30, 31.1.2009.
([2]) IO L 316, 2.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000198/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Access by the disabled community to information in connection with cross compliance

Could the Commission provide information on the legal obligations and responsibilities of the authorities of Member State in ensuring that the public should understand the legislation relating to their own situations and especially that farmers should have access to information regarding the compliance criteria that are in place the for the schemes which relate to them?

Do farmers, as European citizens, have the right that the information be readily available to them and the information be understandable, even for those with disabilities, such as dyslexia?

Do the authorities have a duty to cooperate with farmers to ensure that farmers understand their responsibilities before any penalty or fine is imposed on them?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

1. According to the current Council Regulation (EC) 73/2009 ([1]), the competent national authority shall provide the farmer, *inter alia* by the use of electronic means, with the list of statutory management requirements (SMRs) and the good agricultural and environmental condition (GAEC) to be respected. Furthermore, Member States shall operate a farm advisory system (FAS) covering at least the SMRs and the GAEC. In the Commission proposal for a regulation on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy, the scope of the FAS has been widened (e.g. to include also requirements or actions related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity, protection of water, innovation).

2. It is up to the Member States and their managing authorities to ensure that EU citizens and beneficiaries of EU funds are provided with adequate information on the applicable legislation, the programmes and foreseen operations. Information should be accessible to everyone, including to people with disabilities. If the information and/or instructions are unclear to a citizen, he/she should signal this in good time to the relevant managing authority and request information in a convenient accessible format.

3. Both Council Regulation (EC) 73/2009 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1122/2009 ([2]) contain several rules that allow Member States to establish cooperation with farmers concerning cross compliance controls. Specific rules are foreseen in case a Member State decides to make use of the *de minimis* rule or if a non-compliance is considered as minor. In these cases, the possibility to remedy the situation within a given deadline is given to the farmer to whom findings and obligations are notified before any penalty is imposed.

([1]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009.
([2]) OJ L 316, 2.12.2009.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000199/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 janvier 2013)

Objet: Maladie orpheline et médicament miracle saboté?

Depuis trois ans, la Commission européenne s'oppose bec et ongles à l'autorisation de mise sur le marché européen d'un médicament, l'Orphacol, produit par CTRS, qui permet d'éviter aux personnes touchées par la maladie orpheline précitée une mort certaine (sauf via une greffe du foie, opération lourde et coûteuse). Ce qui m'interpelle dans ce dossier, c'est que l'avis des scientifiques et des 27 États membres est unanimement favorable à ce médicament.

1. Pourquoi la Commission a-t-elle refusé d'autoriser ce médicament alors que l'Agence européenne des médicaments (AEM), une première fois en 2010, une deuxième fois en 2011, le Comité permanent des médicaments à usage humain (États membres), en octobre 2011, et enfin, les gouvernements européens, en novembre 2011, ont tous donné leur feu vert?

2. Comment la Commission motive-t-elle ce refus?

3. En quoi remet-elle en cause, et dénigre-t-elle, les avis positifs de l'AEM qui a précisément pour rôle d'apporter un avis éclairé sur ce genre de questions?

4. Quel est le pourcentage de cas où la Commission n'a pas suivi l'avis de l'AEM au cours des trois dernières années?

5. Asklepion Pharmaceuticals aurait envoyé une lettre à l'exécutif européen pour argumenter contre l'octroi de l'autorisation à Orphacol. Est-il de pratique courante qu'une entreprise tente officiellement de faire du lobbying auprès des décideurs directs ou indirects de la Commission contre une autre entreprise?

6. Vu le nombre de zones d'ombre et de débats qu'engendre la question de l'octroi ou du blocage de cette autorisation, ne serait-il pas dans l'intérêt des institutions européennes, des entreprises citées et, in fine, du patient, de saisir l'Office anti-fraude de la Commission (l'OLAF)?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission

(13 février 2013)

La Commission a rejeté l'autorisation de mise sur le marché du médicament «Orphacol», car le dossier soumis par CTRS ne contenait pas des données complètes sur l'efficacité et la sécurité du produit et ne satisfaisait pas aux exigences fixées dans la législation européenne ([1])

— Si l'Agence européenne des médicaments a bien recommandé l'octroi d'une autorisation de mise sur le marché de l'Orphacol, les États membres étaient quant à eux divisés sur la décision de la Commission. Si cette dernière est tenue de prendre en considération l'avis scientifique formulé par l'Agence, mais aussi de respecter la législation.

— Au cours des trois dernières années, les services de la Commission ont demandé dans plus de 50 cas à l'Agence de clarifier certains points de ses avis relatifs à des autorisations de mise sur le marché.

— Asklepion Pharmaceuticals n'a pas envoyé de lettre à la Commission argumentant contre l'octroi de l'autorisation de commercialiser l'Orphacol. La compagnie pharmaceutique Special Products Ltd a écrit à l'Agence européenne des médicaments pour connaître les conditions à remplir pour une éventuelle demande d'autorisation de mise sur le marché de médicaments composés d'acide cholique. La Commission a reçu une copie de cette lettre, qui ne s'oppose pas, elle non plus, à l'autorisation de mise sur le marché de l'Orphacol.

— La décision de la Commission à ce sujet fait actuellement l'objet d'un examen par le Tribunal. Il appartient en effet à la Cour, et non à l'Office européen de lutte antifraude, de préciser les exigences nécessaires pour l'obtention d'une autorisation de mise sur le marché.

— Enfin, il y a lieu de souligner que le recours à l'acide cholique pour traiter les patients reste possible, dans les conditions prévues par la directive 2001/83/CE. Les besoins des patients ne sont donc pas menacés.

([1]) Directive 2001/83/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 6 novembre 2001 instituant un code communautaire relatif aux médicaments à usage humain, JO L 311 du 28.11.2001, p. 67. Règlement (CE) n° 726/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 31 mars 2004 établissant des procédures communautaires pour l'autorisation et la surveillance en ce qui concerne les médicaments à usage humain et à usage vétérinaire, et instituant une Agence européenne des médicaments, JO L 136 du 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000199/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Wonder drug for rare disease sabotaged?

For three years now, the Commission has fought tooth and nail against issuing a marketing authorisation for Orphacol, a drug manufactured by CTRS, which prevents certain death (unless they have a liver transplant, a taxing and expensive operation) for the people affected by the rare disease it is intended to treat. What is striking about this case is that scientists and the 27 Member States have all issued favourable opinions on this drug.

1. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) gave Orphacol the go ahead in 2010 and then again in 2011, the Standing Committee on Medicinal Products for Human Use (Member States) did so in October 2011 and lastly the EU Governments gave it the green light in November 2011. Why, therefore, has the Commission rejected this drug?

2. How does the Commission justify its refusal?

3. Why is the Commission challenging, and denigrating, the positive opinions given by EMA which exists precisely to give expert opinions on matters of this kind?

4. During the past three years, in what percentage of cases has the Commission not followed the opinion given by the EMA?

5. Apparently Asklepion Pharmaceuticals sent a letter to the EU executive arguing against granting Orphacol authorisation. Is it normal practice for one firm to attempt to lobby officially the direct or indirect decision-makers at the Commission against another firm?

6. Given the number of grey areas and discussions provoked by the question of authorising or rejecting this drug, would it not be in the interest of the EU institutions, the firms mentioned and, in the end, the patient, to refer the whole matter to the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission

(13 February 2013)

The Commission has refused the marketing authorisation for 'Orphacol' because the content of the dossier submitted by CTRS did not contain comprehensive data on efficacy and safety and failed to comply with the requirements set out in the legislation ([1]).

While the European Medicines Agency recommended the granting of a marketing authorisation for 'Orphacol', the view of the Member States on the Commission Decision was split. In addition to considering the scientific opinion of the Agency, the Commission is bound to respect the legislation.

Over the last three years, the Commission services have requested the Agency to clarify certain aspects of its Opinions on marketing authorisations in over 50 cases.

It is not correct that Asklepion Pharmaceuticals has sent a letter to the Commission arguing against the granting of a marketing authorisation for Orphacol. Special Products Ltd wrote to the European Medicines Agency enquiring about the requirements for its prospective marketing authorisation application for cholic acid. The Commission was sent a copy of this letter, which does not argue against the marketing authorisation for Orphacol either.

The Commission Decision on Orphacol is currently being scrutinised by the General Court. The competence to clarify the precise requirements necessary to obtain a marketing authorisation rests with the Court, not with OLAF.

Finally, it is noted that the use of cholic acid to treat patients continues to be possible under the conditions provided for in Directive 2001/83. Patients' needs are therefore safeguarded.

([1]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on Community code relating to medicinal products for human use: OJ L 311; 28.11.2001, p.67. Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency: OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000202/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Cyber-bullying

Bullying in all its forms is a huge problem across all age demographics in the EU. Cyber-bullying and smart technology mean that, for many, there is no escape from bullying. What steps will the Commission take to eliminate cyber-bullying? What steps will the Commission take to ensure that people are made accountable for abusive behaviour online?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concern.

Cyber-bullying has become one of the biggest online risks among young people. Children need to develop the right skills to take part safely in the digital society.

Awareness-raising, training and education, self-regulation and technical tools and enforcement of legal provisions, where they exist can in combination help to tackle effectively with harmful content and contacts.

The Commission has presented a strategy on Better Internet for Children ([1]) that is proposing actions to be undertaken jointly by the Commission, Member States and industry. Among the aims of the strategy is to give both parents and children the technical tools necessary for ensuring the online protection of children and to scale up awareness raising and teaching of online safety in all EU schools to develop children's digital and media literacy and self-responsibility online.

The Safer Internet Programme co-funds Safer Internet Centres in all Member States, whose main task is to raise awareness among young people, teachers and parents, regarding the possible risks young people may encounter online and empower them to deal with these risks. The Centres run helplines for young people, parents, and teachers if they need advice on any issue they face online, including cyber-bullying.

An industry self-regulatory process has been set up in December 2011 ([2]) to take action to develop simple tools for users to report harmful content and contact.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/286.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/self_reg/index_en.htm (signatories include Google, Facebook, Vodafone).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000203/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Democratic Republic of Congo

Can the High Representative outline what actions the European Union is undertaking to end the conflict and humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo?

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

The EU position is set out in Foreign Affairs Council conclusions from June, November and December 2012. Since June 2012, the HR/VP has also expressed her grave concern on several occasions regarding the security and humanitarian situation in eastern DRC ([1]). She has passed clear messages both to Presidents Kabila and Kagamé.

The EU has been consistent in condemning the M23 sedition and external support it has received. Pressure has been put both on DRC (governance, army reform) and Rwanda (budget support). The EU backs efforts of the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU) and the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to find a lasting solution and welcomes the efforts of the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) to conclude a 'framework agreement'. This UN initiative is linked to plans to reinforce the Monusco and the appointment of a UNSG special envoy. The EU remains confident that the 'framework agreement' will be signed by the DRC and neighbouring countries in the near future.

As regards the ICGLR peace talks between DRC and the M23, the EU commends Uganda's facilitation efforts. It is important to keep the region engaged and the Kampala talks are complementary to the UNSG 'framework agreement'.

In order to keep the leverage on DRC authorities, the EU continues to remain engaged. Key priorities in the coming years include support for democratisation, governance and human rights as well as Security Sector Reform and promoting peace and stability in the Great Lakes region.

To alleviate the immediate suffering of the Congolese people, the EU has been providing EUR 77 millions of humanitarian assistance to the DRC in 2012 only and already EUR 61 million for 2013.

([1]) DRC = Democratic Republic of Congo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000204/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Compliance with the Wild Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) in Malta

Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended) was adopted unanimously by the Members States in 1979 as a response to increasing concerns about the decline in Europe's wild bird populations. It bans activities that directly threaten birds, the destruction of their nests and taking of their eggs, and includes a requirement to ensure that birds are not hunted during the periods of their greatest vulnerability, such as return migration to nesting areas, reproduction and the raising of chicks.

Of the ten new Member States which joined the European Union in 2004 only Malta was granted, in respect of the trapping of birds, a (strictly limited) transition period within which to implement the directive. The explanatory note on this transition period states that 'Malta will report annually to the Commission on the application of this transitional measure and on progress achieved'.

Can the Commission advise me if it has examined and is satisfied with the state of transposition of the Birds Directive into Maltese national legislation, as stated in this explanatory note, and of its enforcement. If not, can the Commission advise me what plans it has to protect such a critically important geographical location for Europe's migrant birds?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The Commission has examined the transposition of Directive 2009/147/EC ([1]) on the conservation of wild birds into Maltese legislation and considers that the quality of transposition is satisfactory. However, that is not the case with regards to the actual implementation. Enforcement problems identified relate to the bad application of derogations (in particular spring hunting and trapping) and to the illegal killing of protected species.

These issues have been raised with the Maltese authorities on several occasions and the Commission has, in certain cases, relied on infringement proceedings addressing the incorrect application of derogations. While Maltese authorities are taking steps to improve compliance with the EU's Birds Directive the Commission will continue to closely monitor progress in this area.

([1]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000205/13
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(10. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Ausbeutung von Arbeitnehmern bei der Pilzernte in den Niederlanden

Europaweit werden erneut Fälle bekannt, in denen Arbeitnehmer durch illegale Methoden weit unter den Mindeststandards für Löhne, Sozialversicherung und Unterkunft beschäftigt werden.

Das konkrete Beispiel liefert hier die Pilzernte in den Niederlanden, dem zweitgrößten Produzenten von Pilzen in der EU. Dort werden vor allem polnische und bulgarische Arbeitnehmer systematisch ausgebeutet. Unterbezahlung, schlechte Unterbringungsmöglichkeiten sowie Abhängigkeiten und Einschüchterungen vonseiten des Arbeitgebers sind an der Tagesordnung. Der niederländische Arbeits- und Sozialminister vergleicht die Situation mit Menschenhandel und den Arbeitsbedingungen in der Sex-Branche. Schockierend ist auch die Tatsache, dass 70 % der niederländischen Pilze unter vergleichbar schlechten Arbeitsbedingungen geerntet werden.

Erste Hinweise auf diese Praktiken sind bereits vor sieben Jahren an die Öffentlichkeit gekommen. Leider konnten auch Arbeitskontrollen den Missbrauch bisher nicht verhindern, da die Arbeitnehmer eingeschüchtert wurden und daher in Gegenwart von Kontrolleuren nicht reden. Zudem werden Kontrollen durch Tricks in der Verwaltung und Scheinbuchhaltung systematisch umgangen.

1. Ist der Kommission bewusst, dass es in den Mitgliedstaaten massive Probleme sowohl mit entsendeten Arbeitern als auch mit Saisonarbeitern gibt?

2. Welche konkreten Maßnahmen plant die Kommission, um die katastrophale soziale Lage solcher Arbeitnehmer zu verbessern?

3. Wurden in der Vergangenheit Schritte seitens der Kommission unternommen, um diesen Problemen entgegenzuwirken?

4. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um kurzfristig die Mitgliedstaaten anzuhalten die Mindeststandards für Löhne, Sozialversicherung und Unterkunft von Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmern in einer solchen Lage zu garantieren und dadurch eine gewisse Rechtssicherheit zu schaffen?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(28. Februar 2013)

1. Der Kommission sind die von der Frau Abgeordneten angesprochenen Probleme bezüglich entsandter Arbeitskräfte und Saisonarbeitnehmer bekannt.

2. & 3. Am 21. März 2012 nahm die Kommission einen Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie ([1]) zur Durchsetzung der Richtlinie 96/71/EG ([2]) an, mit der der Umgehung der geltenden Vorschriften vorgebeugt bzw. eine solche Umgehung sanktioniert und der Schutz entsandter Arbeitskräfte in der EU verbessert werden sollen.

Obwohl es in dem von der Frau Abgeordneten angesprochenen Fall um EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger geht, gibt es klare Hinweise darauf, dass auch bestimmte Saisonarbeiter aus Nicht-EU-Ländern ausgebeutet werden und unter menschenunwürdigen Bedingungen arbeiten, die ein Risiko für ihre Gesundheit und Sicherheit darstellen können. Deswegen hat die Kommission im Juli 2010 einen Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über die Bedingungen für die Einreise und den Aufenthalt von Drittstaatsangehörigen zwecks Ausübung einer saisonalen Beschäftigung ([3]) vorgelegt. Der Vorschlag wird derzeit vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat in erster Lesung erörtert.

4. Die Kommission hat über die Strukturfonds finanzielle Unterstützung zur Verbesserung der Verwaltungskapazitäten in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Verfügung gestellt. Grundsätzlich sind für die Durchführung und ordnungsgemäße Anwendung von Richtlinien und Verordnungen der EU jedoch die Mitgliedstaaten zuständig.

([1]) KOM(2012)131 endg. vom 21. März 2012.
([2]) Richtlinie 96/71/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 1996 über die Entsendung von Arbeitnehmern im Rahmen der Erbringung von Dienstleistungen, ABl. L 18 vom 21.1.1997, S. 1.
([3]) KOM(2010)379 endg. vom 13 Juli 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000205/13
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Exploitation of workers in the mushroom industry in the Netherlands

Fresh cases are being reported across Europe where workers are being employed illegally in conditions that fall far below the minimum standards for wages, social security and accommodation.

This specific example concerns mushroom picking in the Netherlands, which is the second largest mushroom producer in the EU. Polish and Bulgarian workers in particular are being systematically exploited in the Dutch mushroom industry. Low pay, poor accommodation, the creation of dependency and intimidation by employers are everyday occurrences. The Dutch Minister for Social Affairs and Employment has compared the situation to human trafficking and working conditions in the sex industry. Shockingly, 70% of Dutch mushrooms are harvested under similar poor working conditions.

Initial indications of these practices came to public notice seven years ago. Regrettably, it has proved impossible to prevent abuse by carrying out labour inspections, since workers are intimidated and will not talk in the presence of inspectors. Inspections are also systematically circumvented by means of management tricks and false accounting.

1. Is the Commission aware that there are huge problems in the Member States affecting both seconded and seasonal workers?

2. What specific steps will the Commission take to improve the atrocious social situation of seconded and seasonal workers?

3. Has the Commission taken action in the past to tackle these problems?

4. What action will the Commission take in the short term to ensure that Member States guarantee minimum conditions in terms of pay, social security and accommodation for workers in these situations, thereby providing a degree of legal certainty?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the points raised by the Honourable Member regarding posted workers and seasonal workers.

2 and 3. On 21 March 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal ([1]) for a directive on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC ([2]) with the aim of preventing and sanctioning the circumvention of the applicable rules and improving the protection of posted workers in the EU.

Although the case raised by the Honourable Member concerns EU nationals, there is significant evidence that certain non-EU seasonal workers also face exploitation and sub-standard working conditions which may threaten their health and safety. That is why the Commission presented a proposal ([3]) in July 2010 for a directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment. It is currently before Parliament and the Council for the first reading.

4. The Commission has made financial support available via the Structural Funds in order to enhance administrative capacity in the Member States. However, the implementation and correct application of EU directives and regulations are a Member State competence.

([1]) COM(2012) 131 final of 21 March 2012.
([2]) Directive 96/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services, OJ L 18, 21.1.1997.
([3]) COM(2010) 379 final of 13 July 2010.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000206/13
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(10 de janeiro de 2013)

Assunto: Resposta a cenários de catástrofes naturais: formação dos funcionários das regiões ultraperiféricas

É sabido, que os Açores, uma região ultraperiférica de origem vulcânica, sofre de um elevado grau de probabilidade de catástrofe natural, a que acresce o alto risco de acidentes sísmicos, uma vez que está situado em 3 placas tectónicas. Tendo em conta as particulares necessidades de uma região isolada, é importante assegurar uma cooperação reforçada em intervenções de socorro da proteção civil, sempre que estejam em causa emergências graves ou ameaças iminentes. A preparação dos Serviços de Proteção Civil para estas situações e a permanente atualização dos conhecimentos dos seus funcionários através do intercâmbio de ideias com os seus homólogos são fundamentais.

Sabendo-se que o mecanismo de proteção civil da UE organiza diversas ações com estes objetivos, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Quantos exercícios ou atividades de formação, e de que tipo, são organizados, por ano, pelo mecanismo de proteção civil da UE?

2. Quais os pedidos de assistência apresentados pelas autoridades regionais dos Açores? E para que fins?

3. Quais são as condições de acesso dos funcionários das regiões ultraperiféricas aos exercícios ou atividades de formação organizados pelo mecanismo de proteção civil da UE? Por quem são suportados os custos?

4. Qual a percentagem de participação de funcionários dos Açores nos exercícios ou atividades de formação organizados pelo mecanismo de proteção civil da UE?

5. Estão identificadas as necessidades específicas das regiões ultraperiféricas, designadamente dos Açores, para reação às situações de emergência?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(1 de março de 2013)

1) O programa de formação do mecanismo de proteção civil da UE abrange não apenas cursos de formação mas também exercícios conjuntos e um programa de intercâmbio. Realizam-se anualmente cerca de 46 cursos de formação.

2) Os pedidos dos Açores devem passar pela autoridade nacional de proteção civil portuguesa (ANPC), mas, até à data, não foi apresentado qualquer pedido.

3) Para cada ciclo de cursos de formação, o número total de lugares é dividido entre Estados participantes e organizações externas, com base nas necessidades de formação comunicadas e na dimensão do país. Cada Estado participante nomeou um coordenador nacional da formação, que é responsável pela identificação e designação dos peritos que deverão participar nos cursos de formação. No caso de Portugal, essa responsabilidade é da ANPC.

O contratante que organiza o curso cobre todos os custos respeitantes aos formandos dos Estados participantes. Os cursos são financiados pelo orçamento da UE e envolvem um procedimento de concurso público.

4) Dado que são as autoridades nacionais de proteção civil que procedem à designação dos participantes nos cursos de formação e nos exercícios, a Comissão não dispõe de uma repartição por região.

5) A principal função do mecanismo acima referido é facilitar a cooperação no quadro das intervenções de socorro da proteção civil em situações de emergência grave que possam exigir medidas urgentes de resposta, em conformidade com o princípio da subsidiariedade.

Por conseguinte, compete aos Estados participantes, e não à Comissão, identificar as necessidades específicas de resposta a situações de emergência.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000206/13
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Natural disaster response: training workers in the outermost regions

The Azores, an outermost region of volcanic origin, is highly likely to experience a natural disaster and has a high risk of seismic activity, since it is located above three tectonic plates. Given the specific needs of isolated regions, it is important to ensure enhanced cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions, where serious emergencies or imminent threats are concerned. It is vital to prepare the Civil Protection Services for such eventualities and to continuously update workers' knowledge through ideas exchanges with their counterparts.

As the EU Civil Protection Mechanism organises various activities to help achieve these aims, I would ask the Commission:

1. How many training exercises and activities are organised each year by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and what do they entail?

2. What assistance requests have been submitted by the Azores regional authorities? What do they aim to achieve?

3. What access do workers in the outermost regions have to training exercises and activities organised by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism? Who bears the costs of these exercises/activities?

4. What percentage of workers in the Azores participate in training exercises and activities organised by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism?

5. Has the Commission identified the specific emergency response needs of the outermost regions, specifically of the Azores?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

1. The training programme of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism involves not just training courses but also joint exercises and an exchange programme. About 46 training courses are held each year.

2. Any request from the Azores would be made through the Portuguese National Authority for Civil Protection (ANPC) and, to date, none has ever been made.

3. For each cycle of training courses, the total number of places is divided between the Participating States and external organisations, based on the reported training needs of the country as well as the size of the country. Each Participating State has appointed a national training coordinator, responsible for identifying and nominating experts to attend the training courses. In the case of Portugal, this responsibility lies with the ANPC.

All costs for participants from Participating States are covered by the contractor organising the course. The courses are funded from the EU budget and involve an open procurement procedure.

4. As the nominations for training courses and exercises are made by the national civil protection authorities, the Commission does not possess a breakdown by region.

5. The main role of the Mechanism is to facilitate cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions in the event of major emergencies which may require urgent response actions, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.

It is therefore the responsibility of the Participating States and not the Commission to identify the specific emergency response needs.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000207/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Posible coordinación en la rebaja de precios intra-semanal de los carburantes

Algunos economistas han detectado que, en los últimos seis años, los precios de venta del gasóleo A (o diésel) y la gasolina Euro Super 95 han sido significativamente más bajos los lunes que los otros días de la semana.

Se da la circunstancia de que el Gobierno español emitió una orden del Ministerio de Industria en el año 2007 por la cual las petroleras españolas deben enviar con periodicidad semanal el precio de los distintos carburantes correspondiendo con el primer día laborable de la semana, es decir, el precio de los lunes.

El pasado mes de julio, la Comisión Nacional de la Competencia publicó un informe en el que puso de manifiesto la falta de competencia en el sector y el hecho de que los precios antes de impuestos y los márgenes de las petroleras en España se situaban entre los más altos de la Unión Europea. Desde la publicación de dicho informe, el llamado «efecto lunes» es entre tres y cuatro veces mayor y ha pasado de una desviación media del −0,28 % al −0,79 % para la gasolina y del −0,20 % al −0,64 % para el gasóleo.

A la luz de lo anterior:

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de estas desviaciones de precio intra-semanales recurrentes para los carburantes? ¿A qué los atribuye?

2. ¿Investigará la Comisión si podría haber una coordinación entre los distintos actores del mercado para facilitar una rebaja de precios los días lunes?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000210/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Posible manipulación de precios en el sector de los carburantes

Analizando los datos de inflación año a año entre noviembre de 2011 y noviembre de 2012, se desprende que el precio de los carburantes antes de impuestos se desvió notablemente en España de la media europea y fue de +3,9 % para la gasolina y −1,1 % para el diesel ([1]).

Sin embargo, el precio de los carburantes en España se había mantenido muy parecido a la media europea hasta el mes de octubre. Pero en las siete semanas que van hasta el fin del mes de noviembre, la variación ha sido notable. Mientras el precio de la gasolina súper 95 ha perdido 6,5 puntos de media en Europa, la caída en España ha sido del 13,5 %. En el caso del gasóleo, la caída en el Estado español fue del 8,1 % frente al 3,7 % de la media en la zona euro. Distintos analistas y reputados economistas han apuntado a la extrañeza de estos datos[1]. Es a finales de noviembre cuando el Gobierno español fija la inflación interanual aplicada para actualizar las pensiones. Asimismo, la caída del precio de los carburantes ha sido, según el Gobierno, el motivo principal de la caída de la inflación, gracias en especial a que, entre principios de octubre y finales de noviembre, el IPC cayó al 2,9 % desde el 3,5 %.

Una semana después de la fijación del IPC, el precio de la gasolina súper 95 y del gasóleo antes de impuestos subió en España a pesar de que en distintos países europeos, con los cuales el precio español de los carburantes guarda generalmente correlación, han bajado notablemente.

A la luz de lo anterior:

1. ¿Investigará la Comisión si el Gobierno español podría estar implicado en una manipulación puntual de precios en el sector de los carburantes en España?

([1]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=26796

2. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de las declaraciones del Ministro de Industria del Gobierno central en que decía haber requerido poco antes del mes de noviembre a las compañías petroleras para que «arrimaran el hombro» ([2])?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000211/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Posible concertación de la competencia en la venta de carburantes

Analizando los datos de inflación año a año entre noviembre de 2011 y noviembre de 2012, se desprende que el precio de los carburantes antes de impuestos se desvió notablemente en España de la media europea y fue de +3,9 % para la gasolina y −1,1 % para el Diésel ([3]).

Sin embargo, el precio de los carburantes en España se había mantenido muy parecido a la media europea hasta el mes de octubre. Pero en las siete semanas que van hasta el fin del mes de noviembre, la variación ha sido notable. Mientras el precio de la gasolina súper 95 ha perdido 6,5 puntos de media en Europa, la caída en España ha sido del 13,5 %. En el caso del gasóleo, la caída en el Estado español fue del 8,1 % frente al 3,7 % de la media en la zona euro. Distintos analistas y reputados economistas han apuntado a la extrañeza de estos datos [1]. Es a finales de noviembre cuando el Gobierno español fija la inflación interanual aplicada para actualizar las pensiones. Asimismo, la caída del precio de los carburantes ha sido, según el Gobierno, el motivo principal de la caída de la inflación, gracias en especial a que, entre principios de octubre y finales de noviembre, el IPC cayó al 2,9 % desde el 3,5 %.

Una semana después de la fijación del IPC, el precio de la gasolina súper 95 y del gasóleo antes de impuestos subió en España a pesar de que en distintos países europeos, con los cuales el precio español de los carburantes guarda generalmente correlación, han bajado notablemente.

A la luz de lo anterior:

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de estas desviaciones abruptas en el precio de los carburantes en el Estado español? ¿A qué las atribuye?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que detrás de estos cambios cabe la posibilidad de que pudiera haber una acción coordinada de las empresas dedicadas a la distribución y venta de carburantes en España que vulnere la libre competencia?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de marzo de 2013)

La Comisión no está al corriente de las posibles causas de la súbita caída de los precios de los carburantes observada en España y comunicada a los servicios de la Comisión mediante los datos del Boletín Petrolífero semanal correspondientes al período comprendido entre principios de octubre y finales de noviembre de 2012, es decir, cuando el Gobierno español calcula la tasa de inflación interanual utilizada para actualizar las pensiones y las prestaciones sociales. Tampoco ha recibido indicaciones de que las pronunciadas variaciones de los precios del combustible en España puedan ser el resultado de prácticas anticompetitivas de las compañías petroleras o de una supuesta intervención del Gobierno español en relación con los márgenes de las compañías.

La Comisión conoce las asimetrías en el ritmo con que los precios al por menor, antes de impuestos, se ajustan a las variaciones de los precios internacionales de los carburantes, pero nunca ha tenido indicios, directamente o a resultas de las investigaciones nacionales llevadas a cabo hasta el momento ([4]), de que dichas asimetrías puedan haberse debido a prácticas contrarias a la competencia. De hecho, según ha señalado la autoridad nacional de competencia española en sus múltiples informes sobre el sector de los carburantes, pueden existir otras explicaciones de esas asimetrías, tales como la existencia de una estructura oligopolística del mercado, retrasos en el refinamiento de los combustibles combinados con unas existencias limitadas de combustible o una transparencia insuficiente de los precios al consumo. Estas explicaciones tienen que ver con unos mercados en que la competencia efectiva es débil y en relación con los cuales los Estados miembros podrían considerar, por lo tanto, la supresión de los obstáculos existentes en el sector.

No obstante, la Comisión no dudará en actuar, por sí misma o en coordinación con la autoridad de competencia española, si recibe suficiente información que indique una conducta colusoria o un comportamiento abusivo de las distintas empresas del mercado del combustible, sea por propia iniciativa, sea por presiones del Gobierno.

([2]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/12/14/actualidad/1355485876_608289.html
([3]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=26796
([4]) Véase la investigación más reciente de la OFT en: http://www.oft.gov.uk/OFTwork/markets-work/othermarketswork/road-fuel-CFI/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000207/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Possible collaboration on one-day-a-week fall in fuel prices

Some economists have noticed that the prices of diesel and Euro Super 95 petrol in the past six weeks have been significantly lower on Mondays than on other days of the week ([1]).

In 2007 the Spanish Government published an order from the Industry Ministry stipulating that Spanish petroleum companies must provide weekly reports on the price of various types of fuel on the first working day of every week, i.e. their price on Monday.

Last July, the National Competition Commission published a report highlighting the lack of competition in this sector and the fact that petroleum companies' pre-tax prices and margins were amongst the highest in the European Union. The so-called 'Monday effect' is now three to four times greater than when that report was published, having risen from an average of -0.28 % for petrol and -0.20 % for diesel, to its current average of -0.79 % for petrol and -0.64 % for diesel.

1. Is the Commission aware that fuel prices repeatedly alter like this within the week? What does it see as the cause?

2. Will the Commission investigate whether market operators are collaborating to help prices fall on Mondays?

Question for written answer E-000210/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Possible price manipulation in the fuel sector

Analysis of year-on-year inflation figures for November 2011 to November 2012 leads to the conclusion that pre-tax fuel prices in Spain differed widely from the European average: +3.9 % for petrol and -1.1 % for diesel ([2]).

However, fuel prices in Spain had remained very close to the European average up until October 2012. But there was a notable change during the seven weeks prior to the end of November. While the price of Super 95 petrol lost 6.5 points on average in Europe, it fell in Spain by 13.5 %. Diesel prices in Spain fell by 8.1 % as opposed to a 3.7 % average in the euro area. Various analysts and reputable economists have commented that these figures are surprising[1]. The end of November is when the Spanish Government calculates the year-on-year inflation rate used to update pensions and benefits. According to the Government, the drop in inflation could primarily be attributed to the fall in fuel prices, and especially to the fact that between the beginning of October and the end of November the RPI fell from 3.5 % to 2.9 %.

One week after the RPI had been set, the pre-tax price of Super 95 petrol and of diesel rose in Spain, even though fuel prices in various European countries, which Spanish fuel prices are normally in line with, had fallen considerably.

1. Will the Commission investigate whether the Spanish Government could be involved in occasionally manipulating prices in the fuel sector in Spain?

2. Is the Commission aware that the Ministry of Industry is said to have asked petroleum companies shortly before November 2012 'to lend a hand' ([3])?

([1]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=27073.
([2]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=26796.
([3]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/12/14/actualidad/1355485876_608289.html

Question for written answer E-000211/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Possible competition agreement on fuel sales

Analysis of year-on-year inflation figures for November 2011 to November 2012 leads to the conclusion that pre-tax fuel prices in Spain differed widely from the European average: +3.9 % for petrol and -1.1 % for diesel ([4]).

However, fuel prices in Spain had remained very close to the European average up until October 2012. But there was a notable change during the seven weeks prior to the end of November. While the price of Super 95 petrol lost 6.5 points on average in Europe, it fell in Spain by 13.5 %. Diesel prices in Spain fell by 8.1 % as opposed to a 3.7 % average in the euro area. Various analysts and reputable economists have commented that these figures are surprising[1]. The end of November is when the Spanish Government calculates the year-on-year inflation rate used to update pensions and benefits. According to the Government, the drop in inflation could primarily be attributed to the fall in fuel prices, and especially to the fact that between the beginning of October and the end of November the RPI fell from 3.5 % to 2.9 %.

One week after the RPI had been set, the pre-tax price of Super 95 petrol and of diesel rose in Spain, even though fuel prices in various European countries, which Spanish fuel prices are normally in line with, had fallen considerably.

1. Is the Commission aware of these sharp variations in fuel prices in Spain? What would it say is the cause?

2. Does the Commission believe that collusion by companies distributing and selling fuel in Spain may lie behind these price changes, interfering thereby with free competition?

Joint answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the possible causes of the sudden fall in fuel prices observed in Spain and reported to the Commission Services through the weekly *Oil Bulletin* data between beginning of October and end of November 2012, i.e. when the Spanish Government calculates the year-on-year inflation rate used to update pensions and benefits, nor has it received any indications that sharp variations in fuel prices in Spain might be the result of anticompetitive practices by oil companies or of an alleged intervention by the Spanish Government vis-à-vis the oil companies' margins.

The Commission is aware of the asymmetries in the speed at which pre-tax retail prices adjust to variations in international fuel prices, but it has never had, directly or through the outcome of national investigations conducted so far ([5]), indications that such asymmetries could have been the result of anticompetitive practices. Indeed, as pointed out by the Spanish NCA in its numerous reports on the Spanish fuel sector, there can be other explanations for these asymmetries, such as the existence of an oligopolistic market structure, fuel refining delays combined with limited fuel stocks or insufficient price transparency for consumers. These explanations are associated with markets where effective competition is weak, and where, therefore, Member States may consider removing existing barriers in the sector.

Nonetheless, the Commission would not hesitate to act, either by itself or in coordination with the Spanish Competition Authority, if it received sufficient information pointing to collusive behaviour of undertakings or abusive behaviour of individual companies on the Spanish fuel market, independently or following government pressure.

([4]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=26796
([5]) See, most recently, the investigation by the OFT, available at: http://www.oft.gov.uk/OFTwork/markets-work/othermarketswork/road-fuel-CFI/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000208/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — avanzata di Al-Qaeda in Mali

L'8 gennaio 2013 il Daily Telegraph del Regno Unito informa che il Mali potrebbe cadere nelle mani di Al-Qaeda nel Maghreb islamico (AQIM). Nel 2012 AQIM prende il controllo di tre regioni settentrionali che si estendono per 300 000 miglia quadrate. Attualmente sta operando per conquistare maggiore territorio. Centinaia di combattenti sono mobilitati dalla città settentrionale di Timbuctu per dirigersi al sud e affrontare l'esercito nazionale del Mali.

Il ministro della difesa, il colonnello Yamoussa Camara, afferma a Radio France International che «elementi Jihadisti» sono radunati in forza. Hanno attaccato Konna città controllata dal governo nel Mali centrale. Se questa città cade, AQIM sarebbe soltanto a 40 miglia dall'ultimo presidio che si frappone fra loro e la capitale Bamako. Ciò lascerebbe aperta la strada e permetterebbe loro di muoversi nel resto del Mali.

I diplomatici a Bamako dubitano della capacità dei militari di resistere a un assalto all'ultimo presidio nella città di Mopti. Il Consiglio di Sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite ha autorizzato il dispiegamento di una forza africana per conquistare il nord. Il piano prevede 3000 truppe provenienti da altri paesi africani per sostenere militarmente il Mali nel riunificare il paese.

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sull'avanzamento di Jihadisti in Mali?

2. Quali misure intende adottare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al fine di evitare che i Jihadisti conquistino la capitale del Mali Bamako?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha condannato espressamente il ricorso alla forza dei gruppi armati che occupano il nord del paese.

L'evoluzione positiva sul fronte operativo in seguito al ritiro delle truppe armate verso nord pone ora in primo piano problemi non più legati alla difesa di Bamako, ma alla stabilizzazione sotto il profilo politico e della sicurezza delle regioni liberate.

Alla luce della situazione attuale e in linea con la risoluzione 2085 del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni unite, l'UE ha accolto con favore l'intervento francese su richiesta malese e si impegna a sostenere la missione africana MISMA (finanziamento di 50 milioni di euro a favore del Fondo per la Pace in Africa) e la riforma delle forze armate malesi (dispiegamento delle forze nel quadro della missione EUTM Mali).

Al contempo l'UE auspica una ripresa sul piano politico, in particolare il rilancio di un dialogo nazionale che dia voce, su base inclusiva, a tutte le comunità del nord del paese, compresi i gruppi armati che scegliessero di abbandonare esplicitamente la via della violenza, del terrorismo e delle aspirazioni secessioniste.

In quest'ottica l'UE si appresta a riprendere gradualmente la cooperazione di fatto sospesa in seguito al colpo di Stato. Essa si è inoltre impegnata a elaborare misure d'urgenza specifiche (rafforzamento delle azioni umanitarie, preparazione delle elezioni, appoggio alla sicurezza interna, in particolare in tema di lotta contro il terrorismo).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000208/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Al-Qaeda advances in Mali

On 8 January 2013, the UK *Daily Telegraph* reported that Mali could fall into the hands of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). In 2012, AQIM took control of three northern regions covering 300 000 square miles. At the moment they are working to capture more territory. Hundreds of fighters have been mobilised from the northern city of Timbuktu, in order to head south to confront Mali's national army.

The defence minister, Colonel Yamoussa Camara, told Radio France International that 'jihadist elements' had gathered in strength. They have attacked the government-held town of Konna in central Mali. If this town falls, AQIM would only be 40 miles from the last garrison that stands between them and the capital Bamako. This would leave the main road open, and allow them to move into the rest of Mali.

Diplomats in Bamako doubt the military's ability to withstand an assault on the last garrison in the town of Mopti. The United Nations Security Council has authorised the deployment of an African force to capture the north. The plan calls for 3 000 troops from other African countries to support Mali's military in reuniting the country.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative on the advancement of jihadists in Mali?

2. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take in order to prevent jihadists from moving into the Malian capital of Bamako?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(19 mars 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a condamné clairement le choix des groupes armés occupant le nord du pays à recourir à la force.

L'évolution positive de la situation opérationnelle — reflux des groupes armés vers le nord — pose désormais le problème non plus en termes de défense de Bamako mais plutôt en termes de préparation de la stabilisation politique et sécuritaire des régions libérées.

Face à cette situation, et en ligne avec la résolution 2085 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, l'UE a salué l'intervention française en réponse à une demande malienne et s'implique dans le soutien au déploiement de la force africaine MISMA (soutien de 50 millions d'Euros sur la Facilité de Paix) et à la réforme de l'armée malienne (déploiement de la mission EUTM Mali).

Dans le même temps, l'UE appelle à la relance du processus politique, en particulier la reprise d'un dialogue national associant selon une base inclusive l'ensemble des communautés du nord du pays, y compris les groupes armés qui rompraient explicitement avec la violence, le terrorisme et les aspirations sécessionnistes.

Dans cette perspective, l'UE se prépare à la reprise graduelle de sa coopération, gelée de fait depuis le coup d'Etat, et est en outre attelée à élaborer des mesures d'urgences spécifiques (renforcement de l'action humanitaire, préparation des élections, appui en termes de sécurité intérieure notamment contre-terrorisme).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000209/13
à la Commission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE)
(10 janvier 2013)

Objet: Desserte des îles et indemnisation en cas de défaillance des armements maritimes

La législation européenne a été renforcée pour préserver les droits des voyageurs au sein de l'Union européenne par voie maritime (règlement (UE) nº 1177/2010 du 24 novembre 2010 applicable au 18 décembre 2012).

La Commission peut-elle confirmer que cette législation prendra en compte le caractère spécifique du transport de marchandises dans le cadre de la desserte des îles?

En effet, les transporteurs insulaires sont des usagers réguliers des transports maritimes, et les perturbations affectent grandement leurs activités: remorques et chauffeurs immobilisés, contrats de livraison non respectés, clientèle perturbée…

Il est donc nécessaire d'étendre rapidement les dispositions de cette directive aux contraintes particulières que connaissent ces transporteurs.

Qu'est-il prévu à cet égard?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(11 février 2013)

Le champ d'application du règlement (UE) nº 1177/2010 ([1]) est limité au transport de passagers et ne couvre pas le caractère spécifique du transport de marchandises dans le cadre de la desserte des îles.

Ce règlement a été adopté récemment et n'est applicable que depuis le 18 décembre 2012, la Commission n'entend donc pas le modifier dans un avenir proche.

([1]) Règlement (UE) nº 1177/2010 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 24 novembre 2010 concernant les droits des passagers voyageant par mer ou par voie de navigation intérieure et modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 2006/2004 (JO L 334 du 17.12.2010, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000209/13
to the Commission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Transport services to islands and compensation in the event of disruptions to those services

European legislation has been strengthened to protect the rights of passengers when travelling by sea in the European Union (Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 of 24 November 2010, applicable from 18 December 2012).

Can the Commission confirm that the regulation will take account of the specific problems affecting the transport of goods to islands?

Island hauliers depend on maritime transport services, and any disruption to those services seriously hampers their work: lorries and their drivers are stranded, delivery dates are not met, customers are inconvenienced, etc.

There is clearly a need, therefore, to broaden the scope of the aforementioned regulation without delay to cover the specific constraints that island hauliers face.

What action is being proposed?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The scope of application of Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 ([1]) is limited to passenger transport and does not deal with the specific problems affecting the transport of goods to islands.

As that regulation has been adopted recently, and became applicable only as from 18 December 2012, the Commission does not intend to modify it in the near future.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 concerning the rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004, OJ L315, 3.12.2007.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000212/13
adresată Comisiei
Cătălin Sorin Ivan (S&D)
(10 ianuarie 2013)

Subiect: Propunerea pentru Capitala Culturală Europeană

În iulie, Comisia Europeană a lansat o nouă propunere pentru acțiunea Uniunii în favoarea evenimentului „Capitale europene ale culturii" pentru anii 2020-2033, propunere care se află în prezent în dezbatere în Parlamentul European.

În cadrul propunerii se face referire la importanța stabilității politice, care poate avea efecte asupra strategiei, dar și un considerabil impact bugetar (în condițiile în care pregătirea pentru anul în care orașele dețin titlul este de 6 ani). În această perioadă de pregătire a titlului pot interveni schimbări în conducerea de la nivel local, regional și național.

1. Cum crede Comisia că se poate asigura o independență a procesului de candidatură și apoi de pregătire în aceste condiții?

2. Ce măsuri are în vedere pentru a garanta o implicare politică echilibrată, care sa aducă beneficii și care să nu creeze probleme pentru buna desfășurare a procesului?

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(13 februarie 2013)

1. Pentru a asigura independența pe care o menționează domnul deputat, Comisia a propus un nou set de criterii de evaluare a candidaturilor. În comparație cu sistemul actual, aceste criterii sunt mai explicite, pentru a oferi mai multe orientări orașelor în vederea elaborării candidaturilor lor pentru deținerea acestui titlu timp de 1 an și în vederea integrării proiectului lor într-o strategie pe termen lung; de asemenea, criteriile vizează aspecte mai ușor de măsurat, în scopul de a ajuta grupul de experți independenți în domeniul culturii în ceea ce privește selecția și monitorizarea orașelor.

2. Sprijinul politic este fundamental, deoarece un oraș nu poate avea un proiect credibil fără finanțare publică substanțială. În plus, este important ca orașele să se bucure de o largă susținere din partea mai multor partide, în special la nivel local, deoarece în cursul perioadei de 6 până la 7 ani dintre momentul prezentării candidaturilor și anul deținerii titlului vor avea loc alegeri la diferite niveluri teritoriale, ceea ce ar putea duce la instalarea unei noi echipe la nivelul orașului, regiunii sau la nivel național. Pe de altă parte, este, de asemenea, esențial să se respecte independența abordării artistice a echipei responsabile de implementarea proiectului, pentru a proteja credibilitatea și calitatea culturală a evenimentului. Pentru a asigura o abordare echilibrată, propunerea Comisiei introduce criterii explicite în acest sens [la articolul 5, la rubrica „Capacitatea de a susține proiectul" (Capacity to deliver) și „Gestionare" (*Management*)] și stabilește condiții pentru atribuirea premiului Melina Mercouri, cum ar fi respectarea tuturor angajamentelor asumate în cursul fazei de depunere a candidaturilor cu privire la buget și la conținutul programului cultural în ansamblu și respectarea independenței echipei responsabile de conținutul artistic.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000212/13
to the Commission
Cătălin Sorin Ivan (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Recommendation regarding European Capitals of Culture

In July 2012, the Commission launched a fresh proposal for EU action in respect of European Capitals of Culture over the period 2020-2033, which is currently being debated in the European Parliament.

In this context, reference is made to the importance of political stability, this being something which might affect the strategy itself, as well as having considerable budgetary implications (given that a six-year preparation period is necessary on the part of cities which will hold the title for one year). During the preparatory period, changes might occur at local, regional and national government level.

1. In view of this, how does the Commission consider it possible to ensure an independent approach to application procedures and the necessary preparations?

2. What measures is it envisaging to guarantee balanced political involvement, so as to ensure that matters proceed smoothly and avoid creating problems in this connection?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

1. To ensure the independent approach the Honourable Member is calling for, the Commission proposed a new set of criteria for the assessment of applications. Compared to the current scheme, the criteria have been made more explicit, in order to give increased guidance to cities to develop their application for the year-title and embed their project within a long-term strategy, and more measurable in order to help the panel of independent cultural experts in the selection and monitoring of cities.

2. Political support is fundamental as a city cannot have a credible project without substantial public funding. Furthermore it is important for cities to have broad cross-party support, especially at local level, since during the 6- to 7-year period between the bidding stage and the title-year, elections will take place at various territorial levels, potentially leading to a new team in office at city, region or national level. On the other hand, it is also crucial that the artistic independence of the implementing team be respected in order to protect the credibility and cultural quality of the event. To ensure a balanced approach, the Commission's proposal introduces explicit criteria in this regard (in Article 5, under 'capacity to deliver' and 'management') and makes the award of the Melina Mercouri prize dependant on various conditions such as honouring in full the commitments made during the bidding phase with regard to the budget and the content of the overall cultural programme and respecting the artistic team's independence.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000213/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(10. januar 2013)

Om: De tre faser ved optagelse af nye lande i euroen

Vil Kommissionen i forbindelse med nye medlemslandes optagelse i euroen redegøre for, hvordan de tre faser forløber, samt hvad de indeholder, og vil Kommissionen herunder specielt oplyse, hvad der præcis forstås som første, anden og tredje fase i relation til de EU-lande, der ikke har euroen som valuta, samt for hvert af de enkelte lande oplyse, hvilken fase de befinder sig i ([1])?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Olli Rehn
(20. marts 2013)

De tre faser beskriver forløbet af oprettelsen af ØMU'en, som blev fuldbragt ved indtrædelsen af tredje fase den 1. januar 1999. Da de nye medlemslande derefter blev optaget i Den Europæiske Union, trådte de ligeledes ind i den tredje fase som medlemslande med dispensation med hensyn til indførelse af euroen. I mellemtiden har Slovenien, Malta, Cypern, Slovakiet og Estland indført euroen. Dermed deltager alle medlemslande i ØMU'ens tredje fase (enten med eller uden dispensation) bortset fra Det Forenede Kongerige og Danmark, som vælger at gøre brug af deres særlige opt-out-mulighed.

Hvad angår medlemslande med dispensation med hensyn til indførelse af euroen (Bulgarien, Tjekkiet, Ungarn, Letland, Litauen, Polen, Rumænien og Sverige), foreskriver traktaten om Den Europæiske Unions funktionsmåde (TEUF) ikke tidspunktet for indførelse af euroen og giver dermed hvert medlemsland med dispensation tid til at foretage de nødvendige justeringer og forberedelser til dets indtræden i euroområdet. Hvert andet år, eller ved anmodning fra et medlemsland med dispensation, vurderer Kommissionen medlemslandets overholdelse af kriterierne i artikel 140, stk. 1 i TEUF. Den seneste konvergensrapport blev vedtaget i maj 2012.

([1]) Der henvises som baggrund til Den Europæiske Centralbanks hjemmeside: https://www.ecb.int/ecb/history/emu/html/index.da.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000213/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: The three stages for new countries to join the euro

With respect to new Member States joining the euro, can the Commission say how the three stages proceed and what they involve? Can the Commission also specifically state what exactly is understood by the first, second and third stages in relation to those EU Member States that do not have the euro as their currency, and indicate at which stage each individual country can currently be found ([1])?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2013)

The three stages described the steps in the process of creation of the EMU, which was completed by entering into the third stage on 1 January 1999. Thereafter, when joining the EU, new Member States have also entered the third stage of EMU as Member States with a derogation from euro adoption. In the meantime, Slovenia, Malta, Cyprus, Slovakia and Estonia have adopted the euro. Hence, all current EU Member States participate in the third stage of EMU (either with or without derogation), apart from the UK and DK which have opt-out clauses.

As far as Member States with a derogation from euro adoption are concerned (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Sweden), the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) does not prescribe the timing of euro adoption and allows time for each Member State with a derogation to make the necessary adjustment and preparations for euro area entry. The Commission assesses once every two years or at the request of a Member State with a derogation its compliance with the criteria listed in the article 140(1) of the TFEU. The latest regular Convergence Report was adopted in May 2012.

([1]) cf. the European Central Bank's website: https://www.ecb.int/ecb/history/emu/html/index.en.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000214/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 janvier 2013)

Objet: Dérives haineuses et/ou racistes de propos sur Twitter

Depuis plusieurs semaines, les jeunes utilisateurs de Twitter propulsent ces sujets de conversation en tête des thèmes les plus discutés du réseau social. Si certains messages sont inoffensifs, nombre d'entre eux dépassent la ligne rouge et ont choqué nombre d'internautes et d'associations représentatives.

De plus en plus souvent, au fur et à mesure que le succès de Twitter augmente, les messages à caractère haineux ou racistes augmentent aussi sur cette plateforme d'échanges.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission par rapport à cela?

2. La Commission a-t-elle déjà rencontré les représentants de Twitter? Ce problème a-t-il été évoqué? Des pistes de réflexion ont-elles vu le jour?

Twitter nous a expliqué qu'il n'entendait pas mettre en place de politique de modération systématique des messages sur son site, au nom de la liberté d'expression, ce qui est bien compréhensible. Il a ajouté: «Nous supprimerons certains contenus a posteriori seulement lorsque cela nous sera demandé par une autorité judiciaire». Si ces contenus contreviennent à une législation locale, ces derniers seront illisibles depuis ce pays, mais pas à l'extérieur.

3. Récemment, Twitter a ainsi empêché ses utilisateurs allemands d'accéder au compte d'un groupe néo-nazi à la demande de la magistrature du pays. Mais les utilisateurs étrangers pouvaient toujours y accéder. La Commission ne pense-t-elle pas que cela est insuffisant? Dans le cas mentionné ici, des groupuscules ou les idées nazies qu'ils véhiculent devraient être inaccessibles au-delà des frontières allemandes.

4. Le réseau social aurait néanmoins fait une exception à la règle citée ci-dessus en acceptant fin octobre de supprimer plusieurs twitts antisémites à la demande de l'Union des étudiants juifs de France. La Commission pourrait-elle suggérer à Twitter le retrait de propos racistes ou haineux sans le recours systématique à l'appareil juridique? La Commission pourrait-elle travailler à des alternatives à ce recours qui agréeraient toutes les parties?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(28 février 2013)

La Commission condamne avec force toutes les manifestations de racisme, de xénophobie et de l'intolérance qui y est associée.

La Commission lutte contre les discours haineux à caractère raciste ou xénophobe sur la base de la décision-cadre 2008/913/JAI, qui pénalise l'incitation publique intentionnelle à la violence ou à la haine fondée sur la race, la couleur, la religion ou l'origine nationale ou ethnique ([1]). De telles infractions peuvent être commises par diffusion ou distribution publique d'écrits, d'images ou d'autres supports, y compris sur l'internet. Ladite décision-cadre prévoit aussi une responsabilité des personnes morales. Il appartient aux autorités nationales, y compris judiciaires, d'enquêter sur les situations de racisme ou de xénophobie et d'engager des poursuites contre les auteurs d'infractions en la matière.

En outre, la directive 2010/13/UE ([2]) interdit, dans tous les services de médias audiovisuels, toute incitation à la haine fondée sur la race, le sexe, la religion ou la nationalité. La responsabilité de l'application de cette interdiction relève avant tout de l'État membre dans lequel le service est réputé être établi. Un État de réception peut limiter la réception et la retransmission d'un tel service si celui-ci enfreint les normes nationales en matière de discours haineux, en notifiant au préalable ces mesures à la Commission.

([1]) Décision-cadre 2008/913/JAI du Conseil du 28 novembre 2008 sur la lutte contre certaines formes et manifestations de racisme et de xénophobie au moyen du droit pénal, JO L 328 du 6.12.2008.

([2]) Directive 2010/13/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil visant à la coordination de certaines dispositions législatives, réglementaires et administratives des États membres relatives à la fourniture de services de médias audiovisuels (directive «Services de médias audiovisuels»), JO L 95 du 15.4.2010.

Conformément à la directive 2000/31/CE (directive sur le commerce électronique), les services d'hébergement doivent, pour ne pas être tenus responsables d'activités ou d'informations illicites qu'ils hébergent, agir promptement dès le moment où ils ont connaissance de tels contenus illicites. La Cour de justice de l'Union européenne a précisé, dans son arrêt du 12 juillet 2011 dans l'affaire C-324/09, que la connaissance d'informations illicites ne devait pas forcément se fonder sur une injonction judiciaire et a jugé, dans son arrêt du 16 février 2012 dans l'affaire C-360/10, qu'un réseau social était un prestataire de services d'hébergement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000214/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Hateful and/or racist comments on Twitter

Over the last few weeks, the issue of abusive comments has been trending on Twitter as a result of the many posts published by young users on the social network. Although many messages posted on the site are harmless, some users go too far, publishing comments that have shocked Internet users and special interest groups.

As Twitter becomes increasingly popular, the number of hateful and racist messages appearing on the networking site is rising all the time.

1. What is the Commission's response to this?

2. Has the Commission held meetings with Twitter representatives? Was this issue raised? Were any ideas on how to tackle it put forward?

Twitter has understandably stated that it does not intend to begin systematically screening the messages posted on its site, citing freedom of expression. The site's representatives also said: 'We will remove specific posts after they have been published, but only if we are requested to do so by a legal authority.' If content published on the site breaches the law in a given country, it will only be made inaccessible in that country.

3. Twitter recently blocked access to a neo-Nazi group's account for users in Germany after being requested to do so by the German authorities. Users in other countries may still access the page, however. Does the Commission not regard this response as inadequate? In this case, access to the neo-Nazi group's account and to the Nazi beliefs it promotes should have been blocked for users outside Germany as well.

4. The social network has, however, made an exception to the rule quoted above by agreeing to a request from the Union of Jewish Students in France to remove a number of anti-Semitic tweets. Could the Commission suggest to Twitter that it removes racist or hateful comments without legal action being required every time? Could the Commission propose alternative approaches that would satisfy all the parties involved?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission strongly condemns all manifestations of racism and xenophobia and related forms of intolerance.

The Commission combats racist and xenophobic hate speech through Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, which penalises the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred on the basis of race, colour, religion, or national or ethnic origin ([1]). These offences can be committed through the public dissemination or distribution of tracts, pictures or other material, including on the Internet. The framework Decision provides also for the liability of legal persons. It is for national authorities, including the courts, to investigate situations of racism or xenophobia and to prosecute the perpetrators of such offences.

Additionally, Directive 2010/13/EU ([2]) prohibits any incitement to hatred based on grounds of race, sex, religion or nationality in all audiovisual media services. Responsibility for enforcing the ban primarily resides with the Member State where the service is deemed to be established. A receiving State may limit its reception and re-transmission if it violates national hate speech standards, which requires prior notification to the Commission.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008.

([2]) Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive), OJ L 95, 15.4.2010.

According to Directive 2000/31/EC (E-commerce Directive) providers of 'hosting services', in order to benefit from a liability exemption for illegal activity or information that they host, should expeditiously act once they obtain knowledge or awareness of such illegal content. In Case C-324/09 of 12 July 2011, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) clarified that awareness of illegal content does not necessarily need to be obtained through a court order. In Case C-360/10 of 16 February 2012, the CJEU held that a social network offers such a hosting service.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000215/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Nedostatočná lokalizácia volajúceho na tiesňovú linku 112

V smernici 2009/136/ES o univerzálnej službe je okrem iného uvedené, že príslušné regulačné orgány stanovia kritériá pre presnosť a spoľahlivosť informácií vzťahujúcich sa na polohu a presnú lokalizáciu volajúceho. Kritériá pre určenie polohy volajúceho na tiesňovú linku 112 boli určené a stanovené pre Turecko, Portugalsko, USA a Kanadu.

Môže Komisia bližšie, detailnejšie objasniť zámer takejto podrobnej a presnej lokalizácie v Európe v prípade volajúceho na tiesňovú linku 112?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(14. februára 2013)

Smernica o univerzálnej službe (článok 26 odsek 5) obsahuje povinnosť pre podniky poskytujúce hovor, aby bola informácia o lokalizácii volajúceho k dispozícii orgánu spracúvajúcemu tiesňové volania. V tom istom odseku sa stanovuje, že príslušné regulačné orgány stanovia kritériá presnosti a spoľahlivosti poskytovaných informácií o polohe volajúceho. V dôsledku toho je na členských štátoch, aby zaviedli kritériá určenia polohy volajúceho. Členské štáty oznámili vo vykonávacej správe výboru COCOM, ktorá sa uverejňuje každoročne 11. februára, že prevažná väčšina podnikov poskytuje lokalizačnú značku (cell ID) ako informáciu o polohe volajúceho. Priemysel medzitým oznámil existenciu technologických riešení, ktoré by mohli poskytnúť presnejšie určovanie polohy. Komisii však neprislúcha uložiť konkrétne technologické riešenie.

Moje útvary sú v súčasnosti v rámci diskusií s expertmi členských štátov s cieľom podpory šírenia najlepších riešení pre zavádzanie prísnejších kritérií určenia polohy volajúceho. Časový rámec na vymedzenie takýchto kritérií presnosti a spoľahlivosti závisí od úspechu týchto diskusií a odhodlania členských štátov zefektívniť svoje tiesňové služby v prospech svojich občanov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000215/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Insufficient localisation of calls on the 112 emergency line

Directive 2009/136/EC on universal service states, among other things, that the competent regulatory bodies shall set criteria for the accuracy and reliability of information relating to the position and precise localisation of callers. The criteria for determining the position of a caller on the 112 emergency line have been specified and set for Turkey, Portugal, the United States and Canada.

Can the Commission clarify in a closer, more detailed way the plan for similarly detailed and precise localisation in Europe in respect of callers on the 112 emergency line?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Universal Service Directive (Article 26 paragraph 5) contains the obligation for undertakings providing the call to make caller location available to the authority handling emergency calls. The same paragraph provides that competent regulatory authorities shall lay down criteria for the accuracy and reliability of the caller location information provided. Consequently, it is for Member States to impose caller location criteria. Member States reported in the COCOMimplementation report, which is published every year on 11 February, that the vast majority of undertakings provide cell ID as caller location. Meanwhile, the industry reported the existence of technological solutions which could provide more accurate positioning. However, the Commission is not in the position to impose a particular technological solution.

Currently my services are in discussions with Member States' experts in view of helping to disseminate the best solutions for implementing more stringent caller location criteria. The timeframe for defining such accuracy and reliability criteria is dependent on the success of these discussions and the commitment of Member States to make their emergency services more efficient for the benefit of their citizens.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000216/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Tieňové bankovníctvo

Európska komisia predložila ešte na začiatku roka 2012 zelenú knihu o tieňovom bankovníctve, v ktorej sa zameriava na potenciálne riziká tieňového bankového systému v EÚ a na spôsob, ako im možno zabrániť z regulačného hľadiska. Tieňové bankovníctvo ako také sa vykonáva prostredníctvom subjektov alebo finančných zmlúv, ktoré vytvárajú kombináciu funkcií podobných funkciám bánk, avšak mimo regulačného rámca alebo v rámci regulačného režimu, ktorý je buď nedostatočne prísny, alebo rieši iné otázky než systémové riziká, a bez prístupu k facilite likvidity centrálnej banky alebo úverových záruk, ktoré poskytuje verejný sektor. Regulované subjekty v štandardnom bankovom systéme sa podieľajú na činnostiach vymedzených ako súčasť činností tieňového bankového systému a sú mnohými spôsobmi prepojené s tieňovými bankovými subjektmi. Odhaduje sa, že objem celosvetového tieňového bankového systému predstavoval v roku 2011 približne 51 biliónov EUR oproti 21 biliónom EUR v roku 2002. Tým predstavuje 25 až 30 % celkového finančného systému a polovicu celého objemu bankových aktív. Napriek určitým potenciálnym pozitívnym účinkom bolo tieňové bankovníctvo označené za jednu z možných hlavných príčin a okolností, ktoré prispeli k finančnej kríze, a faktor, ktorý ohrozuje stabilitu finančného systému.

Akým spôsobom sa Komisia plánuje zamerať na monitorovanie tieňového bankovníctva a dohľad nad ním, s cieľom zachytiť rizikové prevody a zaistiť ochranu spotrebiteľa?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(11. marca 2013)

Komisia je odhodlaná riešiť systémové riziká týkajúce sa tieňového bankovníctva. Komisia v nadväznosti na konzultáciu k zelenej knihe zvažuje vhodnú legislatívnu reakciu, pričom berie do úvahy vstupy vyplývajúce zo správy Európskeho parlamentu.

Komisia sa stotožňuje s obavami váženej pani poslankyne v súvislosti s potrebou zamerať sa na monitorovanie podkladových rizík v záujme zaistenia finančnej stability a ochrany investorov/vkladateľov.

Jedným z prioritných cieľov Komisie je zvýšiť transparentnosť sektora tieňového bankovníctva. Nevyhnutnou podmienkou toho, aby orgány dohľadu boli schopné adekvátne monitorovať a zasahovať, je získanie podrobnejších a spoľahlivejších informácií. S cieľom hľadať praktické spôsoby zabezpečenia transparentnosti sa Komisia zameriava na niekoľko tém/otázok, ktoré boli nadnesené aj v rámci El Khadraouiho správy, a to konkrétne:

i) vytvorenie archívov obchodných údajov o mimoburzových (OTC) derivátoch v kontexte nariadenia o infraštruktúre európskych trhov (EMIR), ktoré prispejú k lepšej identifikácii presunu rizika medzi všetkými účastníkmi finančných operácií;

ii) zavedenie medzinárodného identifikátora právnických osôb (LEI);

iii) vytvorenie Európskeho archívu obchodných údajov a/alebo stanovenie požiadaviek na podávanie správ o repo transakciách a pôžičkách cenných papierov, ktoré zabezpečia komplexné a štruktúrované//podrobné pokrytie týchto transakcií.

Komisia pripraví podrobný plán v priebehu tohto roka. Opatrenia Komisie budú zahŕňať najmä legislatívne návrhy týkajúce sa fondov peňažného trhu a nový právny rámec týkajúci sa cenných papierov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000216/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Shadow banking

The European Commission submitted a green paper on shadow banking at the start of 2012. It focuses on the potential risks of the shadow banking system in the EU, and how to prevent them from a regulatory perspective. Shadow banking is carried out through entities or financial agreements which create a combination of functions similar to the functions of banks. However, these functions are outside the regulatory framework, or within the framework of a regulatory regime which is either not rigorous enough or addresses issues other than systemic risks, and without access to a central bank liquidity facility or credit guarantees provided by the public sector. Regulated entities in the standard banking system participate in activities that are defined as part of the activities of the shadow banking system, and they are linked to shadow banking entities in many ways. It is estimated that the volume of the shadow banking system worldwide was close to EUR 51 billion in 2011, compared to EUR 21 billion in 2002. This represents 25-30% of the overall financial system and half the total volume of banking assets. Despite some potentially positive effects, the shadow banking system was identified as one of the possible main causes of the circumstances that led to the financial crisis, and a factor threatening the stability of the financial system.

How does the Commission plan to focus on monitoring and supervising shadow banking, in order to detect risky transfers and ensure consumer protection?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

The Commission is committed to addressing the systemic risks related to shadow banking. Following the Green Paper consultation, the Commission is considering an appropriate legislative response taking into account the inputs of the European Parliament report.

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concern on the need to focus on the monitoring of underlying risks to ensure financial stability and the protection of investors/depositors.

One of the Commission's priority objectives is to increase the transparency on the shadow banking sector. Getting more granular and reliable information is a prerequisite for supervisors to be able to adequately monitor and intervene. Looking at the practical ways to foster transparency, the Commission is looking into several issues, which are also raised in the El Khadraoui report notably:

(i) the establishment of trade repositories for OTC derivatives in the EMIR context, which will contribute to a better identification of risk transfers among all financial actors;

(ii) the implementation of the international legal entity identifier (LEI);

(iii) the establishment of a European trade repository and/or reporting requirements on repo and securities lending transactions, which will offer a comprehensive and granular coverage of these transactions.

The Commission will detail its roadmap later this year. The Commission actions will notably include legislative proposals on money market funds and a new securities law framework.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000217/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Deti a internet

77 % detí vo veku 15 – 16 rokov je registrovaných na niektorej sociálnej sieti. Vo svojom profile má 16 % z nich fiktívnu identitu a 27 % 9 – 12-ročných uvádza vyšší ako skutočný vek. 50 % detí vo veku 11 – 16 rokov uvádza, že sa ľahšie vyjadrujú online ako v osobnom styku s ľuďmi. Deti patria do skupiny naivných a neskúsených používateľov a čelia obrovským rizikám, či už ide o zneužitie osobných údajov, využitie ich profilov na obchodné účely, zdravotné riziká, fenomény závislosti, alebo skreslený vzťah k realite a svojej vlastnej identite. 12 % detí vo veku 9 – 12 rokov uvádza, že boli obťažované, najmä formou internetového šikanovania (40 %), ako aj obsahom a prístupom sexuálneho charakteru (25 %). Ponuka škodlivého obsahu online s výraznými prvkami násilia, diskriminácie, sexizmu a rasizmu, ktorých charakter nie je vhodný pre maloletých, môže u nepripraveného používateľa znížiť vnímanie urážky ľudskej dôstojnosti a uľahčiť rozšírenie používania siete maloletými s úmyslami, ktoré viac či menej vedome škodia ich dôstojnosti alebo dôstojnosti iných.

Akým spôsobom sa chce Komisia v roku 2013 zamerať na ochranu maloletých používateľov internetu?

Plánuje Komisia v nasledovnom období určitý program zameraný na šírenie potrebných informácií o existujúcich rizikách a na prevenciu?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(18. februára 2013)

Deti sú na internete obzvlášť zraniteľná skupina, ktorá potrebuje osobitnú ochranu a posilnenie postavenia, keďže internet nebol vytvorený na to, aby ho využívala táto skupina. Komisia prijala stratégiu ([1]) vytvárania lepšieho internetu pre deti, aby poskytla tak rodičom, ako aj deťom, technické nástroje na zabezpečovanie ochrany detí na internete ([2]) a rozšírila zvyšovanie informovanosti ([3]) a vyučovanie bezpečnosti na internete na všetkých školách v EÚ v záujme rozvoja digitálnej a mediálnej gramotnosti detí a ich zodpovedného správania sa na internete.

V roku 2013 bude program Bezpečnejší internet ([4]) naďalej spolufinancovať centrá bezpečnejšieho internetu v celej EÚ, s cieľom zabezpečiť informácie o bezpečnosti na internete, nástroje na zvyšovanie verejnej informovanosti a kampane. Predvída sa, že od roku 2014 sa vytvorí infraštruktúra služieb na podporu centier bezpečnejšieho internetu na úrovni EÚ za predpokladu, že bude prijatá prostredníctvom spolurozhodovacieho postupu v rámci nástroja „Spájame Európu“ (CEF) ([5]).

Pokiaľ ide o boj proti online aspektom sexuálneho zneužívania a vykorisťovania detí, smernica 92/2011/EÚ ([6]) zavádza pravidlá kriminalizácie širokého spektra situácií, ktoré zahŕňajú aj nové javy, ako napr. nadväzovanie vzťahov s deťmi, zneužívanie webových kamier alebo pozeranie detskej pornografie online bez sťahovania súborov. Členské štáty sú povinné smernicu transponovať do decembra 2013.

Pokiaľ ide o ochranu osobných údajov, cieľom návrhu nariadenia o všeobecnej ochrane údajov ([7]) Komisie je zabezpečovať osobitnú ochranu detí v niekoľkých ustanoveniach týkajúcich sa súhlasu rodiča (článok 8 ods. 1, právo byť zabudnutý (článok 17) a zvyšovanie informovanosti (článok 52 ods. 2).

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/286
([2]) napr. ľahko použiteľné mechanizmy podávania správ o škodlivom obsahu a správaní na internete alebo ľahko použiteľné nástroje rodičovskej kontroly.
([3]) www.saferinternet.org
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/docs/prog_decision_2009/decision_sk.pdf
([5]) KOM (2011) 665 v konečnom znení http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/documents/com2011_0665_sk.pdf
([6]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2011/92/EÚ z 13. decembra 2011 o boji proti sexuálnemu zneužívaniu a sexuálnemu vykorisťovaniu detí a proti detskej pornografii, ktorou sa nahrádza rámcové rozhodnutie Rady 2004/68/SVV, Ú. v. EÚ L 335, 17.12.2009, s. 1.
([7]) COM (2012) 11 final, návrh nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o ochrane fyzických osôb pri spracúvaní osobných údajov a o voľnom pohybe takýchto údajov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000217/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Children and the Internet

77% of children aged 15 to 16 are registered on a social network. In their profiles, 16% of them have a fictional identity, and 27% of 9 to 12 year-olds declare an older age than their real one. 50% of children aged 11 to 16 years say that it is easier to express themselves online rather than face to face. Children are naive and inexperienced users and they face huge risks, whether from misuse of personal information, commercial use of their profiles, health risks, dependency phenomena or a distorted relationship with reality and their own identity. 12% of children aged 9 to 12 say they have been harassed, particularly in the form of Internet bullying (40%), and also by sexual content and approaches (25%). Harmful content online that has strong elements of violence, discrimination, sexism and racism, the features of which are unsuitable for minors, may diminish, in unprepared users, the perception of the offence against human dignity. It may also facilitate, among minors, wider use of the network with intentions that are more or less knowingly harmful to their dignity or to the dignity of others.

How does the Commission intend to focus on protecting young Internet users in 2013?

Is the Commission planning a programme in the near future aimed at disseminating much-needed information on current risks and prevention?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

Children are a particularly vulnerable group online that needs special empowerment and protection as the Internet was not created for its use. The Commission has rolled out a strategy ([1]) for a Better Internet for Children to give both parents and children the technical tools for ensuring the online protection of children ([2]) and to scale up awareness raising ([3]) and teaching of online safety in all EU schools to develop children's digital and media literacy and self-responsibility online.

In 2013 Safer Internet Programme ([4]) will continue to co-fund Safer Internet Centres across the EU to provide online safety information and public awareness tools and campaigns. From 2014, the creation of an EU-wide service infrastructure to support the Safer Internet Centres is foreseen subject to the adoption by co-decision of Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) ([5]).

As concerns combating the online aspects of child sexual abuse and exploitation, Directive 2011/92/EU ([6]) introduces rules for the criminalisation of a wide range of situations, covering new phenomena like child grooming, webcam abuse, or web viewing child pornography without downloading files. Member States are required to transpose the directive by December 2013.

As regards the protection of personal data, the Commission proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([7]) (GDPR) aims to ensure specific protection for children in several provisions concerning parental consent (Article 8(1)), right to be forgotten (Article 17) and awareness raising (Article 52 (2)).

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/286.
([2]) e.g. easy-to-use mechanisms to report harmful content and conduct online, or user-friendly parental controls.
([3]) www.saferInternet.org.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/docs/prog_decision_2009/decision_en.pdf
([5]) COM(2011) 665 final http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/documents/com2011_0665_en.pdf
([6]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 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, 17.12.2009, p. 1.
([7]) 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.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000218/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Inovačné projekty obnoviteľných zdrojov energie

Európska komisia nedávno vyčlenila prostriedky na projekty širokej škály zdrojov obnoviteľnej energie. Konkrétne ide o bioenergiu (vrátane pokročilých biopalív), koncentrovanú solárnu energiu, geotermálnu energiu, veternú energiu, energiu oceánov a inteligentné siete. Tieto projekty majú byť spolufinancované z príjmov získaných z predaja 200 miliónov emisných kvót z rezervy pre nových účastníkov systému EÚ na obchodovanie s emisiami. V rámci prvého kola súťaže Komisia neudelila financovanie žiadnemu projektu zachytávania a ukladania CO_2, čo ďalej prehlbuje pochybnosti o schopnosti technológie CCS dostatočne rýchlo prispieť k znižovaniu emisií zo spaľovania fosílnych palív.

Akým spôsobom Komisia zdôvodňuje skutočnosť, že neudelila financovanie žiadnemu projektu zachytávania a ukladania CO_2?

Odpoveď pani Hedegaardovej v mene Komisie
(26. februára 2013)

Dňa 18. decembra 2012 Komisia pridelila vyše 1,2 miliardy EUR na financovanie 23 vysoko inovačných demonštračných projektov obnoviteľných zdrojov energie na základe prvej výzvy na predkladanie návrhov v rámci tzv. programu financovania „NER300“. Projekty sa budú spolufinancovať z príjmov získaných z predaja 200 miliónov emisných kvót z rezervy pre nových účastníkov (NER – new entrants' reserve) systému EÚ na obchodovanie s emisiami.

Hoci sa niekoľko projektov uchádzalo o financovanie, v konečnom dôsledku pri prvej výzve na predkladanie návrhov v rámci programu „NER300“ nezískal financovanie žiaden projekt CCS. Spôsobili to medzery vo financovaní, omeškania v schvaľovacích konaniach alebo nedostatočná zrelosť niektorých projektov. Výsledky prvej výzvy na predkladanie návrhov preto ukázali, že technológie CCS v Európe ešte stále zápasia s problémami, a to nielen z finančného hľadiska. Druhá výzva na predkladanie návrhov s druhou tranžou príspevkov z predaja, ktorá sa začne na jar v roku 2013, ponúkne v tejto súvislosti nové príležitosti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000218/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Innovative renewable energy projects

The European Commission recently allocated resources to projects covering a wide range of renewable energy sources. Specifically, these involve bioenergy (including advanced biofuels), concentrated solar energy, geothermal energy, wind energy, ocean energy and intelligent networks. These projects should be co-financed from revenues obtained from the sale of 200 million emission quotas from the reserve for new participants in the EU's emissions trading system. Within the framework of the first round of the competition, the Commission did not grant funds to any CO_2 capture and storage (CCS) projects, which raises further doubts as to the ability of CCS technologies to make a sufficiently rapid contribution to reducing emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels.

How does the Commission justify the fact that it has not granted funds to any CO_2 capture and storage projects?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

On 18 December 2012, over EUR1.2 billion funding has been awarded to 23 highly innovative renewable energy demonstration projects under the first call for proposals for the so-called NER300 funding programme. Projects will be co-financed with revenues obtained from the sale of 200 million emission allowances from the new entrants' reserve (NER) of the EU Emissions Trading System.

Despite the fact that a range of projects have been competing for the funds, in the end no CCS project received an award under the first call of the NER300 Programme. This was due to funding gaps, delays in permitting procedures or insufficient maturity of some of the projects. The results of the first call proved therefore that CCS in Europe is still facing several challenges, not least from a financing perspective. A second call for proposals, with a second tranche of allowance sales, to be launched in spring 2013, will offer a new opportunity in this respect.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000219/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Tretí liberalizačný balíček energetickej legislatívy EÚ

Dňa 21. decembra 2012 sa v Bruseli konal summit predstaviteľov EÚ a Ruska na najvyššej úrovni. Témou rokovaní bol aj tzv. tretí liberalizačný balíček, ktorý tvorí energetická legislatíva EÚ, ktorá má zvýšiť konkurenciu na európskom energetickom trhu. Snahou Ruskej federácie bolo dohodnúť sa na pravidlách, ktoré by vyňali ruské plynovody z európskych liberalizačných snáh. Tie majú za cieľ sprístupniť energetickú infraštruktúru medzi spoločnosťami navzájom. Ruská strana je totiž presvedčená o tom, že tretí liberalizačný balíček energetickej legislatívy Únie je voči Ruskej federácii diskriminačný.

Aký je postoj Komisie k tvrdeniam ruskej strany, že tretí liberalizačný balíček energetickej legislatívy Únie je voči Ruskej federácii diskriminačný?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(25. februára 2013)

Otázka implementácie tretieho energetického balíka v EÚ bola témou, ktorá sa opäť objavila v kontexte summitu EÚ – Rusko, ktorý sa konal 21. decembra 2012. Komisia pravidelne diskutuje okrem iných otázok o tejto otázke s ruskými partnermi v rámci dialógu o energetike medzi EÚ a Ruskom.

Tretí energetický balík je navrhnutý tak, aby sa zabezpečilo vytvorenie plne funkčného vnútorného trhu s energiou, a v tejto súvislosti sa uplatňuje na všetky spoločnosti pôsobiace na európskom trhu bez ohľadu na to, či ide o spoločnosti so sídlom v EÚ, ruské alebo akékoľvek iné zahraničné spoločnosti. Nemožno teda povedať, že tretí energetický balík diskriminuje ruské spoločnosti. Ruské, ako aj ostatné spoločnosti však už využili možnosti vyplývajúce z vnútorného trhu s energiou v EÚ. Komisia je zapojená do technických diskusií s ruskými partnermi a spoločnosťami s cieľom nájsť riešenia, ktoré sú v súlade s právnymi predpismi EÚ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000219/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Third liberalisation package for EU energy legislation

On 21 December 2012, a top-level summit was held in Brussels between EU and Russian representatives. The topic of the discussions included the 'third liberalisation package', comprising EU energy legislation which is intended to boost competition on the European energy market. The Russian Federation tried to secure an agreement on rules that would exempt Russian gas pipelines from European liberalisation moves. The aim of these rules is to convince companies to make their energy infrastructure available to other firms on a mutual basis. The Russians believe that the EU's third liberalisation package for energy legislation discriminates against the Russian Federation.

What is the Commissions position on Russian claims that the EU's third liberalisation package for energy legislation discriminates against the Russian Federation?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The implementation of the 3rd Energy Package in the EU was again raised in the context of the EU-Russia Summit held on 21 December 2012. The Commission has been discussing this question, among several others, with the Russian partners on a regular basis in the framework of the EU-Russia energy dialogue.

The 3rd Energy Package is designed to ensure the creation of a fully-functioning internal market for energy and in this regard applies to all companies operating on the European Market, whether they are EU-based, Russian or any other foreign companies. It can therefore not be said that the 3rd Energy Package discriminates against Russian companies; indeed, like others, Russian companies have already taken advantage of the opportunities arising from the EU internal energy market. The Commission is engaged in technical discussions with the Russian partners and companies involved in order to find solutions in conformity with the EU legislation.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000220/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Ochrana trhu EÚ pred nezvyčajne lacnými čínskymi dovozmi, predovšetkým pokiaľ ide o fotovoltické panely

Európska únia má s Čínou trvalo negatívne saldo obchodu. Pre Čínu sme hlavným vývozným trhom. Podľa údajov Komisie sem smeruje až 80 % všetkého vývozného predaja krajiny. Čína je zároveň najväčším svetovým producentom solárnych panelov. V roku 2011 vyviezla do EÚ solárne panely a ich kľúčové komponenty v hodnote 21 miliárd EUR. Masívne štátne dotácie však vytláčajú európske spoločnosti pôsobiace v oblasti solárnej a veternej energie z čínskeho trhu. Výdavky na podporu obnoviteľných zdrojov energie pritom v posledných rokoch výrazne stúpli. V roku 2010 Čína predbehla USA ako svetový líder inštalovanej kapacity veterných elektrární a svojim firmám v sektore solárnej energie poskytla pôžičky a dotácie vo výške 30 miliárd EUR. Peking takto svojím prístupom popiera zásadu rovnocenných podmienok na svojom trhu.

Akým spôsobom rieši Komisia problém dovozu nezvyčajne lacných výrobkov, najmä fotovoltických panelov z Číny do Európskej únie, ktorý neustále narastá a narúša rovnováhu obchodného vzťahu Únie s Čínou?

Odpoveď pána De Guchta v mene Komisie
(13. februára 2013)

Komisia si dovoľuje odkázať váženú poslankyňu na svoju odpoveď na písomné otázky E-1044/2012, E-9749/2012, E-9610/2012, E-9377/2012 a E-8620/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000220/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Protecting the EU market against unusually cheap Chinese imports, in particular of photovoltaic panels

The European Union has a persistently negative trade balance with China. We are the main export market for China. According to Commission data, up to 80% of all the country's exports come there. China is at the same time the world's largest producer of solar panels. In 2011, it exported solar panels and their key components to the EU to the value of EUR 21 billion. Massive state subsidies, however, squeeze European companies active in the area of solar and wind energy out of the Chinese market. Expenditure on support for renewable energy sources has, meanwhile, risen sharply in recent years. In 2010, China moved ahead of the US as the global leader for installed capacity of wind generators, and provided loans and subsidies totalling EUR 30 billion to its firms in the solar energy sector. Beijing is thus, through its approach, violating the principle of a level playing field on its own market.

How will the Commission address the problem of imports of unusually cheap products, and in particular of photovoltaic panels, from China to the European Union, which are constantly increasing and disrupting the EU's balance of trade with China?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-1044/2012, E-9749/2012, E-9610/2012, E-9377/2012 and E-8620/2012 ([1]).

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000221/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Prezidentské voľby v USA

V USA sa nedávno konali prezidentské voľby. Barack Obama ostáva americkým prezidentom na ďalšie 4 roky. Volebné kampane od samého počiatku zdôrazňovali veľký záujem o dianie na európskom kontinente, a že USA sú spojencami Európanov v rámci spoločnej snahy o riešenie celosvetovej dlhovej krízy. Európska únia a USA v súčasnosti výrazne spolupracujú, predovšetkým kvôli snahe vyriešiť celosvetovú hospodársku krízu. Rovnako pracujeme aj na vzájomnej dohode o voľnom obchode. Okrem toho sme počas uplynulého roka diskutovali aj o regulácii finančných trhov. Obe strany si totiž uvedomujú, že kvôli vzájomnej prepojenosti by bolo neefektívne zaviesť predpisy len v Európe alebo len v USA. Ďalšou dôležitou témou so strategickým významom je počítačová kriminalita, boj s ňou si vyžaduje intenzívnu spoluprácu medzi zákonodarcami a vládami.

Aký vplyv budú mať výsledky prezidentských volieb v USA na spoluprácu Únie a Spojených štátov v snahe prekonať hodpodársku krízu vo svete?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(22. marca 2013)

Medzi EÚ a USA existujú najrozsiahlejšie dvojstranné hospodárske vzťahy a medzi ich ekonomikami je veľká vzájomná závislosť. Napríklad obchod a investície medzi EÚ a USA vytvárajú 15 miliónov pracovných miest na oboch brehoch Atlantiku a z ešte väčšieho prehĺbenia hospodárskych vzťahov by mohli vyplynúť výrazné vzájomné výhody. V tomto ohľade by bolo vhodné spomenúť nedávne rozhodnutie Komisie a amerických správnych orgánov o začatí interných príprav na otvorenie rokovaní o transatlantickom partnerstve v oblasti obchodu a investícií.

Od vypuknutia krízy EÚ a USA úzko spolupracovali v úsilí o prekonanie globálnej hospodárskej krízy na rôznych medzinárodných fórach (v prvom rade v rámci skupiny krajín G-20) a prostredníctvom dvojstranných kontaktov.

Jednou z oblastí spolupráce bola aj počítačová bezpečnosť, najmä prostredníctvom činnosti pracovnej skupiny EÚ – USA na vysokej úrovni v oblasti počítačovej bezpečnosti a počítačovej kriminality, a očakáva sa, že si svoju dôležitosť udrží aj počas druhého funkčného obdobia prezidenta Obamu. Dialóg o energetike a naša spolupráca v otázkach zahraničnej politiky v rôznych regiónoch na celom svete sú ďalšími dvoma príkladmi z dlhého zoznamu, ktoré svedčia o veľmi intenzívnom a blízkom partnerstve.

Komisia očakáva, že počas druhého funkčného obdobia prezidenta Obamu tento kladný vzťah pretrvá.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000221/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Presidential election in the United States

A presidential election was held recently in the United States. Barack Obama will remain the American president for the next four years. From the very beginning, the election campaigns underlined a great interest in events on the European continent, and that the US is an ally of Europeans in the common effort to address the global debt crisis. There is considerable cooperation at present between the European Union and the United States, mainly due to the effort to solve the global economic crisis. We are similarly working on a mutual free trade agreement. In addition, during the past year, we have discussed the regulation of financial markets. Both sides recognise the fact that, due to interconnectedness, it would be ineffective to introduce legislation only in Europe or only in the US. Another important topic of strategic significance is cybercrime: combating it requires intensive cooperation between lawmakers and governments.

What impact will the result of the presidential election in the US have on cooperation between the EU and the United States in the effort to overcome the global economic crisis?

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

The EU and the US have the largest bilateral economic relationship in the world and very interdependent economies. For instance, EU-US trade and investment generates 15 million jobs on both sides of the Atlantic, and there may be significant mutual benefits to deepening the economic relationship even further. In this respect it is worth to note the recent decision taken by the Commission and the American administration to start the internal preparations to launch negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

Since the onset of the crisis the EU and US have cooperated closely in the efforts to overcome the global economic crisis in various international fora (in primis the G20) and through bilateral contacts.

Cybersecurity has also been a key area for cooperation, especially via the work of the EU-US High Level Working Group on Cybersecurity and Cybercrime, and it is expected to retain its importance under the second Obama administration. The Energy dialogue and our cooperation on foreign policy issues in different regions throughout the world are two other examples of a long list that demonstrate a very intense and close partnership.

The Commission expects this positive relation to continue under the Obama II administration.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000222/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Neľudské podmienky zatúlaných a opustených psov v Rumunsku

Absencia registra majiteľov psov, ako i zákonov, ktoré by sa vzťahovali na identifikáciu všetkých vlastnených a opustených psov, vedie k neakceptovateľnej situácii, keď sú tieto zvieratá vystavované neľudskému zaobchádzaniu a zároveň dochádza k porušovaniu ich práv. Situácia v Rumunsku sa vyhrocuje a stáva sa neúnosnou. Krajina, ktorá je členským štátom Európskej únie, porušuje zmluvy v ktorých sa zaviazala dodržiavať dobré životné podmienky zvierat a ochraňovať ich – pokiaľ hovoríme o Lisabonskej zmluve a o Európskom dohovore o ochrane spoločenských zvierat CETS č. 125.

Ako môže Komisia napomôcť k riešeniu tejto naliehavej situácie?

Nepovažuje za opodstatnené apelovať na zodpovedných predstaviteľov Rumunska, aby dodržiavali dohody, ku ktorým sa zaviazali?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(13. februára 2013)

Dovoľujeme si odkázať váženú pani poslankyňu na odpovede na písomné otázky E-007161/2011, E-009002/2011, P-004480/2012, E-004247/2012 a E-002062/2012 ([1]), ktoré sa venujú problémom túlavých psov a riadenia populácie psov.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000222/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Inhumane conditions for stray and abandoned dogs in Romania

The absence of registration for dog owners and of laws applying to the identification of all owned and abandoned dogs is leading to an unacceptable situation. These animals are being exposed to inhumane treatment and violation of their rights. The situation in Romania is getting worse and becoming intolerable. The country, which is an EU Member State, is in breach of agreements regarding the protection of animals and decent living conditions for them. The agreements in question are the Lisbon Treaty and the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals, CETS No 125.

How can the Commission help to resolve this urgent situation?

Does the Commission not consider it justifiable to call on the competent representatives of Romania to comply with the agreements they have signed up to?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the answers to written questions E-007161/2011, E-009002/2011, P-004480/2012, E-004247/2012, and E-002062/2012 ([1]) which address the issues of stray dogs and of dog population management.

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000223/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Antimikrobiálna rezistencia

V posledných rokoch rastie hrozba antimikrobiálnej rezistencie. Táto začínajúca kríza je dôsledkom neprimeraného používania antimikrobiálnych látok v ľudskej a veterinárnej medicíne Zoznam infekcií rezistentných voči mnohým liekom je dlhý a zahŕňa okrem iného infekcie močových ciest, pneumóniu a tuberkulózu. Podľa Svetovej zdravotníckej organizácie existuje na svete minimálne 440 000 individuálnych prípadov tuberkulózy s viacliekovou rezistenciou, ktoré majú za následok viac ako 150 000 úmrtí ročne. Systémy zdravotnej starostlivosti v Európe už samozrejme cítia zvýšené náklady vyplývajúce z tejto situácie. Podľa WHO a Európskeho centra pre kontrolu chorôb v roku 2007 infekcie rezistentné voči liekom mali za následok viac ako 2,5 milióna dodatočných dní hospitalizácie v EÚ, Nórsku a na Islande a navyše 25 000 smrteľných prípadov v tých istých oblastiach. V nasledujúcich rokoch môžeme očakávať značný nárast týchto údajov.

Akým spôsobom Komisia bojuje proti rastúcej hrozbe antimikrobiálnej rezistencie a jej dôsledkom?

Plánuje v dohľadnej dobe predstaviť legislatívne návrhy v tejto oblasti?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(20. februára 2013)

Pokiaľ ide o otázky týkajúce sa antimikrobiálnej rezistencie a opatrenia, ktoré Komisia podnikla v tejto oblasti, Komisia odkazuje na svoje odpovede na predchádzajúce písomné otázky E-010443/2011, E-006000/2011, E-001117/2012, E-000298/2012, E-002779/2012, E-003505/2012, E-003197/2012 a E-007766/2012 ([1]).

Počas írskeho predsedníctva Komisia uverejní plán vykonávania päťročného akčného plánu v oblasti antimikrobiálnej rezistencie a má v úmysle vypracovať priebežnú správu o vykonávaní akčného plánu do konca roku 2013 tak, ako sa požaduje v správe „Mikrobiálna výzva – rastúce hrozby antimikrobiálnej rezistencie“ od Anny ROSBACHOVEJ (ECR/DK), ktorú vydal Európsky parlament z vlastnej iniciatívy.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000223/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Antimicrobial resistance

In recent years, the threat of antimicrobial resistance has been growing. This incipient crisis is the result of the excessive use of antimicrobial substances in human and veterinary medicine. The list of infections resistant to many drugs is long and includes, *inter alia*, urinary tract infections, pneumonia and tuberculosis. According to the World Health Organisation, there are at least 440 000 individual cases of tuberculosis with multidrug resistance, resulting in more than 150 000 deaths a year across the globe. Healthcare systems in Europe are now clearly feeling the increased costs arising from this situation. According to the WHO and the European Centre for Disease Control, drug-resistant infections resulted in more than 2.5 million additional days of hospitalisation in the EU, Norway and Iceland in 2007, plus 25 000 fatalities in the same areas. In the coming years we can expect a significant increase in these data.

How is the Commission combating the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance and its consequences?

Does it plan in the near future to put forward legislative proposals in this area?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

Regarding the questions about Antimicrobial resistance and the actions taken by the Commission on this issue, the Commission refers to its answers to previous written questions E-010443/2011, E-006000/2011, E-001117/2012, E-000298/2012, E-002779/2012, E-003505/2012, E-003197/2012 and E-007766/2012 ([1]).

As requested in the European Parliament's own-initiative report 'the Microbial Challenge-rising threats from Antimicrobial Resistance' by Anna ROSBACH (ECR/DK), the Commission will publish a roadmap on the implementation of the five year action plan on antimicrobial resistance during the Irish Presidency and intends to prepare an interim report on the implementation of the action plan by the end of 2013.

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000224/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Sloboda médií v EÚ

Slobodné médiá sú nevyhnutným prvkom správneho fungovania demokracie. Chrániť slobodu médií však nie je vždy ľahké a sloboda médií by nemala byť považovaná za samozrejmosť. Členské krajiny EÚ sa zaviazali k ochrane slobody médií, často však zlyhávajú pri realizácii právnych opatrení. Problémy, ktorým čelia médiá v členských krajinách, sú veľmi podobné. Podľa organizácie Reportéri bez hraníc sa po roku 2008 situácia ešte zhoršila. Nezávislosť médií je ohrozená hrozbami a násilím zo strany polície, ako aj korupciou a svojvoľným zatýkaním. Treba zdôrazniť aj úlohu krízy, ktorá viedla nielen k zníženiu zdrojov a k prepúšťaniu novinárov, ale aj k zvýšeniu tlaku na reportérov a médiá ako celok.

Aký je názor Komisie na možnosť vytvorenia minimálnych noriem pre právne ustanovenia na zabezpečenie transparentnosti vlastníctva médií?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(19. februára 2013)

Komisia je presvedčená o rozhodujúcom význame slobody a plurality médií pre demokraciu a v súčasnosti uvažuje o týchto záležitostiach po tom, ako nezávislá skupina na vysokej úrovni pre slobodu a pluralitu médií, ktorej predsedajú bývalá prezidentka Lotyšska profesorka Vaira Vike-Freibergaová spolu s profesorkou Hertou Däubler-Gmelinovou, profesorom Miguelom Madurom a pánom Benom Hammersleym, zverejnila 21. januára 2013 svoju správu. Komisia túto správu v súčasnosti posudzuje.

Chceli by sme upozorniť váženú pani poslankyňu, že Európsky parlament pridelil finančné zdroje z rozpočtu Európskej Únie na rok 2013 s cieľom umožniť vykonávanie nástroja na monitorovanie plurality médií, ktorý bolo vyvinutý v štúdii z roku 2007 s názvom „Nezávislá štúdia o ukazovateľoch plurality médií v členských štátoch – smerom k prístupu na základe rizika“. Zavedenie monitorovacieho nástroja prinesie ďalšie údaje o rozsahu problému.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000224/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Media freedom in the EU

Media freedom is an essential element of a properly functioning democracy. Protecting it is not always easy, however, and it should not be taken for granted. EU Member States have committed themselves to the protection of media freedom, but they often fail when it comes to implementing legal measures. The problems confronting the media in Member States are very similar. According to the organisation Reporters Without Borders, the situation grew even worse after 2008. Media independence is compromised by police threats and violence, as well as corruption and arbitrary arrests. It is also necessary to emphasise the role of the crisis, which has led not only to reduced resources and layoffs of journalists, but also to greater pressure on reporters and the media as a whole.

What is the Commission's opinion on the possible creation of minimum standards for legal provisions to secure transparency of media ownership?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

The Commission is convinced of the crucial importance of media freedom and pluralism for democracy and is currently reflecting on these matters, following delivery on 21 January 2013 of the report of the independent High-Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism chaired by the former President of Latvia, Professor Vaira Vike-Freiberga, with Professor Herta Däubler-Gmelin, Professor Miguel Maduro and Mr Ben Hammersley. The Commission is currently assessing it.

The Honourable Member will also be aware that the European Parliament has attributed funding in the European Union's 2013 budget in order to enable implement the Media Pluralism Monitor developed by the 2007 study an 'Independent Study on Indicators for Media Pluralism in the Member States — Towards a Risk-Based Approach'. Deployment of the monitoring tool will yield further data on the extent of the problem.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000225/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Sociálne investície v EÚ

Hospodárska a finančná kríza, ktorá momentálne otriasa Európskou úniou, bude mať dlhodobý a silný vplyv nielen na európske hospodárstvo, ale aj na mieru zamestnanosti, verejné úspory a sociálne investície v Európe. Miera nezamestnanosti v krajinách EÚ bola v januári 2012 vyššia ako 10 %. Navyše čelíme mimoriadne vážnym problémom, ktoré súvisia s nezamestnanosťou mladých ľudí. Ďalším naliehavým problémom je situácia nízkokvalifikovaných pracovníkov, ktorí čelia pretrvávajúcemu znižovaniu dopytu na pracovnom trhu. Počet ľudí žijúcich v chudobe a ohrozených sociálnym vylúčením neustále narastá. Jedným z následkov krízy je aj zvýšený tlak na systémy sociálnej pomoci a podstatné zníženie výnosov plynúcich do dôchodkových systémov, na príspevky na zamestnanie alebo do systémov zdravotnej starostlivosti. Protikrízovým opatreniam, ktoré boli doposiaľ prijaté, chýba sociálny rozmer. Sociálne investície, sú dôležité na zabezpečenie správnej úrovne zamestnanosti a na zlepšenie konkurencieschopnosti.

Plánuje Komisia apelovať na jednotlivé členské štáty EÚ, aby sa zamerali na sociálne investície?

Ak áno, akým spôsobom?

Plánuje Komisia monitorovať pokrok v oblasti sociálnych investícií v jednotlivých členských krajinách?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(28. februára 2013)

Členské štáty majú k dispozícii balík o sociálnych investíciách ([1]) s usmerneniami, ako postupovať pri modernizácii systémov sociálneho zabezpečenia v reakcii na značné problémy, ktorým v súčasnosti čelia a ktoré opisuje aj vážená pani poslankyňa.

Balík sa zameriava na:

— jednoduchšie a cielenejšie sociálne politiky, ktoré zabezpečia primerané a udržateľné systémy sociálnej ochrany. Niektoré krajiny v porovnaní s inými dosahujú v sociálnej oblasti lepšie výsledky napriek tomu, že majú podobný alebo nižší rozpočet, čo dokazuje, že stále existuje priestor pre zefektívnenie výdavkov v oblasti sociálnej politiky.

— zlepšenie integrácie ľudí do spoločnosti a trhu práce. Kvalitná a cenovo prístupná starostlivosť o deti a vzdelávanie, prevencia predčasného ukončovania školskej dochádzky, pomoc pri odbornej príprave a hľadaní zamestnania, podpora bývania a dostupná zdravotná starostlivosť – to všetko sú politické oblasti s významným rozmerom sociálnych investícií.

— zabezpečenie toho, aby systémy sociálnej ochrany reagovali na potreby ľudí v kritických životných situáciách. Predchádzanie rizikám a príprava ľudí na ne znižujú potrebu vyšších sociálnych výdavkov v prípade, že nastanú ťažkosti.

Oznámenie tiež poskytuje členským štátom usmernenie, ako na realizáciu vytýčených cieľov čo najlepšie využiť finančnú podporu EÚ, najmä z Európskeho sociálneho fondu. Komisia bude prostredníctvom európskeho semestra pozorne sledovať výkonnosť systémov sociálnej ochrany v jednotlivých členských štátoch a v prípade potreby formulovať odporúčania pre jednotlivé krajiny týkajúce sa uvedených problémov.

([1]) COM(2013) 83.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000225/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Social investment in the EU

The economic and financial crisis currently shaking the European Union will have a powerful long-term effect not only on the European economy, but also on employment levels, public savings and social investment in Europe. The level of unemployment in EU countries was over 10% in January 2012. We are also facing extremely serious problems related to unemployment among young people. Another pressing problem is the situation of poorly-qualified workers, who face a continuing drop in demand on the labour market. The number of people living in poverty and under the threat of social exclusion is rising all the time. One of the consequences of the crisis is also greater pressure on social assistance systems and a substantial reduction in payments to pension systems, and contributions to employment or healthcare systems. The anti-crisis measures adopted so far lack a social dimension. Social investments are important for ensuring the right level of employment and for boosting competitiveness.

Is the Commission planning to call on individual Member States to target social investments?

If so, in what way?

Does the Commission plan to monitor progress in the area of social investments in individual Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Social Investment Package ([1]) gives guidance to Member States on modernising their welfare systems in response to the significant challenges they currently face, as describe by the Honourable Member.

The package focuses on:

— Simplified and better targeted social policies, to provide adequate and sustainable social protection systems. Some countries have better social outcomes than others despite having similar or lower budgets, demonstrating that there is room for more efficient social policy spending.

— Improving people's integration in society and the labour market. Affordable quality childcare and education, prevention of early school leaving, training and job-search assistance, housing support and accessible healthcare are all policy areas with a strong social investment dimension.

— Ensuring that social protection systems respond to people's needs at critical moments throughout their lives. Preventing and preparing people against risks reduces the need for higher social spending once hardship has occurred.

The communication also offers guidance to Member States on how best to use EU financial support, notably from the European Social Fund, to implement the outlined objectives. The Commission will closely monitor the performance of individual Member States' social protection systems through the European Semester and formulate, where necessary, Country Specific Recommendations in this area.

([1]) COM(2013) 83.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000226/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Sociálne podnikanie

Podniky sociálneho hospodárstva predstavujú 10 % všetkých európskych podnikov, čo predstavuje 2 milióny podnikov, a zamestnávajú minimálne 11 miliónov ľudí v EÚ, čo predstavuje približne 6 % celkovej pracovnej sily. Sociálne podnikanie významne prispieva k európskemu sociálnemu modelu a k stratégii Európa 2020. Sama Komisia považuje aktérov sociálneho hospodárstva a sociálne podniky za hybnú silu hospodárskeho rastu. Tieto podniky majú potenciál vytvárať udržateľné pracovné miesta a podporovať začlenenie zraniteľných skupín na trhu práce. Sociálne podniky svojou povahou a spôsobom fungovania prispievajú k budovaniu súdržnejšej, demokratickejšej a aktívnejšej spoločnosti. Navyše väčšinou ponúkajú výhodné pracovné podmienky, ako aj rovnakú mzdu za rovnakú prácu, pričom podporujú rovnaké príležitosti pre mužov a ženy, čím umožňujú zosúladenie pracovného a súkromného života.

Akým spôsobom Komisia podporuje činnosť sociálnych podnikov v Európskej únii?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(28. februára 2013)

EÚ už podporuje sociálne podniky, najmä v rámci vytýčených cieľov a zámeru stratégie Európa 2020. Touto otázkou sa zaoberá vo svojich hlavných iniciatívach s názvom „Inovácia v Únii“ a „Európska platforma proti chudobe a sociálnemu vylúčeniu“, ktoré zdôrazňujú dôležitosť sociálnych podnikov bojujúcich proti chudobe a sociálnemu vylúčeniu a zároveň navrhujú opatrenia na zlepšenie kvality právnych štruktúr týkajúcich sa nadácií, vzájomných spoločností a družstiev pôsobiacich v európskom kontexte. EÚ sa tiež venuje téme sociálnych podnikov v rámci Aktu o jednotnom trhu I a II, iniciatívy Príležitosti pre mladých, balíku opatrení týkajúcich sa zamestnanosti nazvanom „Smerom k oživeniu hospodárstva sprevádzanému tvorbou veľkého počtu pracovných miest“, ako aj iniciatívy za sociálne podnikanie, ktoré predpokladajú tri kategórie opatrení týkajúce sa financovania, viditeľnosti a právneho rámca pre sociálne podniky.

Sociálne podniky sa často zapájajú do projektov, ktoré sú financované prostredníctvom európskych štrukturálnych fondov (ESF, EFRR), programu PROGRESS, Európskeho nástroja mikrofinancovania Progress, iniciatívy Príležitosti pre mladých atď. Úlohe sektora sociálnych podnikov sa venuje osobitná pozornosť v plánovanom balíku o sociálnych investíciách. V nariadení o kohéznej politike 2014 – 2020 sa navyše navrhuje investičná priorita určená na sociálne hospodárstvo a sociálne podniky. Program pre sociálnu zmenu a inováciu takisto poskytne priestor na podporu súvisiacich činností sociálnych podnikov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000226/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Social entrepreneurship

Businesses in the social economy account for 10% of all European businesses, representing 2 million businesses, and employ at least 11 million people in the EU, or approximately 6 % of the total workforce. Social entrepreneurship contributes significantly to the European social model and to the Europe 2020 strategy. The Commission itself considers those involved in the social economy and social enterprises to be an engine of economic growth. Such enterprises have the potential to create sustainable jobs and to support the integration of vulnerable groups into the labour market. By their nature and means of operation, social enterprises contribute to the building of a more inclusive, democratic and active society. Moreover, they usually offer favourable working conditions and equal pay for equal work, and promote equal opportunities for men and women, allowing work and private life to be reconciled.

How does the Commission support the work of social enterprises in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The EU is already providing support for social enterprises, in particular within the objectives and target setting of the Europe 2020 strategy. It is addressed in its flagship initiatives 'Innovation Union' and 'European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion' which underline the importance of the social enterprises for fighting poverty and social exclusion and propose measures to improve the quality of the legal structures relating to associations foundations, mutual societies and cooperatives operating in a European context. The social enterprises issue is also addressed in the Single Market Act I and II, the Youth Opportunities Initiative, the Employment Package 'Towards a job-rich recovery' and the Social Business Initiative that envisages three categories of measures concerning the funding, the visibility and the legal framework for social enterprises.

Social enterprises are often involved in projects funded by European Structural Founds (ESF, ERDF), PROGRESS, European Progress Microfinance Facility, Youth Opportunities Initiative etc. The role of the social enterprises sector is specifically addressed in the forthcoming Social Investment Package. Furthermore the Cohesion Policy Regulation 2014-2020 proposes an investment priority dedicated to the social economy and social enterprises. Also, the Programme for Social Change and Innovation will provide space to support social enterprises related actions.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000227/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Summit EÚ – Rusko

Dňa 21. decembra 2012 sa v Bruseli konal summit predstaviteľov EÚ a Ruska na najvyššej úrovni. Počas summitu však nedošlo k žiadnym významnejším rozhodnutiam. Vzťahy Európskej únie a Ruskej federácie sú už dlhší čas napäté, a to z viacerých dôvodov. Rusko považuje za diskriminačný tretí liberalizačný balíček Únie, ktorý tvorí energetická legislatíva EÚ, ktorá má zvýšiť konkurenciu na európskom energetickom trhu. Ďalším problematickými otázkami, na ktorých sa EÚ s Ruskom nedokáže zhodnúť, sú napr. otázky dodržiavania ľudských práv, obchodu, víz, ale aj reagovania na situáciu v Sýrii.

Ako Komisia hodnotí súčasné vzťahy medzi Európskou úniou a Ruskou federáciou?

Považuje ich za napäté?

Ak áno, aké budú ďalšie kroky zamerané na zlepšenie vzájomných vzťahov medzi EÚ a Ruskom?

Odpoveď podpredsedníčky Komisie/vysokej predstaviteľky Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(14. februára 2013)

Samit EÚ – Rusko, ktorý sa konal 21. decembra 2012, umožnil podrobnú a konštruktívnu diskusiu, ktorá poslúžila na zhodnotenie súčasného stavu strategického partnerstva EÚ – Rusko. EÚ pokračuje v nastoľovaní závažných otázok k programu EÚ – Rusko na príslušných fórach, kde sa riešia otvoreným a efektívnym spôsobom. Napriek čiastkovým neúspechom v oblastiach, na ktoré poukazuje vážená pani poslankyňa, sa vzhľadom na to, že obidve strany jednoznačne uznávajú prospešnosť vzájomného vzťahu, dá očakávať zaistenie jeho ďalšieho pozitívneho vývoja.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000227/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: EU-Russia summit

On 21 December 2012, a top-level summit of EU and Russian representatives was held in Brussels. During the summit, however, no significant decisions were taken. Relations between the European Union and the Russian Federation have been strained for some time, and for a number of reasons. Russia considers the EU's third liberalisation package, comprising EU energy legislation, which is intended to boost competition on the European energy market, to be discriminatory. Other problematic issues on which the EU and Russia cannot agree include, for example, respect for human rights, trade, visas, and the response to the situation in Syria.

How does the Commission assess the current relations between the European Union and the Russian Federation?

Does it consider them to be tense?

If so, what will be the next steps towards improving mutual relations between the EU and Russia?

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

The 21 December 2012 EU-Russia Summit allowed for detailed and constructive discussions which served to take stock of the current state of the EU-Russia strategic partnership. The EU side continues to raise issues of concern on the EU-Russia agenda in relevant fora where they are dealt with in an open and businesslike manner. Despite setbacks in areas such as those mentioned by the Honorable Member, the clear recognition by both sides of the mutually beneficial nature of their relationship can be expected to ensure its continuing positive development.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000228/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Sprísnenie tabakovej smernice

Príprava revízie smernice 2001/37/ES trvala niekoľko rokov. Revíziou chce Komisia zabezpečiť lepšie fungovanie vnútorného trhu a vysokú úroveň ochrany verejného zdravia cez zníženie atraktívnosti tabakových výrobkov, čo má najmä mladých ľudí odradiť od toho, aby začali fajčiť. Komisia pritom vychádza z údajov, podľa ktorých fajčenie každý rok v Európe zabije takmer 700 000 ľudí a predstavuje najrozšírenejšie zdravotné riziko, ktorému sa dá predchádzať. Predložená legislatíva upravuje výrobu, prezentáciu a predaj tabakových výrobkov a má ambíciu reagovať na nové výskumy, nové produkty a nové marketingové stratégie tabakového priemyslu. Európska asociácia pestovateľov tabaku ale uviedla, že po odstránení značiek a dizajnu, tak ako je uvedené v smernici, bude jediným rozhodovacím faktorom cena, čo zvýhodní dovoz z krajín s nízkymi nákladmi a povedie k strate pracovných miest v Európe.

Aká bude reakcia Komisie na varovania asociácie, že spomínaná revízia bude v konečnom dôsledku viesť k strate pracovných miest v Európe?

Zaoberala sa Komisia upozorneniami členských štátov, ako aj podnikateľských združení v dostatočnej miere?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(13. februára 2013)

Komisia prijala návrh na revíziu smernice o tabakových výrobkoch 19. decembra 2012 ([1]). Návrh sa opiera o dôkladnú analýzu hospodárskych, sociálnych a zdravotných vplyvov, ako aj o analýzu vplyvov na vnútorný trh. Komisia tiež vykonala rozsiahle konzultácie so zainteresovanými stranami vrátane pestovateľov tabaku a výrobcov tabakových výrobkov a dôkladne zvážila vyjadrené obavy.

V návrhu Komisie sa stanovuje zväčšenie zdravotných výstrah na 75 % plochy na prednej a zadnej strane obalu a povinnosť uvádzať kombinované obrazové a textové výstrahy. Ďalšia plocha na zdravotné informácie je vyhradená na bočných stranách obalov cigariet. Ochranné známky môžu byť naďalej umiestňované na zostávajúcej ploche.

Navrhované pravidlá popri zlepšovaní fungovania vnútorného trhu prispejú k zlepšeniu informovanosti občanov o zdravotných rizikách vznikajúcich v dôsledku spotreby tabaku. Táto informovanosť je obzvlášť dôležitá preto, aby odradila mladých ľudí od začatia používania tabakových výrobkov.

Vychádzajúc z možného poklesu spotreby tabaku o 2 % v priebehu piatich rokov po nadobudnutí účinnosti smernice sa odhaduje, že v sektore tabaku by došlo k úbytku 5 700 pracovných miest. Toto by však bolo kompenzované vytvorením približne 8 000 nových pracovných miest v iných odvetviach v dôsledku zvýšenia výdavkov fajčiarov na iné druhy tovaru alebo služieb, ktoré si vyžadujú viac pracovníkov než automatizovaná výroba cigariet.

([1]) COM(2012) 788, final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000228/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Tightening up the Tobacco Directive

It took several years to prepare the revision of Directive 2001/37/EC. Through this revision, the Commission wants to improve the working of the internal market and provide better public health protection by reducing the attractiveness of tobacco products, to dissuade young people in particular from taking up smoking. The Commission takes as its starting point data showing that smoking kills almost 700 000 people every year in Europe, making it the most widely spread preventable health risk. The submitted legislation regulates the production, presentation and sale of tobacco products, and is aimed at responding to new research, new products and the new marketing strategy of the tobacco industry. The European Association of Tobacco Growers, however, has said that, after removing the trademarks and the design, as stated in the directive, the only deciding factor will be price, which will benefit imports from low cost countries and lead to job losses in Europe.

How will the Commission respond to the Association's warning that the revision will ultimately lead to job losses in Europe?

Has the Commission taken sufficient account of the warnings of Member States and business groups?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The Commission adopted a proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive on 19 December 2012 ([1]). The proposal is underpinned by a thorough analysis of the economic, social and health impacts, as well as an analysis of impacts on the internal market. The Commission has also carried out extensive stakeholder consultations, including with tobacco growers and manufacturers and has carefully considered the concerns expressed.

The Commission proposal foresees to increase the health warnings to 75 % on the front and back of the packets and to make combined picture and text warnings mandatory. Some additional surface is reserved for health information on the lateral side of cigarette packages. Trademarks can continue to be put on the remaining surfaces.

Next to improving the functioning of the internal market, the proposed rules will contribute to improve citizens' awareness about the health risks stemming from tobacco consumption. This is particularly important to discourage young people from starting to use tobacco products.

Based on a possible drop in tobacco consumption of 2 % in five years after the entry into force of the directive, it is estimated that 5 700 jobs would be lost in the tobacco sector. However, this would be compensated by the creation of approximately 8 000 new jobs in other sectors as a result of ex-smokers' increased expenditure in other goods or services that require more workers than the automated production of cigarettes.

([1]) COM(2012) 788 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000229/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Zvýšenie kriminality reguláciou tabaku

Smernica o tabakových výrobkoch platí od roku 2001. Stanovuje maximálne limity látok, akými sú nikotín, decht a oxid uhoľnatý, v cigaretách. Európska komisia sa snaží o revíziu tejto smernice, a to s cieľom uľahčiť fungovanie vnútorného trhu v odvetví tabakových výrobkov pri súčasnom zabezpečení vysokej úrovne ochrany verejného zdravia. Podľa správy Transcrime však niektoré zvažované opatrenia môžu viesť k zvýšeniu kriminality a nelegálneho obchodovania. Generické balenia cigariet by sa ľahšie kopírovali, a to by viedlo k veľkému vzostupu pašovania a falšovania. Ak by boli tabakové spoločnosti nútené platiť podľa princípu „kto znečisťuje, ten platí", zvýšila by sa aj výhodnosť falšovania, čierny trh by sa rozšíril a pre políciu by bol podľa správy ťažšie odhaliteľný. Spoločné centrum pre výskum medzinárodného zločinu Transcrime upozorňuje, že Komisia nedostatočne vyhodnotila, ako môžu určité navrhované opatrenia ovplyvniť kriminalitu.

Aká bude reakcia Komisie na upozornenia zo strany Transcrime, že niektoré zvažované opatrenia v súvislosti s uvedenou revíziou môžu viesť k zvýšeniu kriminality a nelegálneho obchodovania?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(27. februára 2013)

Vážená pani poslankyňa naznačuje, že v návrhu revidovanej smernice o tabakových výrobkoch ([1]), ktorý Komisia prijala 19. decembra 2012, sa ráta s generickými baleniami cigariet. Tak to však nie je. V návrhu Komisie sa počíta so zväčšením zdravotných výstrah na 75 % na prednej a zadnej strane balenia a navrhuje sa zavedenie povinnosti uvádzať kombinované obrazové i textové výstrahy. Ďalší priestor je vyhradený pre zdravotné informácie na bočných stranách balení cigariet. Obchodná značka môže byť umiestnená na zostávajúcom priestore.

Podľa posúdenia Komisie nezvýšia navrhované pravidlá, týkajúce sa balenia, riziko nelegálneho obchodovania. Počas prípravnej fázy návrhu revidovať smernicu o tabakových výrobkoch požiadala Komisia zainteresované strany, aby predložili presvedčivé dôkazy o možnom vplyve plánovaných opatrení na nelegálne obchodovanie. Komisia nedostala žiadne dôkazy o tom, že by kombinácia obrazových a textových výstrah zvýšila nelegálne obchodovanie.

V tejto súvislosti je tiež potrebné zvážiť, že nelegálne obchodovanie prebieha už aj v súčasnosti, t. j. súčasné balenia nezabezpečujú účinnú ochranu pred nelegálnym obchodovaním, pričom treba zohľadniť aj vysokú úroveň zručnosti, ktorá sa dosiahla pri falšovaní balení cigariet. Okrem toho je nutné si uvedomiť, že významný a zvyšujúci sa podiel nelegálneho obchodovania sa zakladá na pravých výrobkoch a nie na falošných výrobkoch. V navrhovanej smernici sa preto ráta so systémom sledovania a zisťovania a s bezpečnostnými prvkami, ktoré majú pomôcť znížiť nelegálne obchodovanie.

([1]) COM (2012) 788 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000229/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Increased crime due to tobacco regulation

The Tobacco Products Directive has been in force since 2001. It sets maximum limits for substances such as nicotine, tar and carbon monoxide in cigarettes. The European Commission is seeking to revise the directive in order to facilitate the functioning of the internal market in the tobacco products sector, while at the same time ensuring a high level of public health protection. According to a Transcrime report, however, some of the measures under consideration may lead to increased crime and illegal trade. It would be easier to copy generic packaging of cigarettes, which would lead to a large rise in smuggling and counterfeiting. If the tobacco companies were forced to pay according to the 'polluter pays' principle, this would increase the profitability of counterfeiting and the black market would become bigger and, according to the report, more difficult to uncover. The Joint Research Centre on Transnational Crime, Transcrime, notes that the Commission has insufficiently assessed how some of the proposed measures might affect crime.

What will the Commission's response be to Transcrime's observation that some of the measures envisaged in connection with this revision may result in an increase in crime and illegal trade?

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

The Honourable Member suggests that the proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive ([1]), adopted by the Commission on 19 December 2012, foresees generic packaging. This is not the case. The Commission proposal foresees to increase the health warnings to 75% on the front and back of the pack and to make combined picture and text warnings mandatory. Additional space is reserved for health information on the lateral sides of cigarette packs. Trademarks can be put on the remaining surfaces.

In the Commission's assessment, the proposed rules on packaging will not increase the risk of illicit trade. During the preparatory phase of the proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive, the Commission asked stakeholders to provide compelling evidence regarding the possible impact of measures envisaged on illicit trade. The Commission did not receive any evidence that combined picture and text warnings would increase illicit trade.

In this respect it also needs to be considered that illicit trade is already taking place today, i.e. the current packages do not provide an effective protection against illicit trade taking also into account the high level of expertise reached in counterfeiting the packaging. Moreover it needs to be considered that a significant and increasing share of the illicit trade is based on genuine products and not counterfeits. This is why the proposed Directive foresees a tracking and tracing system and security features to help reduce illicit trade.

([1]) COM(2012) 788 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000230/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Väčšia transparentnosť v oblasti liečiv

Výbor Európskeho parlamentu pre životné prostredie, verejné zdravie a bezpečnosť potravín nedávno schválil legislatívu o väčšej transparentnosti v cenotvorbe a preplácaní liekov, ktorá by mala zlepšiť prístup pacientov k dostupným liekom. Revízia smernice č. 89/105/EEC, smernice o transparentnosti, má za cieľ zabezpečiť dobré fungovanie jednotného trhu a zároveň predchádzať zbytočným zdržaniam pri rozhodovaní o stanovení ceny lieku a výške úhrad. Europoslanci však odporúčajú pri generických liekoch 60-dňovú lehotu na určenie ceny lieku a zaradenie do systému úhrad. Rozhodnutia o nových liekoch budú musieť padnúť do 180 dní, pričom táto lehota má zahŕňať aj všetky procedurálne kroky a potrebné posúdenia zdravotníckej technológie. Komisia pre tento účel navrhovala lehotu 30 a 120 dní.

Aký má Komisia názor na predĺženie lehoty na určenie ceny lieku a zaradenie do systému úhrad a lehoty na rozhodnutia o nových liekoch?

Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie
(15. februára 2013)

V návrhu Komisie na revíziu smernice 89/105/EHS, ktorá sa týka vnútroštátnych rozhodnutí v oblasti cenotvorby a preplácania liekov, sa rozlišuje medzi originálnymi a generickými liekmi.

Podľa návrhu zostane lehota pre originálne lieky, ktoré sú predmetom hodnotenia zdravotníckych technológií (HTA – Health Technology Assessment) nezmenená (180 dní – ako je stanovené v súčasnej smernici 89/105/EHS). Skrátenie lehoty pre originálne lieky zo 180 na 120 dní by sa uplatňovalo iba vtedy, ak by sa na uvedenú kategóriu výrobkov nevzťahoval zložitejší postup hodnotenia zdravotníckych technológií.

V prípade generických liekov Komisia namiesto súčasnej lehoty 180 dní navrhuje lehotu 30 dní, čo predstavuje úsporu pre rozpočty zdravotníctva aj pre pacientov (v prípade doplatkov za lieky). Je dôležité, aby sa zaviedla zásada, že pre generické lieky sú potrebné oveľa kratšie lehoty, lebo vlastnosti týchto výrobkov sú už dobre známe. Potreba zaviesť významné skrátenie lehôt pre generické lieky nadväzuje na vyšetrovanie vo farmaceutickom odvetví vykonané Komisiou ([1]), z ktorého vyplýva, že keby generiká vstupovali na trh ihneď po skončení patentovej ochrany, dosiahli by sa významné úspory pre rozpočty zdravotníctva.

V Európskom parlamente a Rade však naďalej prebiehajú rokovania s cieľom určiť najvhodnejšie lehoty pre generiká.

([1]) Oznámenie Komisie o vyšetrovaní vo farmaceutickom odvetví, KOM(2009) 351; Pracovný dokument útvarov Komisie, SEK(2009) 952.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000230/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Greater transparency in the area of medicines

The European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety recently approved legislation on greater transparency in the pricing and reimbursement of medical products. The revision of Directive 89/105/EEC, the Transparency Directive, has the aim of securing a properly functioning single market, while preventing unnecessary delays in decisions on setting medical product prices and reimbursement levels. In the case of generic medicines, however, MEPs recommend a 60-day deadline for setting the prices of medicines and including them in the reimbursement system. Decisions on new medicines must be taken within 180 days, but this deadline should also include all of the procedural steps and necessary assessments of medical technology. The Commission proposed a deadline of 30 to 120 days for this.

What is the Commission's opinion on extending the deadline for setting the prices of medical products and including them in the reimbursement system, and the deadlines for deciding on new medical products?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The Commission proposal for a revision of Directive 89/105/EEC concerning national decisions on pricing and reimbursement of medicinal products makes a distinction between originator and generic medicinal products.

According to the proposal, the time limit for originators that are subject to HTA (Health Technology Assessment) has remained unchanged (180 days — as provided by the current Directive 89/105/EEC). A reduction of the period for originators from 180 to 120 days would only apply whenever the more complex procedure of a HTA would not be applicable to this category of products.

With regard to generic medicinal products, the time limit of 30 days proposed by the Commission, instead of the current 180 days, is meant to ensure savings for healthcare budgets and for patients (in case of co-payment). It is important to establish the principle that much shorter time limits for generics are necessary since the characteristics of these products are already well known. The need to introduce a significant reduction of the time limits for generics is a follow-up to the Commission's Pharmaceutical Sector Inquiry ([1]), which demonstrated that important savings for healthcare budgets would have been made had generics entered the market immediately, following the loss of exclusivity.

Negotiations are however ongoing both in the European Parliament and in the Council in order to determine the most appropriate time limit for generics.

([1]) Commission Communication on the Pharmaceutical Sector Inquiry, COM(2009)351; Staff Working Document, SEC(2009)952.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000231/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Vyšetrovanie eurofondov v Poľsku

Európska komisia by mala v súčasnej dobe prešetrovať pochybné čerpanie eurofondov v Poľsku. Konkrétne ide o oblasť výstavby verejnej infraštruktúry, ktorú spravuje poľská agentúra GDDKiA. Ide o jeden z najväčších programov v Európe, ktorý disponuje prostriedkami v hodnote 5,5 mld. EUR. Dodávatelia však agentúru obviňujú, že im nezaplatila faktúry v hodnote desiatok miliárd EUR. Agentúra sa bráni tým, že konala v súlade so zákonom a k nevyplateniu faktúr došlo z dôvodu, že dodávatelia nedodali požadovanú kvalitu práce. Poľsko je pritom najväčším prijímateľom kohéznej pomoci, v rokoch 2007 až 2013 dostalo 68 mld. EUR a podobnú sumu očakáva aj v budúcom programovacom období. Problémy s poľskou agentúrou sa dotkli celého európskeho stavebného priemyslu. Meškanie platieb a nedoplatky v Poľsku majú negatívny vplyv na finančnú kondíciu ďalších firiem.

V akom štádiu sa momentálne nachádza vyšetrovanie prípadu pochybného čerpania eurofondov v Poľsku?

Dospela už Komisia k určitým záverom?

Ak áno, kedy budú výsledky vyšetrovania zverejnené a aký bude nasledovný postup?

Odpoveď pána Hahna v mene Komisie
(4. marca 2013)

Zmluvné vzťahy medzi príjemcom finančných prostriedkov EÚ (v tomto prípade Poľskou agentúrou GDDKiA) a jeho dodávateľmi nepatria do právomoci Komisie. V takýchto prípadoch, ak je niektorá zo zmluvných strán presvedčená, že dochádza k nesprávnemu plneniu zmluvy, za riešenie situácie je zodpovedný súd alebo iné inštitúcie príslušného členského štátu.

Komisia však zodpovedá za zabezpečenie zákonného a riadneho použitia finančných prostriedkov EÚ. Komisia by sa teda mala uistiť, že riadiaci orgán členského štátu realizuje programy a projekty spolufinancované EÚ v súlade s príslušnými pravidlami na úrovni EÚ i daného členského štátu.

Komisia požiadala riadiaci orgán, aby podal správu o situácii spoločností z odvetvia výstavby ciest, ktoré v roku 2011 a 2012 vyhlásili bankrot, ako aj o možných dosahoch na realizáciu projektov výstavby ciest spolufinancovaných EÚ. Komisia tiež požiadala poľský orgán auditu o audit príslušných projektov. Výsledky tohto auditu sa očakávajú koncom februára.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000231/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Investigation of EU funds in Poland

The European Commission should, presently, examine the questionable spending of EU funds in Poland. Specifically, this concerns the area of the construction of public infrastructure managed by the Polish agency GDDKiA. This is one of the largest programmes in Europe, which has at its disposal resources worth EUR 5.5 billion. Contractors, however, accuse the agency of not paying their invoices, amounting to tens of billions of euro. The agency's defence is that it acted in accordance with the law and that invoices were not paid because the contractors failed to deliver the required quality of work. Yet, Poland is the biggest beneficiary of cohesion support, and it received EUR 68 billion between 2007 and 2013 and is expecting a similar amount in the next programming period. The problems with the Polish agency have affected the whole of the European construction industry. Delays and arrears in payments in Poland have a negative impact on the financial state of other firms.

How is the investigation of the questionable spending of EU funds in Poland currently progressing?

Has the Commission come to a particular conclusion?

If so, when will the results of the investigation be made public, and what will the next step be?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

Contractual relationships between a beneficiary of EU funds (in this case the Polish agency GDDKiA) and its contractors are not within the Commission's competences. In such cases, should one of the parties consider that there is maladministration of the contract, the national court of justice or other national institutions are responsible for addressing such issues.

However, the Commission has responsibility to ensure that EU funds are used in a legal and regular way. This means that the Commission should ensure that the national managing authority implements EU co-financed programmes and projects in compliance with applicable EU and national rules.

The Commission has asked the managing authority to report on the situation concerning the construction companies in the road sector which have filed for bankruptcy in 2011 and 2012 and its potential impact on the implementation of road projects co-financed by the EU. In addition, the Commission has asked the Polish audit authority to launch an audit of the affected projects. The results of the audit are expected by the end of February.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000232/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Vzťah Veľkej Británie s EÚ

Veľká Británia je protieurópsky naladená už dlhšiu dobu. Krízu v eurozóne chcú Briti využiť na opätovné vyjednávanie o otázke právneho vzťahu Veľkej Británie s Úniou. Úmyslom Veľkej Británie je navrátenie určitých právomocí, Británia chce teda ešte viac výnimiek z pravidiel EÚ ako nadobudla doposiaľ. Krajina totiž už dnes využíva niekoľko výnimiek z európskych politík, medzi nimi vlastnú menu, zachovanie hraničných kontrol a podobne. Každý členský štát má svoje špecifické požiadavky, ktoré musia byť v dostatočnej miere zohľadňované, Európska únia je však založená na systéme spolupráce.

Môžu podľa názoru Komisie súčasné snahy Veľkej Británie ohroziť samotnú Úniu a jej vnútorný trh?

Ak áno, ako bude Komisia v tomto prípade postupovať?

Odpoveď pána Barrosa v mene Komisie
(20. februára 2013)

Je na britskej vláde a na obyvateľoch Spojeného kráľovstva, aby určili, čo považujú za najlepší prístup z hľadiska pozície Spojeného kráľovstva v rámci Európskej únie. Prostredníctvom svojho členstva Spojené kráľovstvo pozitívne prispelo k realizácii európskych politík od prehlbovania jednotného trhu cez rozšírenie a politiku v oblasti klímy a energetiky, až po udržiavanie otvorenosti Európy voči svetu a rozvoj nových obchodných príležitostí. Komisia sa domnieva, že za predpokladu, že si to Spojené kráľovstvo želá, je v európskom záujme a vo vlastnom záujme Spojeného kráľovstva, aby Británia bola naďalej aktívnym členom EÚ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000232/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: The relationship between the United Kingdom and the EU

The United Kingdom has been anti-European for quite a while. The British want to use the eurozone crisis to re-negotiate the issue of the UK's legal relationship with the EU. The UK intends to repatriate certain powers, and therefore wants even more exemptions from EU rules than it has had up to now. The country already makes use of a number of exemptions from EU policies, including having its own currency, keeping its border controls, etc. Each Member State has its own specific requirements which must be taken into account sufficiently; the European Union is, however, based on a system of cooperation.

In the opinion of the Commission, might the current efforts of the United Kingdom undermine the EU itself and its internal market?

If so, how will the Commission proceed in this case?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

It is for the British Government and the British people to set out what they feel is the best approach to the UK's place within the European Union. Through its membership the UK has positively contributed to the realisation of European policies from the deepening of the single market, to enlargement, to climate and energy policy, to keeping Europe open to the world and developing new trade opportunities. The Commission considers that, provided that the UK so wishes, it is in the European interest and in the UK's own interest for Britain to continue to be an active member of the EU.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000233/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Zvyšovanie cien energií a zdrojov

Spoločnosť PwC vykonala globálny prieskum medzi takmer 800 výkonnými riaditeľmi z celého sveta, a to v súvislosti so zvyšovaním nákladov na energie a prírodné zdroje. 53 % z nich uviedlo, že problém rastu nákladov na energie a prírodné zdroje rozhodujúco vplýva na spotrebu a správanie spotrebiteľov a je to jedna z najväčších hrozieb pre vyhliadky rastu. Obavy alebo extrémne obavy z nákladov na energie a prírodné zdroje potvrdilo 24 % výkonných riaditeľov firiem zo západnej Európy. Spoločnosť zároveň upozorňuje na skutočnosť, že za posledný rok sa objavili viaceré významné príklady extrémnych prejavov počasia, cenových šokov na trhoch s komoditami a prudké nárasty cien energií. V súčasnom oveľa náročnejšom prostredí pre rast si firmy nemôžu dovoliť cenové šoky v súvislosti s energetickými nákladmi a nákladmi na zdroje.

Bude sa Komisia výsledkami spomínaného prieskumu zaoberať?

Ak áno, predostrie návrh určitých opatrení zameraných na zmiernenie negatívneho vplyvu rastu cien energií na rast?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(28. februára 2013)

Komisia nepredkladá návrhy na základe štúdií tretích strán. Samozrejme si je vedomá dôležitosti bezpečnej a dostupnej dodávky energie a zdrojov a ich účinného využívania. Cieľom existujúcich politík je zabezpečiť oboje.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000233/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Increasing prices of energy and resources

PwC conducted a global survey of nearly 800 executive directors from around the world in connection with the rising costs of energy and natural resources. 53% of them said that the rise in energy and natural resource costs had a decisive, negative impact on consumption and consumer behaviour, and that it was one of the biggest threats to growth prospects. 24% of executive directors of companies from Western Europe confirmed that they were concerned or extremely concerned about the cost of energy and natural resources. The company also noted that, last year, there were a number of important examples of extreme weather events, price shocks in commodity markets, and sharp increases in energy prices. In today's much more challenging growth environment, companies cannot afford price shocks in energy and resource costs.

Will the Commission take account of the results of this survey?

If so, will it bring forward a proposal for specific measures aimed at mitigating the negative impact of energy price increases on growth?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission does not put forward proposals based on third party studies. It is of course aware of the importance of a secure and affordable supply of energy and resources and their efficient use, and its existing policies aim at ensuring both.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000234/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10. januára 2013)

Vec: Zvyšovanie globálnej teploty

Meteorológovia upozorňujú na skutočnosť, že rok 2013 bude medzi 0,43 a 0,71 stupňa Celzia teplejší ako dlhodobý globálny priemer 14 stupňov. Najpravdepodobnejší odhad je nárast o 0,57 stupňa Celzia. Vedci tvrdia, že rastúce teploty môžu byť spôsobené prirodzenou variabilitou klímy a globálnym otepľovaním spôsobeným emisiami skleníkových plynov. Podľa údajov Svetovej meteorologickej organizácie bolo od roku 2001 zaznamenaných 12 globálne najteplejších rokov. Končiaci rok 2012 bol v poradí deviatym najteplejším s nárastom o 0,45 stupňa Celzia oproti dlhodobému priemeru. Táto skutočnosť však vedie k nárastu hladiny oceánov a k extrémnemu počasiu. Ohrozené sú najmä nízko položené ostrovy a krajiny citlivé na zvyšujúcu sa hladinu oceánov a morí, záplavy a hurikány.

Akým spôsobom prispieva Komisia k boju proti zvyšovaniu globálnej teploty?

Odpoveď pani Hedegaardovej v mene Komisie
(26. februára 2013)

V rámci klimaticko-energetického balíka má Európska únia komplexný súbor opatrení, ktoré do roku 2020 umožnia EÚ znížiť emisie skleníkových plynov o 20 % oproti roku 1990, spolu so systémom obchodovania s emisnými kvótami EÚ a s rozhodnutím o spoločnom úsilí, ktoré je kľúčovým prvkom politiky v oblasti klímy. Komisia okrem toho naďalej podporuje členské štáty pri dosahovaní ich cieľov prostredníctvom opatrení pre celú EÚ, akými sú napríklad smernica o energetickej efektívnosti, návrh na zvýšenie výdavkov EÚ v oblasti klímy aspoň na 20 % rozpočtu EÚ na obdobie 2014 – 2020, normy týkajúce sa emisií CO_2 z vozidiel na roky 2015 a 2020, vykonávanie demonštračného programu „NER 300“ a adaptačnej stratégie EÚ.

EÚ tiež aktívne spolupracuje s medzinárodnými partnermi v rámci Rámcového dohovoru Organizácie Spojených národov o zmene klímy (UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) s cieľom zabezpečiť, aby globálny nárast teploty nepresiahol 2° C. Komisia podporuje medzinárodné opatrenia v oblasti klímy, a to tým, že realizuje predĺženie Kjótskeho protokolu do roku 2020, na ktorom sa úspešne dohodlo v Dauhe v roku 2012. Komisia okrem toho poskytuje oficiálnu rozvojovú pomoc a financovanie opatrení v oblasti zmeny klímy v rozvojových krajinách s cieľom zachovať možnosti nízkoemisného vývoja. Komisia sa tiež aktívne zúčastňuje na medzinárodných fórach, ktoré zabezpečujú medzinárodné opatrenia v oblasti klímy, napr. prispieva k činnostiam skupiny Medzivládneho panelu o zmene klímy (IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), skupín G8 a G20, Fóra najvýznamnejších ekonomík o energetike a klíme (MEF – Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate), Organizácie pre hospodársku spoluprácu a rozvoj (OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) a Medzinárodnej agentúry pre energiu (IEA – International Energy Agency).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000234/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Global temperature rise

Meteorologists warn that 2013 will be between 0.43 and 0.71 degrees Celsius warmer than the long-term global average of 14 degrees. The most likely estimate is an increase of 0.57 degrees Celsius. Scientists say rising temperatures may be due to natural variability of the climate and global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions. According to data from the World Meteorological Organisation, the 12 warmest years globally were recorded since 2001. The year ending, 2012, was the ninth warmest, with an increase of 0.45 degrees compared to the long-term average. This fact leads, however, to an increase in sea levels and to extreme weather conditions. Particularly at risk are low-lying islands and countries vulnerable to increasing ocean and sea levels, floods and hurricanes.

How is the Commission contributing to the fight against the global temperature increase?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

With the climate and energy package, the European Union has a comprehensive set of measures in place, which will enable the EU to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20% below 1990 levels by 2020, with the EU Emissions Trading System and the effort sharing decision as the core of climate policy. Furthermore the Commission continues to support Member States to reach their targets through EU-wide measures such as the Energy Efficiency Directive, the proposal to increase of EU climate-related expenditure to at least 20% of the 2014-2020 EU budget, the vehicle CO_2 standards for 2015 and 2020, the implementation of the 'NER 300' demonstration programme and the EU Adaptation Strategy.

The EU is also engaging proactively with international partners under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in order to secure our chances to stay below 2°C global temperature increase. The Commission is supporting international climate action by implementing the extension of the Kyoto Protocol until 2020, as successfully agreed in Doha in 2012. Furthermore the Commission is providing official development assistance and climate finance for developing countries to reap low-emission development opportunities and participating actively in international fora enabling international climate action, e.g. contributing to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the G8 and G20, the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate (MEF), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Energy Agency (IEA).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000236/13
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Improving safety for trailers

At present there is no legislation within Europe requiring trailer and caravan manufacturers to provide suitable lifting points and lifting devices to help improve health and safety, unlike in Australia and New Zealand where mandatory standards are in place.

As new blanket legislation is being introduced for trailers and caravans across Europe, will the Commission propose the inclusion of rules for safe and suitable lifting within this new legislation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

The Commission is not aware of any specific problems with lifting points and the lifting devices of trailers and caravans. These devices are not regulated by EU legislation. The case is similar for cars.

EU legislation focuses on requirements concerning road safety and environmental protection, it does not deal with comfort issues, equipment used for the maintenance of the vehicle or issues relating to the commercial relationship between manufacturers and their clients.

The purpose of the current revision of the legislation mentioned by the Honourable Member is to update the specific requirements applying to special purpose vehicles, including caravans but not trailers which fall under common legislation. This revision implements the requirements of Regulation (EC) 661/2009 on the General safety of vehicles for the special needs of special purpose vehicles. In particular Regulation (EC) 661/2009 introduced a number of new safety systems and replaced 50 EU Directives by International Regulations from the United Nations (UNECE Regulations).

Since lifting points and lifting devices are not regulated at EU level for 'normal' vehicles, regulations for special purpose vehicles are not foreseen either.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000237/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(10 de janeiro de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório do FMI sobre a reforma do Estado em Portugal

Foi hoje conhecida a versão de um relatório elaborado pelo FMI intitulado «Portugal. Rethinking the State — selected expenditures reform options», datado de janeiro de 2013, estudo esse que foi solicitado pelo Governo português. Este relatório contém recomendações para uma «reforma» do Estado que, entre outras, incluem: cortes de 20 % nas pensões da função pública, um novo aumento das taxas moderadoras no Serviço Nacional de Saúde, corte de serviços gratuitos no Serviço Nacional de Saúde, cortes nas remunerações das horas extraordinárias pagas aos médicos, aumento do valor das propinas no ensino superior, despedimento de 50 mil professores, redução do montante e período temporal de usufruto do subsídio de desemprego, o aumento da idade da reforma.

Como sabemos, o FMI, a Comissão Europeia e o Banco Central Europeu assinaram conjuntamente com o Governo português um «memorando de entendimento» enquadrado num programa de assistência financeira que continha já várias medidas ditas de austeridade, que, tendo retirado direitos e rendimentos aos trabalhadores portugueses, não resolveram, mas agravaram a situação económica e social do país.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Pretende continuar a aprofundar as medidas impostas ao povo português que têm implicado a retirada de direitos sociais e laborais, a destruição das funções sociais do Estado e o aumento do desemprego?

2. Pretende, no futuro, sugerir alterações às medidas contidas no «Memorando de Entendimento» no sentido das medidas que o FMI sugere no relatório citado?

3. Que ilações retira dos resultados profundamente negativos da aplicação das medidas contidas no «Memorando de Entendimento» que têm conduzido à recessão económica, à destruição massiva de postos de trabalho e ao generalizado agravamento dos problemas sociais e económicos do país?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(19 de fevereiro de 2013)

O referido relatório foi elaborado pelo FMI em colaboração com o Banco Mundial, em resposta a um pedido do Governo português e na sequência de uma missão de assistência técnica realizada por estas instituições em Portugal. A Comissão Europeia não esteve diretamente envolvida na elaboração do relatório.

O Governo português pretende aplicar uma reforma abrangente do setor público, graças à qual deverão ser alcançadas poupanças orçamentais no montante de 4 mil milhões de euros e, ao mesmo tempo, o funcionamento do setor público deverá tornar-se mais eficiente. As propostas relativas a esta reforma serão debatidas aquando da 7.ª revisão do Programa de Ajustamento Económico e finalizadas no programa de estabilidade de Portugal para 2013.

A economia portuguesa está a atravessar uma profunda recessão, que é uma consequência da necessária correção dos graves desequilíbrios acumulados nos anos anteriores à crise que causaram a perda de acesso do país aos mercados financeiros. O Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal visa corrigir estes desequilíbrios e voltar a colocar a economia portuguesa numa trajetória de crescimento sustentável e de criação de emprego. A assistência financeira prestada pelos Estados-Membros da UE ajudou Portugal a realizar com êxito este programa de reforma sem um colapso financeiro que teria tido consequências económicas e sociais dramáticas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000237/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: IMF report on Portuguese State reform

An IMF report dated January 2013 entitled 'Portugal: Rethinking the State — Selected Expenditure Reform Options' was released today. This report, which was requested by the Portuguese Government, contains recommendations for a State 'reform' that includes *inter alia*: 20 % cuts to public sector pensions; a further increase in National Health Service user fees; cuts to free services on the National Health Service; reduced overtime payments for doctors; increased tuition fees for higher education; the dismissal of 50 000 teachers; lower and shorter unemployment benefits; and a higher retirement age.

It is common knowledge that the IMF, the Commission and the European Central Bank concluded a 'Memorandum of Understanding' with the Portuguese Government as part of a financial assistance programme containing various austerity measures. Having taken away the rights and earnings of Portuguese workers, these measures have not only failed to resolve the country's economic and social situation, but have made it worse.

In view of this, we would ask the Commission:

1. Will it continue to impose further measures on the Portuguese people, which have so far led to the removal of social and labour rights, the destruction of the State's social functions, and rising unemployment?

2. Will it in future suggest changes to the measures contained in the 'Memorandum of Understanding' as regards the measures that the IMF suggests in this report?

3. What conclusions does it draw from the profoundly negative impact of implementing the measures contained in the 'Memorandum of Understanding', which have led to economic recession, massive job losses and a general worsening of the country's social and economic problems?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

The mentioned report was prepared by the IMF in cooperation with the World Bank in response to a request by the Portuguese Government and following a technical assistance mission by these institutions to Portugal. The European Commission was not directly involved in the preparation of the report.

The Portuguese Government aims to implement a broad reform of the public sector through which budgetary savings of EUR 4 billion should be achieved while making the operation of the public sector more efficient. Respective proposals will be discussed at the 7th Review of the Economic Adjustment Programme and finalised in the Portuguese Stability Programme for 2013.

The Portuguese economy is currently undergoing a deep recession which is a consequence of the necessary correction of the severe imbalances that had built up in the years before the crisis and which caused Portugal's loss of access to the financial market. The Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal aims at correcting these imbalances and bringing the Portuguese economy back on a sustainable growth and jobs path. The financial assistance provided by the EU Member States has helped Portugal to carry through this reform programme without a financial meltdown which would have had very dramatic economic and social consequences.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000238/13
aan de Raad
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(10 januari 2013)

Betreft: Syrische en Palestijnse vluchtelingen

De crisis in Syrië verergert met de dag. Op 7 januari 2013 stonden er volgens gegevens van UNHCR ongeveer 400 000 Syrische vluchtelingen geregistreerd en wachtten meer dan 600 000 vluchtelingen nog op registratie.

1. Het gemeenschappelijk hervestigingprogramma van de EU is dit jaar in werking getreden. In hoeverre voorziet dit programma in de hervestiging van Syrische vluchtelingen? Hebben lidstaten het geplande aantal te hervestigen vluchtelingen verhoogd met het oog op de Syrische crisis, en zo niet, zullen ze dit doen?

2. In augustus 2012 heeft UNHCR landen gevraagd om 500 erkende niet-Syrische vluchtelingen op te nemen die na de oorlog in Irak in Syrië verbleven (afkomstig uit landen als Afghanistan, Somalië en Soedan). In hoeverre zijn lidstaten aan dit verzoek tegemoet gekomen? Zo niet, welke maatregelen zullen er genomen worden om hieraan tegemoet te komen?

3. Een bijzonder kwetsbare groep vluchtelingen is de Palestijnen in de 65 vluchtelingenkampen in Syrië. Veel Palestijnen hebben naar onbekende bestemmingen moeten vluchten, in het bijzonder na de schietpartijen bij het vluchtelingenkamp Yarmouk (het grootste kamp voor Palestijnen in Syrië) in december 2012. Volgens mediaberichten weigeren buurlanden steeds vaker om Palestijnen op te vangen. Zijn de lidstaten bereid maatregelen te nemen om de Palestijnse gemeenschap te beschermen, bijvoorbeeld door druk te zetten op buurlanden om de Palestijnse vluchtelingen uit Syrië op dezelfde manier te behandelen als niet-Palestijnse vluchtelingen?

Antwoord
(2 mei 2013)

De Raad heeft de Commissie in oktober 2012 eenparig geprezen om haar inzet bij het opzetten van een regionaal beschermingsprogramma (RPP), dat een antwoord moet bieden op de crisis in Syrië, en haar ermee belast er zo spoedig mogelijk gestalte aan te geven. De ministers wezen er bij die gelegenheid op dat nauwe samenwerking met internationale organisaties zoals de UNHCR van het grootste belang is. De operationele aspecten van de uitvoering van het RPP — waarbij rekening is gehouden met de specifieke situatie van de Palestijnse vluchtelingen — behoren tot de bevoegdheid van de Commissie. De Commissie is ook belast met de uitvoering van projecten die specifiek op de Palestijnse vluchtelingen in Syrië gericht zijn.

Tijdens dezelfde zitting van de Raad in oktober 2012, hebben de ministers gemeld welk effect de migratiebewegingen hebben op de lidstaten en hoe zij met die ontwikkelingen omgaan. Volgens statistieken van Eurostat hebben in 2012 ongeveer 23 500 Syriërs in de EU bescherming gezocht.

In meer algemene zin heeft de Raad de situatie in Syrië herhaaldelijk besproken en herhaald dat de inzet van EU en haar lidstaten wat het verlenen van humanitaire bijstand betreft, onverkort gehandhaafd blijft. De EU en haar lidstaten hebben immers sedert het begin van de crisis voortvarend humanitaire hulp geboden in de regio. Zoals reeds meermaals is verklaard, was de EU ook ingenomen met de inspanningen van de buurlanden om Syrische vluchtelingen op te vangen die op de loop zijn gegaan voor het geweld in Syrië, en heeft zij haar solidariteit met hen betuigd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000238/13
to the Council
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Syrian and Palestinian refugees

The crisis in Syria is worsening from day to day. As at 7 January 2013, around 400 000 Syrian refugees have been registered and more than 600 000 still await registration, according to UNHCR data.

1. The Joint EU Resettlement Programme became operational this year. To what extent does this programme provide for the resettlement of Syrian refugees? Have Member States increased the planned number of refugees to be resettled in view of the Syrian crisis, and if not, will they do so?

2. In August 2012, the UNHCR asked countries to take in 500 recognised non-Syrian refugees, who were staying in Syria after the Iraq war (from such countries as Afghanistan, Somalia and Sudan). To what extent did Member States meet this request? If not, what measures will be taken to meet it?

3. A particularly vulnerable group of refugees are the Palestinians in the 65 refugee camps in Syria. Many Palestinians have had to flee to unknown destinations, especially after the shootings at Yarmouk Camp (the largest refugee camp for Palestinians in Syria) in December 2012. According to media reports, neighbouring countries are increasingly refusing to provide shelter to Palestinians. Are the Member States willing to take measures to protect the Palestinian community, for example by putting pressure on neighbouring countries to treat Palestinian refugees from Syria in the same way as non-Palestinian refugees?

Reply
(2 May 2013)

In October 2012 the Council unanimously welcomed the Commission's work regarding the establishment of a Regional Protection Programme (RPP) in response to the Syrian crisis and tasked the Commission with setting up the programme as soon as possible. On that occasion Ministers stressed that close coordination with international organisations such as the UNHCR was of the greatest importance. The operational aspects of the implementation of the RPP — which take into account the particular situation of Palestinian refugees — fall within the Commission's remit. The Commission is also responsible for running projects aimed specifically at Palestinian refugees living in Syria.

At the same Council session in October 2012, ministers reported on how the crisis was impacting on their Member States in terms of migratory movements and how they were responding to those developments. According to statistics from Eurostat, some 23 500 Syrians have sought protection in EU during 2012.

More generally, over recent months the Council has discussed the situation in Syria on a number of occasions and has confirmed the continuous commitment of the EU and its Member States in terms of the provision of humanitarian assistance. The EU and its Member States have indeed been very active in providing humanitarian aid in the region since the beginning of the crisis. As stated on several occasions, the EU has also welcomed the efforts made by neighbouring countries to host Syrian refugees who have fled the violence in Syria and has expressed its solidarity with them.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000239/13
aan de Commissie
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(10 januari 2013)

Betreft: Syrische en Palestijnse vluchtelingen

De crisis in Syrië verergert met de dag. Volgens gegevens van UNHCR stonden er op 7 januari 2013 ongeveer 400 000 Syrische vluchtelingen geregistreerd en wachtten meer dan 600 000 vluchtelingen nog op registratie.

1. Volgens mediaberichten is de situatie in vluchtelingenkampen in de regio zodanig verslechterd dat de opvangvoorzieningen onmenselijk zijn geworden, vooral gezien de huidige barre winterse omstandigheden. In december 2012 heeft de Commissie aangekondigd dat er 30 miljoen euro extra wordt uitgetrokken om mensen die door de Syrische crisis zijn getroffen te helpen, zowel in Syrië zelf als in buurlanden. Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van het totale bedrag dat aan humanitaire hulp is besteed om mensen te helpen die getroffen zijn door de crisis, en kan zij aangeven waaraan dit bedrag is besteed?

2. Het aantal Syrische vluchtelingen neemt toe en de capaciteit van buurlanden om deze vluchtelingen op te vangen bereikt zijn grens. Er wordt verwacht dat steeds meer Syrische vluchtelingen gedwongen zullen worden hun toevlucht te zoeken in de EU. Is de Commissie bereid voor te stellen dat lidstaten gebruikmaken van het in de richtlijn tijdelijke bescherming voorziene mechanisme? Welke andere maatregelen heeft de Commissie genomen om de toestroom, die waarschijnlijk in omvang zal toenemen, te verwerken?

3. Een bijzonder kwetsbare groep vluchtelingen is de Palestijnen in de 65 vluchtelingenkampen in Syrië. Veel Palestijnen hebben naar onbekende bestemmingen moeten vluchten, in het bijzonder na de schietpartijen bij het vluchtelingenkamp Yarmouk (het grootste kamp voor Palestijnen in Syrië) in december 2012. Volgens mediaberichten weigeren buurlanden steeds vaker om Palestijnen op te vangen. Is de Commissie bereid maatregelen te nemen om de Palestijnse gemeenschap te beschermen, bijvoorbeeld door druk te zetten op buurlanden om de Palestijnse vluchtelingen uit Syrië op dezelfde manier te behandelen als niet-Palestijnse vluchtelingen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(4 maart 2013)

Tot op heden heeft de EU meer dan 125 miljoen EUR vrijgemaakt voor humanitaire hulp aan personen in nood die in Syrië verblijven of Syrië ontvlucht zijn en bescherming hebben gevonden in buurlanden (Turkije, Libanon, Jordanië en Irak). Deze middelen worden toegewezen via verschillende VN-agentschappen en niet-gouvernementele partnerorganisaties. Ze worden gebruikt om levensnoodzakelijke noodhulp, voedsel, noodopvang, herintegratie en basisgezondheidszorg, psychosociale ondersteuning, water en sanitaire voorzieningen te financieren, en om ervoor te zorgen dat de personen die internationale bescherming van de UNHCR nodig hebben, worden geregistreerd.

De Commissie is bereid om samen met het Europees Ondersteuningsbureau voor asielzaken (EASO) hulp te verlenen en te coördineren voor lidstaten die onder grote druk kunnen komen te staan. Het gaat in het bijzonder ook om financiële steun en deskundige bijstand, ter aanvulling van de nationale noodvoorzieningen van de lidstaten.

In geval van een massale toestroom of dreigende massale toestroom van ontheemden naar de Unie, zou in de hele EU tijdelijke bescherming kunnen worden toegepast op grond van de richtlijn inzake tijdelijke bescherming. Als deze situatie zich voordoet, zal de Commissie grondig onderzoeken of het wenselijk is voor te stellen dit mechanisme te activeren.

De Commissie is een dialoog aangegaan met de gastlanden in de regio teneinde hen te helpen bij hun voortdurende inspanningen om degelijke internationale bescherming te bieden aan iedereen die daar behoefte aan heeft, ongeacht de nationaliteit.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000239/13
to the Commission
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Syrian and Palestinian refugees

The crisis in Syria is worsening from day to day. As at 7 January 2013, around 400 000 Syrian refugees have been registered and more than 600 000 still await registration, according to UNHCR data.

1. According to media reports, the situation in refugee camps in the region has deteriorated to such an extent that reception conditions have become inhumane, especially under the current harsh winter conditions. In December 2012, the Commission announced that an additional EUR 30 million were being allocated to help people affected by the Syrian crisis, both inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. Can the Commission provide an overview of the total amount spent on humanitarian aid to help people affected by the crisis, and indicate how this amount has been spent?

2. The number of Syrian refugees is increasing and the capacity in neighbouring countries to provide shelter for these refugees is reaching saturation point. It is expected that more and more Syrians will be forced to seek refuge inside the EU. Is the Commission willing to propose that Member States make use of the Temporary Protection Directive mechanism? What other measures is the Commission taking to deal with the likely increased influx?

3. A particularly vulnerable group of refugees are the Palestinians in the 65 refugee camps in Syria. Many Palestinians have had to flee to unknown destinations, especially after the shootings at Yarmouk Camp (the largest refugee camp for Palestinians in Syria) in December 2012. According to media reports, neighbouring countries are increasingly refusing to provide shelter to Palestinians. Is the Commission willing to take measures to protect the Palestinian community, for example by putting pressure on neighbouring countries to treat Palestinian refugees from Syria in the same way as non-Palestinian refugees?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

To date, the EU has mobilised over EUR 125 million for humanitarian assistance to persons in need, both those in Syria and those who fled Syria and found shelter in neighbouring countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq). These funds are channelled through several UN-Agencies, and NGO partner organisations. They are being used to finance the provision of life-saving emergency assistance, food, emergency shelter, rehabilitation and basic healthcare, psychosocial support, water and sanitation, as well as to ensure the registration of the persons in need of international protection by UNHCR.

The Commission, together with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), is ready to provide or coordinate assistance, including in particular financial assistance and expert support, to those Member States that could find themselves under particular pressure, to complement Member States' national contingency arrangements.

EU-wide temporary protection under the Temporary Protection Directive could be triggered if there were to be a mass influx or imminent mass influx of displaced persons into the Union. Should such a situation develop, the Commission will give careful consideration to the appropriateness of proposing that this mechanism be activated.

The Commission is engaged in a dialogue with the host countries in the region to support them in their continued efforts to provide adequate international protection to all those who are in need of it, irrespective of their nationality.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000240/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Proteste sunnite in Iraq

L'8 gennaio 2013 diverse fonti mediatiche hanno riferito che da due settimane i cittadini iracheni della comunità sunnita protestano contro quella che ritengono essere una disparità di trattamento della loro comunità religiosa da parte del governo del primo ministro Nouri al-maliki.

I militari iracheni sono stati costretti a disperdere i manifestanti che stavano dimostrando nel nord del paese contro il governo a guida sciita. Le proteste sono proseguite dopo l'arresto delle guardie del corpo assegnate al ministro delle Finanze Rafia al-Issawi, uno dei più alti funzionari sunniti del governo centrale. Molti cittadini sunniti si ritengono discriminati dall'ingiusta applicazione delle leggi da parte del governo contro la loro comunità religiosa.

Le proteste si starebbero intensificando a seguito della rivolta in Siria guidata dai sunniti. Tuttavia, alcune fonti sunnite avrebbero dichiarato che il partito islamico iracheno, ramo dei Fratelli Musulmani, sta guidando la campagna di proteste allo scopo di creare una regione autonoma.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al corrente della recente ondata di proteste sunnite?

2. Come giudica le informazioni in merito alla discriminazione nei confronti della minoranza sunnita in Iraq?

3. Quali misure sta adottando l'UE al fine di promuovere la tolleranza religiosa tra i cittadini iracheni?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 marzo 2013)

L'AR/VP segue con la massima attenzione la situazione in Iraq ed è al corrente delle proteste in corso nelle province a maggioranza sunnita cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare.

L'AR/VP nutre preoccupazione per l'intensificarsi delle tensioni religiose in Iraq e fa sistematicamente appello al governo e ai gruppi politici iracheni perché si impegnino in un dialogo autentico e inclusivo che permetta di appianare le divergenze politiche. Nella sua ultima dichiarazione del 25 gennaio 2013 l'AR/VP ha ribadito l'importanza di assicurare una governance democratica, efficace e inclusiva, estesa a tutto l'Iraq, imperniata sullo stato di diritto e sul rispetto della Costituzione.

L'Unione europea ha sistematicamente sostenuto gli sforzi dell'Iraq verso la democrazia, promuovendo la riconciliazione nazionale come presupposto di un sistema democratico inclusivo ed efficace. L'Unione europea continuerà a seguire gli sviluppi interni in Iraq con la massima attenzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000240/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sunni protests in Iraq

On 8 January 2013, various news sources reported that Iraqis from the Sunni community have been protesting for the past two weeks about what they believe is unfair treatment of their religious community by the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

Iraqi soldiers were forced to disperse protesters in the north of the country who were demonstrating against the Shiite-led government. The protests continued after the arrest of bodyguards assigned to Finance Minister Rafia al-Issai, who is one of the central government's most senior Sunni officials. Many Sunnis feel discriminated against by the government's unfair application of laws against their religious community.

The protests are believed to be gaining momentum as a result of the Sunni-led uprising in Syria. However, some Sunni sources are cited as saying that the Iraqi Islamic Party, which is a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, is leading the protest campaign with the aim of creating an autonomous region.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the recent wave of Sunni-led demonstrations?

2. How does the Vice-President/High Representative view these reports of discrimination against Iraq's Sunni minority?

3. What steps is the EU taking in order to promote religious tolerance among Iraqis?

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

The HR/VP follows the situation in Iraq very closely. HR/VP is aware of the ongoing protests in predominantly Sunni provinces the honourable Member is referring to.

The HR/VP is concerned by the increased sectarian tensions in Iraq. HR/VP has called repeatedly on the government and Iraqi political groups to engage in an inclusive and genuine dialogue to address political differences. In her latest statement of 25 January 2013, she stressed again the importance of ensuring effective and inclusive democratic governance in all of Iraq, underpinned by rule of law and respect of the Constitution.

The EU has consistently supported Iraq's democratic endeavours and encouraged national reconciliation as a prerequisite for an inclusive and effective democratic system. The EU will continue to follow the internal developments in Iraq very closely.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000241/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Uso ilegal de ayudas públicas europeas

Después de varios años de investigación judicial en España, un partido político ha reconocido que se lucró de forma ilegal con la utilización de ayudas públicas, en concreto a través de fondos de la Unión Europea destinados a promover cursos de formación para personas en paro. Según los acuerdos a los que han llegado los procesados por el ministerio fiscal, al menos trescientos mil euros se deberán devolver por el uso ilegal de esas subvenciones europeas.

Por ello, pregunto a la Comisión:

¿No cree que se debe incorporar como medida restrictiva en materia de subvenciones la prohibición de su otorgamiento, durante al menos cinco años, a personas o entidades que hayan sido condenadas por los tribunales de justicia por la utilización ilegal de las mismas?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de marzo de 2013)

El sistema de gestión y control de los Fondos Estructurales pretende, entre otras cosas, la prevención, detección y corrección de fraudes e irregularidades y su seguimiento, y la gestión adecuada de los riesgos relativos a la legalidad y la regularidad. En él se incluyen controles efectuados por las instituciones de la Unión Europea, así como por las autoridades de los Estados miembros.

La Comisión comparte con los Estados miembros la gestión de la ejecución de los Fondos Estructurales, que debe estar en línea con el principio de buena gestión financiera. En este contexto, corresponde a los Estados miembros adoptar todas las medidas necesarias (legislativas, reglamentarias y administrativas) para proteger los intereses financieros de la Unión frente a las irregularidades y el fraude mediante la prevención temprana, la detección y la corrección.

Por lo que respecta al periodo de programación actual, el artículo 70, apartado 1, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1083/2006 contempla que las autoridades de gestión serán responsables de prevenir, detectar y corregir las irregularidades y recuperar los importes indebidamente abonados, cuando proceda.

Además, el artículo 13, apartado 1, de dicho Reglamento establece que antes de aprobar una operación la autoridad de gestión debería asegurarse de que el beneficiario tiene la capacidad necesaria para llevar a cabo la acción. Se prevén normas similares en el artículo 112 de la propuesta de Reglamento sobre disposiciones comunes para el periodo de programación 2014-2020.

Por otra parte, el artículo 57, apartado 4, prevé que no reciban contribuciones de los Fondos las empresas que sean o hayan sido objeto de un procedimiento de recuperación como consecuencia del traslado de actividades productivas (art. 57) en el interior de un Estado miembro u otro Estado miembro.

Por lo tanto, el Estado miembro debe adoptar las medidas necesarias en caso de que considere que se han utilizado ilegalmente los fondos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000241/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Misappropriation of European funding

Following a judicial inquiry in Spain lasting several years, a political party has admitted that it misappropriated public funding, specifically European funds that had been made available to promote training courses for the unemployed. Misappropriated funds to the tune of at least EUR 300 000 will have to be repaid under the terms of the settlements reached with defendants in the proceedings brought by the public prosecutor's office.

Does the Commission not agree that persons or bodies found guilty in a court of law of misusing public funds should be barred from receiving grant funding for a period of at least five years?

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

The management and control system of the Structural Funds aims *inter alia* at the prevention, detection and correction of fraud and irregularities and their follow-up, and the adequate management of the risks relating to the legality and regularity. It includes controls conducted by the European Union institutions as well as by the authorities of the Member States (MS).

Commission shares with the MS the management of the Structural Funds' implementation, which has to be in line with the principle of sound financial management. Within this frame, it is the responsibility of the MS to take all the necessary measures, including legislative, regulatory and administrative measures, to protect the Union's financial interests from irregularities and fraud by early prevention, detection and correction.

For the current programming period, Article 70(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 foresees that the managing authorities bear the responsibility to prevent, detect, and correct irregularities and recover unduly paid amounts where appropriate.

Furthermore, Article 13(1) of that regulation stipulates that before approving an operation the managing authority should ensure that the beneficiary has the necessary capacity to implement the operation. Similar rules are envisaged in Article 112 of the proposal for a Common Provisions Regulation for the 2014-2020 programing period.

In addition, Article 57(4) foresees that undertakings which are or have been subject to a procedure of recovery following the transfer of a productive activity (Article 57) within a Member State or to another Member State do not benefit from a contribution from the Funds.

Hence, the MS must take the necessary measures in case it deems that Funds have been misappropriated.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000242/13
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE)
(10. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Rückstände von Mineralöl in Lebensmitteln

Immer wieder werden in Lebensmitteln Rückstände von Mineralöl nachgewiesen, die auf verschiedenen Wegen übertragen werden können. Eine Gefahrenquelle ist der Transport von Mineralöl und Lebensmitteln in denselben Tanks, wobei das Mineralöl durch unzureichende Reinigung der Tanks in die Lebensmittel gelangt.

Bislang unterliegt die Kontrolle dieser Transporte nationalem Recht und es gibt keinen EU-weiten Grenzwert, der angibt, wie hoch die Rückstände von Mineralöl in Lebensmitteln maximal sein dürfen, damit eine Gefährdung der menschlichen Gesundheit ausgeschlossen werden kann.

1. Plant die Kommission, eine Studie über die Auswirkungen von Mineralölrückständen auf die menschliche Gesundheit in Auftrag zu geben?

2. Plant die Kommission, zum Schutz der Verbraucher und basierend auf wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen einen Schwellenwert für Mineralölrückstände in Lebensmitteln einzuführen?

3. Gedenkt die Kommission die Kontrollen zur Reinigung von Tanks, die sowohl zum Transport von Mineralöl als auch von Lebensmitteln verwendet werden, EU-weit zu verschärfen bzw. diese parallele Nutzung zu verbieten?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(1. Februar 2013)

Auf Ersuchen der Kommission hat die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) ein wissenschaftliches Gutachten zu Mineralölkohlenwasserstoffen in Lebensmitteln ([1]) abgegeben. Danach stellen Lebensmittelverpackungsmaterialien, Lebensmittelzusatzstoffe, Verarbeitungshilfsmittel und Umweltkontaminanten, wie etwa Schmiermittel, die wichtigsten Quellen für Mineralölkohlenwasserstoffe in Lebensmitteln dar. Die Tatsache, dass Mineralöl in denselben Tanks wie Sonnenblumenöl transportiert wurde, hat zur Festlegung eines speziellen Schwellenwertes, von Einfuhrbeschränkungen für das Ursprungsland ([2]) und zu einer stärkeren Sensibilisierung der Kontrollstellen in den Mitgliedstaaten geführt. Derzeit wird mit den Mitgliedstaaten erörtert, ob auf Grundlage des EFSA-Gutachtens ein allgemeiner Höchstgehalt für Mineralöl in Lebensmitteln festgelegt werden muss.

([1]) EFSA-Gremium für Kontaminanten in der Lebensmittelkette (CONTAM); Scientific Opinion on Mineral Oil Hydrocarbons in Food. EFSA Journal 2012;10(6):2704. [185 S.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2012.2704. Online abrufbar unter: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1151/2009 der Kommission mit Sondervorschriften für die Einfuhr von Sonnenblumenöl, dessen Ursprung oder Herkunft die Ukraine ist, wegen des Risikos einer Kontamination durch Mineralöl sowie zur Aufhebung der Entscheidung 2008/433/EG, ABl. L 313 vom 28.11.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000242/13
to the Commission
Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Mineral oil residues in food

Again and again, residues of mineral oil are being found in food. There are various ways in which this contamination could have occurred. One potential source is the practice of transporting mineral oil and food in the same tanks, in which case if the tanks are not cleaned thoroughly enough, mineral oil can become mixed with food.

So far, monitoring of such transport has been subject to national law, and there is no limit valid throughout the EU for levels of mineral oil residues in food to ensure that human health is not endangered.

1. Is the Commission planning to order a study of the impact of mineral oil residues on human health?

2. Is the Commission planning to introduce a limit on mineral oil residues in food to protect consumers, on the basis of scientific knowledge?

3. Will the Commission step up, throughout the EU, monitoring of the cleaning of tanks which are used to transport both mineral oil and food, or else to ban such parallel use?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

At the request of the Commission, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has delivered a Scientific Opinion on Mineral Oil Hydrocarbons (MOH) in Food ([1]). According to this opinion, the main sources of MOH in food are food-packaging materials, food additives, processing aids and environmental contaminants such as lubricants. Transport of mineral oil in the same tanks as sunflower oil has resulted in the establishment of a specific action limit, import restrictions for the country of origin ([2]), and increased awareness of control bodies in the Member States. Discussions with the Member States on the need for a general maximum level for mineral oil in food based on the EFSA opinion are ongoing.

([1]) EFSA Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM); Scientific Opinion on Mineral Oil Hydrocarbons in Food. EFSA Journal 2012;10(6):2704. [185 pp.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2012.2704. Available online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal.

([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1151/2009 imposing special conditions governing the import of sunflower oil originating in or consigned from Ukraine due to contamination risks by mineral oil and repealing Decision 2008/433/EC, OJ L 313, 28.11.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000243/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Effectiveness of the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive

What assessment has the Commission made of the effectiveness of the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive (2000/53/EC) in reducing the release into the environment of harmful metals such as lead and chromium, and in promoting the use, in the production of cars, of materials that can more easily be recycled?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The End-of Life Vehicles Directive ([1]) (ELV Directive) has certainly contributed to reducing the release into the environment of harmful metals. The directive includes measures for the reduction and control of hazardous substances, in order to prevent their release into the environment, to facilitate recycling and to avoid disposal of hazardous waste. Under the directive, mercury, cadmium and hexavalent chromium can only be used in a number of specific applications set out in Annex II. This annex is regularly amended to remove exemptions for use of the hazardous substances in materials and components, if this use is considered avoidable.

A recent study analysing the costs and environmental benefits of the heavy metal ban in the ELV Directive shows that the use of hazardous substances in vehicles has almost been eliminated due mainly to the requirements of the ELV directive. According to the study, there is a lifecycle emission reduction of 99,6% in the use of lead, 96% in the use of cadmium, phase-out of mercury and 99,9% in the use of hexavalent chromium ([2]).

Furthermore, the association of the ELV Directive with other EU directives relating to the manufacturing of new vehicles such as the directives on motor vehicle type approval ([3]), particularly with regards to their reusability, recyclability and recoverability, as well as the high targets set in the ELV Directive for reuse/recycling and reuse /recovery ensure the use of materials suitable for recovery and recycling ([4]).

([1]) End-of-Life Vehicle Directive 2000/53/EC.
([2]) End-of-Life vehicle Directive 2000/53/EC Annex II: Study on analysis of costs and environmental benefits of heavy metal ban, and proposal for better regulation. Öko-Institut e.V., 2010 (http://www.endseurope.com/docs/101202a.pdf).
([3]) Directives 70/156/EEC and 2005/64/EC.
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/waste/key_waste_streams/end_of_life_vehicles_elvs

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-000244/13
komissiolle
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(10. tammikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Israelin laittomissa siirtokunnissa valmistettujen tuotteiden merkitseminen

Euroopan unioni on Israelin suurin kauppakumppani. Eurooppalaiselle kuluttajalle on tärkeää voida valita niiden tuotteiden välillä, jotka on tosiasiallisesti valmistettu Israelissa ja jotka on valmistettu Israelin laittomissa siirtokunnissa.

Useimmissa Euroopan supermarketeissa on mahdotonta tietää, onko hedelmät ja vihannekset kasvatettu Israelissa vai Palestiinan alueella. Tämän lisäksi Israelin Länsirannalle perustamilla teollisuusalueilla valmistettuja tuotteita myydään eurooppalaisissa kaupoissa harhaanjohtavasti merkinnällä ”valmistettu Israelissa”.

Israelin siirtokunnat on todettu kansainvälisoikeudellisesti laittomiksi. Joulukuussa 2012 Israel antoi luvan 3 000 uuden siirtokunta-asunnon rakentamiseen kiistellylle E-alueelle. Tämä samainen alue on Palestiinan alueella.

Kuluttajan kannalta on tärkeää, että tuotteessa on merkintä, jolla voidaan erottaa siirtokunnissa valmistetut tuotteet Israelissa tai Palestiinassa valmistetuista.

1. Mihin toimiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä Israelin laittomissa siirtokunnissa valmistettujen tuotteiden merkitsemiseen liittyen?

2. Näkeekö komissio epäselvien merkintökäytäntöjen suhteen ristiriitaa EU:n kuluttajansuojalain edellytysten kanssa?

3. Harkitseeko komissio toimia, joilla kannustetaan jäsenmaita lopettamaan Israelin laittomissa siirtokunnissa valmistettujen tuotteiden myynti?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(11. maaliskuuta 2013)

Sellaisten tuotteiden merkitsemistä, jotka ovat peräisin Israelin vuotta 1967 edeltävien rajojen ulkopuolisilta alueilta, säännellään EU:n kuluttajansuojapolitiikalla. Pakkausmerkintöjä koskevan lainsäädännön soveltaminen kuuluu ensisijaisesti EU:n jäsenvaltioiden toimivaltaan, ja siitä vastaavat niiden toimivaltaiset viranomaiset.

Komissio ja Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinto kartoittavat parhaillaan asiasta annettua lainsäädäntöä 14. toukokuuta ja 10. joulukuuta 2012 tehtyjen Lähi-idän rauhanprosessia koskevien ulkoasiainneuvoston päätelmien jatkotoimena. Lainsäädännön mukaan tuontituotteiden alkuperän ilmoittaminen on pakollista monien tuotteiden osalta erityisesti elintarvikealalla. Pakattuja elintarvikkeita säännellään monialaisilla säädöksillä, joissa vahvistetun perusperiaatteen mukaan elintarvikkeiden alkuperää koskevat merkinnät eivät saa johtaa kuluttajaa harhaan. Näiden sääntöjen perusteella alkuperän merkitseminen on vapaaehtoista, ellei merkitsemättä jättäminen johtaisi kuluttajaa harhaan. Muiden kuin elintarvikkeiden ja teollisuustuotteiden osalta pakkausmerkinnät ovat pakollisia ainoastaan kosmetiikkatuotteissa, eikä niiden osalta ole annettu monialaisia säädöksiä. Tällaisissa tapauksissa sovelletaan sopimattomia kaupallisia menettelyjä koskevaa direktiiviä 2005/29/EY, jossa säädetään sekä elintarvikkeita että muita tuotteita koskevasta yleisestä suojasta harhaanjohtavia kaupallisia menettelyjä vastaan. Direktiivissä ei aseteta sitovaa velvoitetta tuotteiden alkuperän ilmoittamiseen. Jos alkuperä kuitenkin ilmoitetaan, sitä koskevien tietojen on oltava oikeita, jotta ne eivät johda kuluttajaa harhaan.

EU ei suunnittele kauppakieltojen käyttämistä kauppasuhteissaan Israelin kanssa. Kauppa nähdään kasvua luovana tekijänä, ja näin ollen kauppakieltoja voidaan harkita vasta, kun muita keinoja ei ole käytettävissä.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000244/13
to the Commission
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Labelling of products produced in Israel's illegal settlements

The European Union is Israel's biggest trading partner. For European consumers, it is important to be able to choose between those products which are genuinely produced in Israel and those which are produced in Israel's illegal settlements.

In many European supermarkets it is impossible to tell whether fruit and vegetables have been grown in Israeli or Palestinian territory. Moreover, products produced in the industrial areas established by Israel on the West Bank are misleadingly sold in European shops as 'produce of Israel'.

The Israeli settlements have been defined as illegal under international law. In December 2012, Israel authorised the building of 3 000 new settlers' homes in the disputed E area. This area is in the Palestinian territories.

It is important to consumers that products should be marked so that it is possible to distinguish between products produced in the settlements and those produced in Israel or Palestine.

1. What will the Commission do with regard to labelling of products produced in the illegal Israeli settlements?

2. Does the Commission regard the unclear labelling practices as being in conflict with the EU's consumer protection requirements?

3. Will the Commission consider measures to encourage Member States to halt the sale of products produced in the illegal Israeli settlements?

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

The labelling of products originating in territories beyond Israel's pre-1967 borders is an issue that is part of EU policy on consumer protection. The enforcement of labelling legislation is primarily a competence of EU Member States and is in the hands of their respective competent authorities.

As a follow-up to the EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process of 14 May and 10 December 2012, the Commission and the EEAS are currently mapping existing relevant EU legislation. According to such legislation, mandatory indication of the origin of imported products is required for a number of products, in particular in the food sector. Horizontal legislation exists for pre-packaged foodstuffs, which establishes the fundamental principle that food labelling must not mislead the consumer as to the origin of the foodstuff. Origin labelling is voluntary under these rules, unless its omission would mislead the consumer. For non-food / industrial goods there is only mandatory labelling for cosmetics; no horizontal legislation exists. In such cases the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005/29/EC) becomes relevant. This directive provides for general protection against misleading commercial practices for both food and non-food products. There is no positive obligation under this directive to indicate the origin of products. However, if the origin is indicated, the information must be correct so as not to mislead the consumer.

Finally, trade bans are not envisaged by the EU as an instrument to be used in the framework of our trade relations with Israel. Trade is seen as an element of growth creation and therefore trade bans could only be considered when there is no other instrument at reach.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-000245/13
à Comissão
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(10 de janeiro de 2013)

Assunto: Cibercrime

De acordo com o Relatório publicado, no dia 8 de janeiro, pela ENISA (European Network and Information Security Agency), os cibercriminosos possuem um grande avanço em relação aos consumidores e deverão ter como alvo preferencial, para o próximo ano, os smartphones e as redes sociais.

O Relatório identifica as ameaças emergentes e os riscos adicionais a que os telefones móveis estarão sujeitos e sublinha que as comunicações efetuadas por seu intermédio têm, frequentemente, um nível de segurança inferior àquele que é normalmente utilizado nos sistemas informáticos convencionais.

O aumento do nível de segurança dos smartphones tornou-se, assim, uma prioridade. Trata-se de um mercado em forte expansão, utilizado por consumidores, governos e profissionais do mundo empresarial, que utilizam os telefones móveis para armazenar e processar enormes quantidades de dados pessoais e confidenciais. Existe, igualmente, um número cada vez mais elevado de novos fornecedores de aplicações, como é o caso da Amazon, CISCO, Microsoft e Nokia, que oferecem diferentes aplicações para variados sistemas operativos. Um bom exemplo desta falta de segurança foi a descoberta feita pela Symantic Security company, em março de 2002, de que algumas aplicações para o Android da Google eram compiladas e vendidas com «malware» anexado que poderia tirar «screenshots» dos telefones das pessoas, bem como dados sensíveis (ex. dados bancários).

O Relatório salienta ainda que, neste momento, a maior ameaça em termos de ciberguerra são os ataques «drive-by» (que afetam os computadores quando os utilizadores estejam inadvertidamente a utilizar um website infetado), sendo igualmente identificadas outras ameaças emergentes, como é o caso do aumento dos ataques através de «cavalos de Tróia» (programas que são enviados para outros sistemas de forma a roubar dados e passwords), «virus» e «botnets» ou «zombies» (conjunto de computadores comprometidos submetidos ao controlo central do cibercriminoso).

Esta «Cyber Análise» é um instrumento importante para que os decisores políticos possam tomar consciência das atuais ameaças e ajudar a definir as prioridades e políticas no que diz respeito ao controlo da segurança da informação. Tendo em conta os dados avançados, qual deverá ser a resposta da Comissão e quais as medidas que está a pensar tomar de forma a reforçar a política de segurança e os mecanismos de proteção?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

A Comissão partilha o ponto de vista do Senhor Deputado sobre a importância de garantir a cibersegurança e sobre o aumento dos riscos decorrentes de incidentes e atividades maliciosas. Os pareceres de peritos fornecidos pela Agência Europeia de Segurança das Redes e da Informação (ENISA) são contributos importantes para as medidas tomadas pela Comissão neste domínio. Nos últimos anos, a Comissão desenvolveu atividades destinadas a garantir um elevado nível de segurança das redes e da informação na UE, tais como a Agenda Digital para a Europa ([1]) e as iniciativas políticas sobre a proteção das infraestruturas críticas da informação ([2]). A Comissão intensificou agora os seus esforços e adotou uma abordagem mais global da cibersegurança, destinada a promover a segurança das redes e da informação em toda a UE e em todos os setores.

A comunicação sobre uma estratégia de cibersegurança para a União Europeia, que a Comissão adotou juntamente com a Alta Representante da União para os Negócios Estrangeiros e a Política de Segurança, define ações concretas para garantir um ambiente digital seguro e resiliente e intensificar a luta contra o cibercrime, respeitando e promovendo os direitos e valores fundamentais da UE. A estratégia é acompanhada de uma proposta de diretiva da Comissão relativa à segurança das redes e da informação na UE, destinada a garantir o bom funcionamento do mercado interno. A proposta visa reforçar o grau de preparação dos Estados-Membros e a cooperação a nível da UE, bem como impor obrigações de segurança das redes e da informação aos prestadores de serviços e fornecedores de infraestruturas que são essenciais para a economia e a sociedade.

([1]) COM(2010) 245.
([2]) COM(2009) 149 e COM(2011) 163.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000245/13
to the Commission
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Cybercrime

According to the report published on 8 January by ENISA (the European Network and Information Security Agency), cybercriminals are well ahead of consumers; smartphones and social networks are likely to be their preferred target over the coming year.

The report identifies the emerging threats and additional risks affecting mobile phones and points out that mobile communication, in many cases, falls short of the security standard normally achievable by conventional computer systems.

Making smartphones more secure has thus become a priority. The smartphone market is booming, attracting consumers, governments, and businesspeople, who use mobile phones to store and process huge quantities of confidential personal data. There are also a growing number of providers, including Amazon, Cisco, Microsoft, and Nokia, offering a variety of apps for the different operating systems. The lack of security was brought sharply to light by the Symantec security company, which discovered in March 2012 that some apps for Google's Android system were being sold with built-in malware capable of taking screenshots of phones and gathering sensitive data (bank particulars, for example).

The ENISA report notes that, as far as cyberwarfare is concerned, the greatest threat at present lies in drive-by attacks (which occur when computer users inadvertently visit a compromised website) and it also mentions other emerging threats, such as the increasing attacks by 'Trojan horses' (programs sent to other systems to steal data and passwords), viruses, and botnets or zombies (groups of computers controlled centrally by a cybercriminal).

This 'cyber analysis' is useful to political decision-takers because it makes them aware of current threats and helps them to determine priorities and policies for the purpose of overseeing information security. Taking into account the information presented, how should the Commission respond and what measures is it considering in order to strengthen security policy and protection systems?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The Commission shares the views of the Honourable Member on the importance to ensure cybersecurity and on the increasing risks posed by incidents and malicious activities. The expert insights provided by the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) are important inputs to the policy activities undertaken by the Commission in this area. Over the last years, The Commission has undertaken activities to ensure a high level of network and information security in the EU, such as the Digital Agenda for Europe ([1]) and the policy initiatives on Critical Information Infrastructure Protection ([2]). The Commission has now stepped up its efforts and has taken a more comprehensive policy approach to cybersecurity and to the promotion of network and information security across the EU and across sectors.

The communication on a Cybersecurity Strategy for the European Union, that the Commission has adopted together with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, sets out concrete policy actions to ensure a safe and resilient digital environment and step up the fight against cybercrime, while respecting and promoting fundamental rights and EU core values. The strategy is accompanied by a Commission proposal for a directive on network and information security across the EU to ensure the smooth functioning of the internal market. The proposal aims to strenghten national preparedness; reinforce EU-level cooperation; and impose network and information security obligations on providers of services and infrastructure which are critical for the economy and society.

([1]) COM(2010) 245.
([2]) COM(2009) 149 and COM(2011) 163.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-000246/13
do Komisji
Janusz Władysław Zemke (S&D)
(10 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wykup gruntów w parku przemysłowym w Solcu Kujawskim (województwo kujawsko-pomorskie)

W Solcu Kujawskim zrealizowano projekt nr PL 0106.01.05 w ramach Programu Phare 2001. Projekt został zakończony w 2005 r. Warto podkreślić, że przyniósł on wszystkie zakładane efekty ekonomiczne i społeczne, przyczyniając się do powstania licznych podmiotów gospodarczych i miejsc pracy.

Obecnie kończą się 10-letnie umowy dzierżawy gruntów dla przedsiębiorców w parku przemysłowym (efekcie projektu), które były i są własnością gminy. Przedsiębiorcy zainteresowani są wykupem tych gruntów na własność, gdyż pozwoliłoby to na zwiększenie inwestycji, dalszą rozbudowę ich firm i zdolności produkcyjnych. Zmiana własności nie dotyczyłaby przy tym infrastruktury drogowej i technicznej oraz innych obiektów wybudowanych w ramach projektu Phare 2001 i współfinansowanych przez Unię Europejską. Dotyczyłaby wyłącznie gruntów, które są własnością gminy.

Czy w tej sytuacji możliwy jest wykup przez przedsiębiorców w parku przemysłowym w Solcu Kujawskim gruntów od gminy, pomimo tego że nie zamknięto jeszcze formalnie w skali całego państwa Programu Phare 2001?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(12 lutego 2013 r.)

Komisja pragnie poinformować Szanownego Pana Posła, że otrzymała pismo z polskiego Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych ([1]) podnoszące tę samą kwestię, której dotyczy jego pytanie.

Komisja może zatwierdzić proponowaną zmianę własności ([2]), pod warunkiem że nie będzie ona dotyczyć infrastruktury drogowej i technicznej ani budynku terminalu dla pojazdów ciężarowych zbudowanego w ramach projektu i współfinansowanego z budżetu UE.

([1]) Sygn.: DWR/000186/13/EW z dnia 2 stycznia 2013 r.
([2]) Jak wspomniano w odpowiedzi Komisji na pismo władz polskich z dnia 22 stycznia 2013 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000246/13
to the Commission
Janusz Władysław Zemke (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Purchase of land on an industrial estate in Solec Kujawski (Kujawsko-Pomorskie province)

Phare 2001 project PL 0106.01.05 was undertaken in the town of Solec Kujawski, with work finishing in 2005. It is worth noting that the project produced all the economic and social effects expected of it, leading to the creation of many companies and jobs.

Under the terms of the project, the 10-year land lease agreements for the businesses concerned on the industrial estate are about to expire. The land concerned remains the property of the local council. The business owners are interested in purchasing the land, as this would make it possible for them to step up investment and further develop their companies and manufacturing capacities. A change of ownership would not affect the roads or technical infrastructure, or any of the other buildings constructed as part of the Phare 2001 project with EU co-financing. It would only affect the land owned by the council.

In this context, is it possible for the businesses concerned to purchase land on the industrial estate in Solec Kujawski from the council despite the fact that the Phare 2001 programme has not yet been formally closed at national level?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that it received a letter from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs ([1]) raising the same question as the one submitted by the Honourable Member of the European Parliament.

The Commission is able to approve the proposed change of ownership ([2]) provided that it will not concern the road and technical infrastructure and the truck terminal building constructed under the project and co-financed from EU budget.

([1]) Ref: DWR/000186/13/EW of 2 January 2013.
([2]) As also stated in it's reply to the Polish authorities dated 22 January 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000247/13
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Imposta municipale unica in agricoltura

L'imposta municipale unica (IMU) in Italia include anche i beni immobili delle aziende agricole, creando così una doppia tassazione, poiché tali edifici sono già tassati al momento del pagamento delle imposte. Tale manovra non tiene conto del fatto che l'agricoltura è un settore ad alta patrimonializzazione, ma a bassa redditività e rappresenta un danno per l'agricoltura.

Si tratta di beni funzionali all'esercizio dell'attività agricola, che vengono assimilati, in buona parte, a puro e semplice patrimonio, anche se tali edifici rappresentano gli strumenti di lavoro dell'agricoltore e non la sua ricchezza.

Le associazioni di categoria del settore agricolo hanno richiesto al governo italiano l'esenzione dal pagamento dell'imposta per i fabbricati rurali ad uso strumentale oppure una riduzione degli oneri attualmente previsti per gli stessi, con particolare riferimento a quelli dislocati in aree svantaggiate, e la revisione del meccanismo di calcolo relativo ai terreni condotti dagli agricoltori.

1. Può la Commissione indicare se tale tassazione per le imprese agricole esiste solo in Italia o è comune agli altri Stati membri?

2. Può la Commissione invitare il governo italiano ad esentare gli edifici funzionali all'attività agricola da tale tassazione, includendo invece gli stabili convertiti in abitazione, non direttamente utili al lavoro degli agricoltori?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(28 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione desidera informare l'onorevole parlamentare dei fatti elencati di seguito.

1. Un censimento dei regimi fiscali nazionali in materia di proprietà immobiliari è disponibile sul sito internet della Commissione al seguente indirizzo:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/info_docs/tax_inventory/index_en.htm

2. Allo stato attuale del diritto comunitario, non esiste un regime armonizzato per la fiscalità diretta in materia di immobili. La definizione dei sistemi fiscali compete agli Stati membri, a condizione che essi non discrimino i contribuenti, direttamente o indirettamente, in base alla nazionalità. La legislazione italiana attualmente in vigore in materia di IMU prevede che gli immobili destinati a essere utilizzati per la produzione agricola siano esenti da imposta se situati in comunità montane. Un regime preferenziale (a un tasso dello 0,2 % e con coefficienti catastali ridotti ([1])) si applica anche agli immobili e ai terreni assegnati all'attività agricola, nonché a quelli direttamente coltivati dagli agricoltori ([2]). Gli edifici utilizzati come abitazione principale del contribuente sono soggetti al regime di «prima casa» (con aliquota ridotta e deduzioni).

Nella misura in cui l'IMU applicabile agli immobili e ai terreni agricoli non presenta profili discriminatori contrari al diritto unionale, la Commissione non può intervenire affinché le autorità italiane modifichino la loro legislazione.

([1]) Articolo 13,5 del D.L.n. 20/2011.
([2]) Conformemente all'articolo 13, 8-bis, del D.L. n. 201/2011 sono soggetti a imposta solo i valori superiori a EUR 6 000, con riduzioni tra il 70 % e il 25 % in funzione del valore del terreno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000247/13
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Single municipal tax for agriculture

The single municipal tax (IMU) in Italy also applies to farm property, thus creating a double taxation, since a duty is already levied on these buildings when taxes are paid. This measure fails to take account of the fact that farming is a sector with high capitalisation but low profitability and is thus harmful to the farming industry.

This property is needed to run agricultural businesses and a considerable part of it is assimilated as pure and simple assets, even if these buildings constitute tools for agriculture rather than wealth derived from it.

Trade associations in the agricultural sector have asked the Italian Government to exempt from this tax farm buildings used as part of the business or to reduce the tax burden currently in place for them, with particular reference to those located in disadvantaged areas, and to revise the calculation mechanism for land managed by farmers.

1. Can the Commission indicate whether this tax on agricultural businesses exists only in Italy, or in other Member States as well?

2. Can it invite the Italian Government to exempt buildings used in the running of farms from this taxation, including, instead, buildings converted into dwellings which are not directly useful for the work of the farmers?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(28 février 2013)

La Commission souhaite informer l'Honorable Parlementaire du fait que

1. Un recensement des régimes fiscaux nationaux en matière de propriété immobilière est disponible sur le site internet de la Commission à l'adresse suivante:
(http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/info_docs/tax_inventory/index_en.htm).

2. En l'état actuel du droit européen, la fiscalité directe concernant les immeubles n'est pas harmonisée. Les États membres demeurent compétents pour définir leurs régimes d'imposition, à condition, toutefois, de ne pas discriminer, de manière directe ou indirecte, les contribuables sur la base de leur nationalité. La législation italienne actuellement en vigueur en matière d'IMU prévoit que les immeubles destinés à être utilisés dans le cadre de la production agricole sont exemptés de l'impôt s'ils sont localisés dans des communautés de montagne. Un régime favorable [taux 0,2 % et coefficients cadastraux réduits ([1])] s'applique également aux immeubles et terrains affectés à l'activité agricole ainsi qu'à ceux directement cultivés par les agriculteurs ([2]). Les immeubles utilisés comme «habitation principale» du contribuable sont soumis au régime dit «prima casa» (taux réduit et déductions).

Dans la mesure où le régime IMU applicable aux immeubles et terrains agricoles ne présente pas des profils de discrimination contraires au droit européen, la Commission n'a pas le droit d'agir afin que les autorités italiennes modifient leur législation.

([1]) Article 13, 5 du D.L., n° 20/2011.
([2]) Conformément à l'article 13, 8-*bis* du D.L., n° 201/2011, n'est soumise à l'impôt que la valeur excédant 6 000 euros, avec des réductions entre 70 % et 25 %, en fonction de la valeur du terrain.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-000248/13
до Комисията (зам.-председател/върховен представител)
Evgeni Kirilov (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) и Norica Nicolai (ALDE)
(10 януари 2013 г.)

Относно: VP/HR — Пускане в действие на летището в Нагорни Карабах

Армения обяви наскоро своето намерение за пускане в действие на летището Степанакерт/Ханкенди в Нагорни Карабах, отваряйки го за редовни международни полети. Без съмнение това действие ще бъде изтълкувано от Азербайджан, чиято територия в Нагорни Карабах е окупирана от Армения, като явна провокация.

1. Заместник-председателят/върховен представител има ли позиция по въпроса предвид международното право и състоянието на политическите преговори за мирно решение на конфликта в Нагорни Карабах, провеждани от групата „Минск“ и други международни форуми?

2. Заместник-председателят/върховен представител ще предприеме ли действия за избягване на изпълнението на този провокативен проект от Армения и за предотвратяване на ескалацията на и без това обтегнатите отношения между Армения и Азербайджан, които застрашават стабилността на целия Южен Кавказ?

Отговор, даден от върховния представител/заместник-председателя г-жа Аштън от името на Комисията
(18 февруари 2013 г.)

1. Върховният представител/заместник-председателят изцяло подкрепя изявлението на съпредседателите на групата „Минск“ на ОССЕ от юли 2012 г. и април 2011 г., в които се изразява опасението, че пускането в действие на това летище може да доведе до ескалиране на напрежението. Извършването на полети няма да подпомогне мирния процес и ЕС насърчава настойчиво страните в конфликта да търсят решение по дипломатически път. Върховният представител/заместник-председателят очаква страните да зачитат и спазват обещанията, които са препотвърдили пред съпредседателите на групата „Минск“, а именно, че ще отхвърлят всяка заплаха за използване на сила или всяко използване на сила, насочени срещу самолети на гражданската авиация, че ще търсят решение на въпроса с дипломатически средства и че ще се въздържат от политизиране на проблема. Върховният представител/заместник-председателят подкрепя недвусмисления призив на съпредседателите към страните да действат съгласно международното право и в съответствие с действащите практики за извършване на полети над тяхната територия, и потвърждава, че ЕС се присъединява към тяхното ясно послание, че пускането в действие на това летище не може да се използва в подкрепа на каквато и да е претенция за промяна на статута на Нагорни Карабах, който следва да бъде определен в съответствие с принципите от Мадрид.

2. Горните послания бяха съобщени многократно и на двете страни по време на неотдавна проведените дипломатически контакти и срещи на високо равнище, включително по време на съветите за сътрудничество, проведени от ЕС с Армения и Азербайджан през декември 2012 г. в Брюксел, както и по време на посещения на високо равнище в региона. Това помогна да се предотврати по-нататъшното ескалиране на напрежението около Нова година. Не са извършени полети. ЕС настойчиво приканва страните в конфликта да се въздържат както в действията, така и в думите си. ЕС е готов да подкрепи усилията на групата „Минск“ на ОССЕ, насочени към предотвратяване на всякакво ескалиране на напрежението в региона и към своевременното намиране на мирно решение на конфликта.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000248/13
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Evgeni Kirilov (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) și Norica Nicolai (ALDE)
(10 ianuarie 2013)

Subiect: VP/HR — Intrarea în funcțiune a aeroportului din Nagorno-Karabah

Armenia și-a anunțat de curând intenția de a inaugura aeroportul situat la Stepanakert/Hankendi, în Nagorno-Karabah, deschizându-l pentru zboruri internaționale regulate. Fără îndoială, acest act va fi perceput ca o provocare clară de către Azerbaidjan, al cărui teritoriu Nagorno-Karabah este ocupat de Armenia.

1. Are Vicepreședintele/Înaltul Reprezentant un punct de vedere cu privire la această chestiune, ținând seama de dreptul internațional și de stadiul negocierilor politice pentru găsirea unei soluții pașnice la conflictul din Nagorno-Karabah purtate de Grupul de la Minsk și alte forumuri internaționale?

2. Va întreprinde Vicepreședintele/Înaltul Reprezentant acțiuni menite să evite implementarea de către Armenia a acestui proiect provocator și înrăutățirea relațiilor deja tensionate dintre Armenia și Azerbaidjan, ce riscă să pericliteze stabilitatea din întreaga regiune a Caucazului de Sud?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton, Înalt Reprezentant/Vicepreședinte în numele Comisiei
(18 februarie 2013)

1. Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele sprijină pe deplin declarația copreședinților Grupului de la Minsk al OSCE din iulie 2012 și aprilie 2011, prin care aceștia își exprimă îngrijorarea cu privire la faptul că operarea acestui aeroport ar putea conduce la escaladarea tensiunilor. Operarea zborurilor nu ar contribui la procesul de pace, iar UE îndeamnă părțile să caute o soluționare diplomatică. Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele așteaptă ca părțile să respecte și să se supună asigurărilor pe care acestea le-au dat din nou copreședinților Grupului de la Minsk potrivit cărora părțile vor respinge utilizarea de amenințări sau utilizarea de forță împotriva aeronavelor civile și vor căuta să abordeze problema prin demersuri diplomatice, evitând să o politizeze. Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele susține apelul clar al copreședinților adresat părților de a acționa în conformitate cu dreptul internațional și de a respecta practicile utilizate în prezent în cazul zborurilor care le survolează teritoriul. Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele subliniază faptul că se alătură reiterării clare a copreședinților conform căreia operarea acestui aeroport nu poate servi drept argument pentru solicitările de schimbare a statutului regiunii Nagorno-Karabakh, statut care trebuie determinat în baza principiilor de la Madrid.

2. Mesajele de mai sus au fost comunicate în mod repetat ambelor părți cu ocazia recentelor contacte și întruniri diplomatice la nivel înalt, inclusiv cu ocazia Consiliilor de Cooperare pe care UE le-a organizat în decembrie 2012 în Bruxelles și la care au participat Armenia și Azerbaidjan, precum și cu ocazia vizitelor la nivel înalt în regiune. Acest lucru a contribuit la prevenirea unei noi escaladări a tensiunii în preajma Anului Nou. Nu au avut loc zboruri. UE îndeamnă părțile să se abțină de la acțiuni și declarații. UE este pregătită să vină în sprijinul eforturilor Grupului de la Minsk al OSCE de a evita o posibilă escaladare a tensiunilor în regiune și de a găsi o soluționare pașnică a conflictului.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-000248/13
za Komisijo (podpredsednica/visoka predstavnica)
Evgeni Kirilov (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) in Norica Nicolai (ALDE)
(10. januar 2013)

Zadeva: VP/HR – začetek delovanja letališča v Gorskem Karabahu

Armenija je nedavno objavila, da namerava odpreti letališče v Stepankertu (Hankendi) v Gorskem Karabahu za redne mednarodne polete. Azerbajdžan, katerega ozemlje Gorski Karabah zaseda Armenija, bo to nedvomno razumel kot jasno provokacijo.

1. Kakšno je stališče podpredsednice/visoke predstavnice o tem vprašanju, ob upoštevanju mednarodnega prava in stanja političnih pogajanj o mirni rešitvi spora o Gorskem Karabahu, ki jih vodijo skupina iz Minska in drugi mednarodni forumi?

2. Ali bo podpredsednica/visoka predstavnica sprejela ukrepe, da bi se izognili temu provokativnimu projektu ter zaostritvi že tako napetih odnosov med Armenijo in Azerbajdžanom, ki bi lahko ogrozila stabilnost v celotnem Zakavkazju?

Odgovor visoke predstavnice Unije in podpredsednice Komisije Catherine Ashton v imenu Komisije
(18. februar 2013)

1. Visoka predstavnica/podpredsednica v celoti podpira izjavi sopredsedujočih skupine iz Minska pod okriljem OVSE iz julija 2012 in aprila 2011, v katerih so izrazili zaskrbljenost, da bi lahko delovanje tega letališča povzročilo povečanje napetosti v regiji. Opravljanje letov ne bi prispevalo k mirovnemu procesu. EU strani poziva, naj si prizadevajo za diplomatsko rešitev. Visoka predstavnica/podpredsednica strani poziva k spoštovanju in uresničevanju obnovljenih zagotovil sopredsedujočim skupine iz Minska, da se bosta odrekli vsakršnim grožnjam ali uporabi sile zoper civilne zrakoplove, da bosta spore reševali po diplomatski poti in se bosta vzdržali politizacije sporov. Visoka predstavnica/podpredsednica želi okrepiti nedvoumni poziv sopredsedujočih stranema, naj ukrepata v skladu z mednarodnim pravom in skladno s sedanjo prakso za lete čez njuno ozemlje, ter ponavlja jasno stališče EU, da delovanja tega letališča ne more pomeniti podpore trditvam o spremembi statusa Gorskega Karabaha, ki ga je treba določiti v skladu z madridskimi načeli.

2. Navedeno je bilo večkrat sporočeno obema stranema v okviru nedavnih diplomatskih stikov in srečanj na visoki ravni, tudi v okviru svetov za sodelovanje, ki jih je EU organizirala z Armenijo in Azerbajdžanom decembra 2012 v Bruslju, in med obiski regije na visoki ravni. To je prispevalo k preprečevanju nadaljnjih napetosti v novem letu. Leti se niso opravljali. EU poziva strani, da se vzdržita ukrepov in izjav. Pripravljena je podpreti prizadevanja skupine iz Minska pod okriljem OVSE, da bi se izognili vsakršnemu stopnjevanju napetosti v regiji in bi se spor čim prej rešil na miroljuben način.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000248/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Evgeni Kirilov (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) and Norica Nicolai (ALDE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Putting into operation the airport in Nagorno-Karabakh

Armenia has recently announced its intention of putting into operation the airport at Stepanakert/Khankendi in Nagorno-Karabakh, opening it for regular international flights. Undoubtedly this act will be understood by Azerbaijan, whose territory of Nagorno-Karabakh is occupied by Armenia, as a clear provocation.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative have a position on this issue, bearing in mind international law and the state of political negotiations on a peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict conducted by the Minsk Group and other international forums?

2. Will the Vice-President/High Representative undertake steps to avoid the implementation of this provocative project by Armenia and the escalation of already tense relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which risk jeopardising the stability of the entire South Caucasus?

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

1. The High Representative/Vice-President fully supports the statement of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs of July 2012 and of April 2011, expressing concern that the operation of this airport could lead to increased tensions. The conduct of flights would not help the peace process and the EU urges the sides to seek a diplomatic solution. The High Representative/Vice-President expects the sides to respect and abide by their renewed assurances to the Minsk Group Co-Chairs that they would reject any threat or use of force against civil aircraft, would pursue the matter through diplomatic steps, and would refrain from politicizing the issue. The High Representative/Vice-President reinforces the unequivocal appeal of the Co-Chairs to the sides to act in accordance with international law and consistent with current practice for flights over their territory, and reiterates the EU alignment with their clear reaffirmation that the operation of this airport cannot be used to support any claim of a change in the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is to be determined in line with the Madrid principles.

2. The messages above were communicated repeatedly to both sides at recent high-level diplomatic contacts and meetings including the Cooperation Councils which the EU held with both Armenia and Azerbaijan in December 2012 in Brussels and during high-level visits to the region. This has contributed to prevention of further tension around New Year. Flights have not taken place. The EU urges the sides for restraint in both actions and words. The EU stands ready to support the OSCE Minsk Group's efforts in avoiding any escalation of tensions in the region and towards an early peaceful resolution of the conflict.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000249/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(10 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επικίνδυνες συνθήκες για τη δημόσια υγεία στο πρώην στρατόπεδο Καρατάσιου Θεσσαλονίκης και επιπλοκές από την άρνηση απόδοσής του στον τοπικό Δήμο

Το αίτημα για μετατροπή του πρώην Στρατοπέδου Καρατάσιου, 689 στρεμμάτων, στη Δυτική Θεσσαλονίκη, σε Μητροπολιτικό Πάρκο τυγχάνει ευρείας απήχησης στους πολίτες της Θεσσαλονίκης. Η τοπική κοινωνία έχει εκφράσει πολλές φορές την αντίθεσή της στην τσιμεντοποίηση του χώρου, με ψηφίσματα και αποφάσεις του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου του πρώην Δήμου Πολίχνης ([1]). Πολίτες έχουν αναπτύξει εκεί πρωτοποριακές δράσεις πολιτισμού, περιβαλλοντικής εκπαίδευσης και αστικών καλλιεργειών στις κατευθύνσεις της Πράσινου Βίβλου της ΕΕ για το αστικό περιβάλλον ([2]). Οι στρατιωτικές αρχές ([3]) έχουν παραχωρήσει 120,4 στρέμματα στον τοπικό Δήμο, αλλά πριν δύο μήνες γνωστοποίησαν με επιστολή τους ότι θα προχωρήσουν σε διοικητική αποβολή του από τον χώρο αυτό ([4]). Στην υπόλοιπη έκταση του στρατοπέδου, που παραμένει υπό στρατιωτική διαχείριση, καταγγέλλεται κακή χρήση, ιδιαίτερα όσον αφορά στα επικίνδυνα απόβλητα από πλάκες αμιάντου, οι ίνες των οποίων διασκορπίζονται απρονόητα από ασκήσεις βαρέων οχημάτων εντός του στρατοπέδου ([5]), αποτελώντας κίνδυνο για τη δημόσια υγεία των κατοίκων των γειτονικών του στρατοπέδου περιοχών. Υπάρχει, επίσης, εγκαταλειμμένη χωματερή, για την οποία δεν έχουν γίνει έργα αποκατάστασης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ενημέρωση από τις αρχές του Κ-Μ για την απαράδεκτη κατάσταση που επικρατεί στο πρώην στρατόπεδο Καρατάσιου; Αν ναι, τι προτίθεται να κάνει ώστε να προστατευθεί η δημόσια υγεία και το δικαίωμα σε καθαρό περιβάλλον;

2. Θεωρεί ότι στο πλαίσιο της αστικής αναζωογόνησης, της περιβαλλοντικής προστασίας και της καλύτερης διαχείρισης του αστικού χώρου, μπορεί να συνεργαστεί με το Κ-Μ για να μεταβιβαστεί ο συγκεκριμένος χώρος στον Δήμο και να χρησιμοποιηθεί ως χώρος πρασίνου;

3. Η μετατροπή του σε μητροπολιτικό πάρκο, η ενδυνάμωση της συμμετοχής των πολιτών σε περιβαλλοντικές και πολιτιστικές δράσεις κι αστικούς κήπους, η συντήρηση των ιστορικών μνημείων του καθώς κι έργα εξυγίανσης της χωματερής και των χώρων με επικίνδυνα απόβλητα, θα μπορούσαν να αποτελέσουν έργο επιλέξιμο για συγχρηματοδότηση από αδιάθετους πόρους του ΕΣΠΑ ή γενικότερα στο πλαίσιο της περιφερειακής ανάπτυξης, αστικής αναζωογόνησης και κοινωνικής συνοχής;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαρτίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει ενημερωθεί για την κατάσταση που περιγράφεται από τις αρχές του κράτους μέλους.

2. Η χρήση γης, με εξαίρεση τη διαχείριση αποβλήτων, διέπεται από αποφάσεις που πρέπει να λαμβάνονται ομόφωνα σε επίπεδο ΕΕ. Τα θέματα ιδιοκτησίας αφορούν αποκλειστικά τις ενδιαφερόμενες εθνικές αρχές. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει καμία αρμοδιότητα παρέμβασης.

3. Τα έργα που αφορούν την αστική ανάπτυξη ή την αποκατάσταση των χωματερών και των χώρων απόθεσης επικίνδυνων αποβλήτων θα μπορούσαν να συγχρηματοδοτηθούν μέσω του Εθνικού Στρατηγικού Πλαισίου Αναφοράς, είτε στο πλαίσιο του Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος για το Περιβάλλον είτε στο πλαίσιο του σχετικού Περιφερειακού Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος, εφόσον ανταποκρίνονται στα καθορισμένα κριτήρια επιλεξιμότητας και έχουν επιλεγεί σύμφωνα με τις ισχύουσες διαδικασίες και τα καθιερωμένα κριτήρια. Επιπλέον, θα πρέπει να είναι διαθέσιμα τα αναγκαία χρηματοδοτικά μέσα. Σε κάθε περίπτωση, όμως, εναπόκειται στις ελληνικές αρχές να προτείνουν, να εκπονούν και να υλοποιούν ανάλογα έργα.

([1]) http://www.pmnews.gr/local-news/local/item/1832-to-oksygono-tis-thessalonikis
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/pdf/com90218final_en.pdf
([3]) Το 308ο Προκεχωρημένο Εργοστάσιο Βάσεως (ΠΕΒ) της 3ης Ταξιαρχίας Υποστήριξης του Γ' Σώματος Στρατού.
([4]) http://ecogreensalonika.wordpress.com/2012/10/10/thessaloniki-military-camps
([5]) http://ecogreensalonika.wordpress.com/2012/04/30/dangerous-asbestos-to-camp-karatasou/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000249/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Public health risk posed by the former army camp of Karatasio (Thessaloniki) and problems arising from a refusal to transfer it back to the local municipality

The request for the former army camp of Karatasio, covering 68.9 hectares in western Thessaloniki, to be converted into a municipal park has attracted considerable attention among the citizens of Thessaloniki. The local community has repeatedly expressed its opposition to the site being cemented over, backed by resolutions and decisions by the municipal council of the former Municipality of Polichni ([1]). Citizens there have developed innovative cultural, environmental-educational and city-farming projects, along the lines set out in the EU Green Paper on the Urban Environment ([2]). The military authorities ([3]) granted 12.04 hectares to the local municipality, but two months ago published a letter stating that they intended to proceed with the administrative expulsion of the municipality from the site ([4]). In the rest of the camp area, which remains under military administration, complaints have been made about abuses, in particular involving hazardous waste from asbestos plates, whose fibres are being carelessly scattered during exercises involving heavy vehicles inside the camp ([5]), posing a risk to the public health of residents of the neighbouring areas. There is also an abandoned landfill, where no rehabilitation projects have yet been carried out.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it been informed by the authorities of the Member State in question about the unacceptable situation obtaining at the former army camp of Karatasio? If so, what will it do to protect public health and the right to a clean environment?

2. Does it consider that in the context of urban regeneration, environmental protection and a better management of urban space, it can collaborate with the Member State in question to ensure that the site is transferred to the municipality for use as a green space?

3. Could conversion into a city park, greater public involvement in environmental and cultural projects and urban gardens, the preservation of historical monuments and projects to rehabilitate the landfill and hazardous waste sites form a project eligible for co-funding using unallocated NSRF resources or more generally as part of regional development, urban regeneration and social cohesion?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2013)

1. The Commission has not been informed of the situation described by the authorities of the Member State.

2. Land-use, with the exception of waste management, is subject to unanimity decision-making at the EU level. Property issues are a matter solely for the national authorities concerned. The Commission has no competence to intervene.

3. Projects related to urban development or rehabilitation of landfills and hazardous waste sites could be co-financed through the National Strategic Reference Framework, either under the Operational Programme for the Environment or the relevant Regional Operational Programme, provided that they meet the established eligibility criteria, and they are selected according to the applicable procedures and criteria. Moreover, the necessary financial means should be available. In any case, however, it is up to the Greek authorities to propose, prepare and carry out such projects.

([1]) http://www.pmnews.gr/local-news/local/item/1832-to-oksygono-tis-thessalonikis
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/pdf/com90218final_en.pdf
([3]) 308th base of the 3rd Support Brigade of the IIIrd Army Corps.
([4]) http://ecogreensalonika.wordpress.com/2012/10/10/thessaloniki-military-camps
([5]) http://ecogreensalonika.wordpress.com/2012/04/30/dangerous-asbestos-to-camp-karatasou/

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000250/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(10 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιπτώσεις από πιθανή ιδιωτικοποίηση των πρώην στρατοπέδων της Θεσσαλονίκης

Τα πρώην στρατόπεδα της Θεσσαλονίκης έχουν γίνει κατά το παρελθόν αντικείμενο αντιπαράθεσης καθώς η αναγκαιότητα για τη μεταβίβασή τους στην τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση έχει γίνει αποδεκτή, αλλά υπάρχουν συνεχείς υπαναχωρήσεις. Πολιτιστικοί και οικολογικοί φορείς της Θεσσαλονίκης ανησυχούν για το ενδεχόμενο αυτά να περιέλθουν στο Ταμείο Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ) και να εκποιηθούν σε ιδιωτικές επιχειρήσεις, στερώντας τους πολίτες από πολύτιμους χώρους πρασίνου και δράσεων πολιτισμού ([1]). Η Θεσσαλονίκη υποφέρει από σοβαρή ατμοσφαιρική ρύπανση, ιδιαίτερα εξαιτίας των υψηλών συγκεντρώσεων μικροσωματιδίων PM 10 και PM 2,5, που αποτελούν σοβαρό κίνδυνο για την υγεία των πολιτών, αλλά και της πυκνής δόμησης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ενημέρωση από τις αρχές του κράτους μέλους για το ενδεχόμενο να μεταβιβαστούν τα πρώην στρατόπεδα της Θεσσαλονίκης στο ΤΑΙΠΕΔ με στόχο οικιστική ή άλλη εκμετάλλευση για δημοσιονομικούς λόγους;

2. Η δόμηση αυτών των χώρων είναι συμβατή με τις κατευθύνσεις της Πράσινης Βίβλου της ΕΕ για το αστικό περιβάλλον ([2]), όπου ορίζεται ως ελάχιστο αποδεκτό επίπεδο χώρων πρασίνου τα 10 τετραγωνικά μέτρα ανά κάτοικο, όταν η Θεσσαλονίκη διαθέτει μόλις 2,41;

3. Είναι συμβατή με την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία η κατεδάφιση κτηρίων εντός αυτών των στρατοπέδων που έχουν χαρακτηριστεί «ιστορικά πολιτιστικά μνημεία»;

4. Η δημιουργία μητροπολιτικών πάρκων σε αυτά τα στρατόπεδα, σε συνδυασμό με άλλες δράσεις αστικής αναζωογόνησης, ανάδειξης και συντήρησης ιστορικών πολιτιστικών μνημείων, θα μπορούσε να αποτελέσει έργο επιλέξιμο για συγχρηματοδότηση από αδιάθετους πόρους του ΕΣΠΑ ή άλλες ευρωπαϊκές πηγές;

5. Θεωρεί ότι οι διατάξεις του νόμου 2745/1999 περί οικιστικής ανάπλασης των πρώην στρατοπέδων, που παραχωρούν μεγάλο μέρος της έκτασής τους για εξυπηρέτηση γενικών οικιστικών αναγκών του προσωπικού των ενόπλων δυνάμεων, συνάδει με τους κανόνες χωροταξικού σχεδιασμού και ισονομίας των πολιτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαρτίου 2013)

1. - 2. ΗΕπιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει γνώση του θέματος που τέθηκε και δεν μπορεί να σχολιάσει τη διαθέσιμη ποσότητα χώρων πρασίνου. Ο προσδιορισμός ακίνητων περιουσιακών στοιχείων για ιδιωτικοποιήσεις, οι σχετικές προπαρασκευαστικές ενέργειες και η μεταφορά τους στο ελληνικό Ταμείο Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ) εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των ελληνικών αρχών. Ο κ. βουλευτής μπορεί να συμβουλευτεί πρόσφατες εκδόσεις που ακολούθησαν την έκδοση της Πράσινης Βίβλου ([3]). Ωστόσο, αυτά τα έγγραφα δεν περιέχουν δεσμευτικές διατάξεις για τα κράτη μέλη.

3. Η διατήρηση της ευρωπαϊκής πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς είναι θέμα ύψιστης σημασίας. Ωστόσο, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 167 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει αρμοδιότητα να εξετάσει το ζήτημα, το οποίο εμπίπτει αποκλειστικά στην αρμοδιότητα των εθνικών αρχών.

4. Τα έργα που αφορούν τη δημιουργία αστικών πάρκων μπορούν να συγχρηματοδοτηθούν στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής για τη συνοχή με την προϋπόθεση ότι πληρούν τα κριτήρια επιλεξιμότητας. Σύμφωνα με την αρχή της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης, η επιλογή και η υλοποίηση έργων, στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής για τη συνοχή, εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των ελληνικών αρχών. Ο κ. βουλευτής θα πρέπει, επομένως, να επικοινωνήσει με τον αρμόδιο φορέα:

Ενδιάμεση Διαχειριστική Αρχή της Περιφέρειας Κεντρικής Μακεδονίας
Λεωφόρος Γεωργικής Σχολής 65, Κτίριο ΖΕΔΑ, 570 01, Πυλαία Θεσσαλονίκης
Τηλ.: 2313 321 700
Ioraiopoulou@mou.gr

([1]) http://www.pmnews.gr/local-news/local/item/1832-to-oksygono-tis-thessalonikis
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/pdf/com90218final_en.pdf
([3]) Για παράδειγμα, εκείνες που είναι διαθέσιμες στη διεύθυνση διαδικτύου: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/thematic_strategy.htm

5. Όταν εφαρμόζουν το δίκαιο της ΕΕ, τα κράτη μέλη οφείλουν να σέβονται την αρχή της ισότητας ενώπιον του νόμου που διατυπώνεται στο άρθρο 20 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων. Ωστόσο, από τις πληροφορίες που παρασχέθηκαν στην ερώτηση, δεν προκύπτει ότι ο Ν. 2745/1999 έχει σχέση με την εφαρμογή του δικαίου της ΕΕ. Ως εκ τούτου, εναπόκειται στις εθνικές αρχές να προβούν στην αξιολόγηση που ζητά ο κ. βουλευτής, σύμφωνα με την ισχύουσα εθνική και διεθνή νομοθεσία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000250/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Consequences of the possible privatisation of the former army camps in Thessaloniki

The former army camps in Thessaloniki have in the past attracted considerable controversy: while it has been accepted that they have to be transferred to local authorities, this process has been marred by constant backtracking. Cultural and environmental groups in Thessaloniki are worried that they will be handed over to the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund (HRADF) and sold to private companies, depriving citizens of precious green areas and venues for cultural activities ([1]). Thessaloniki suffers from severe air pollution, especially due to the high concentrations of PM 10 and PM 2.5 particulates that pose a serious risk to public health, but also to the dense concentration of development.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it been informed by the authorities of the Member State in question of the possibility that the former army camps in Thessaloniki may be transferred to the HRADF for the purpose of residential or other commercial exploitation?

2. Is the development of these sites in line with the guidelines of the EU Green Paper on the urban environment ([2]), which sets the minimum acceptable amount of green space at 10 m2 per inhabitant, bearing in mind that Thessaloniki has just 2.41 m2?

3. It is compatible with European law to demolish buildings within these camps which have been designated 'historical and cultural monuments?'

4. Could the creation of urban parks in these camps, in conjunction with other schemes aimed at urban renewal and the enhancement and preservation of historical and cultural monuments, form a project eligible for funding using unallocated NSRF resources or other EU sources?

5. Does it take the view that that the provisions of Law 2745/1999 on the residential redevelopment of the former camps, which assign much of the land to meet the general housing needs of members of the armed forces, are consistent with planning rules and the principle of the equality of citizens before the law?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2013)

1-2. The Commission is not aware of the subject raised and cannot comment on the amount of available green space. The identification of real estate assets for privatisation, related preparatory measures and their transfer to HRADF is the responsibility of the Greek authorities. The Honourable Member may wish to consult recent publications that have followed the Green Paper ([3]), However, these documents do not contain binding provisions for Member States.

3. The safeguarding of European cultural heritage is of the highest importance. However, in accordance with Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Commission has no jurisdiction to deal with the question at hand, which is a matter solely for the national authorities.

4. Projects related to the creation of urban parks could be co-financed under cohesion policy provided that they meet the eligibility criteria concerned. Under shared management, cohesion policy project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the Greek authorities. The Honourable Member should therefore contact the responsible body:

Intermediate managing authority of Central Macedonia
65 Georgikis Scholis str, ZEDA Building, Pylaia, Thessaloniki
Tel: 2313 321 700
Ioraiopoulou@mou.gr

([1]) http://www.pmnews.gr/local-news/local/item/1832-to-oksygono-tis-thessalonikis
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/pdf/com90218final_en.pdf
([3]) For example those available on http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/thematic_strategy.htm

5. When implementing EC law, Member States shall respect the principle of equality before the law enshrined in Article 20 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. However, on the basis of the information provided in the question, it does not appear that Law 2745/1999 is linked to the implementation of EC law. Therefore, it is for the national authorities to make the assessment requested by the Honourable Member, in conformity with relevant national and international law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000251/13
alla Commissione
Vito Bonsignore (PPE)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Misure di prevenzione dell'esposizione al mercurio. Benefici economici e tutela del consumatore

Venti prestigiosi istituti di ricerca hanno pubblicato gli esiti di uno studio sugli effetti in termini di Quoziente Intellettivo dell'esposizione a livelli eccessivi di mercurio, soprattutto nei bambini.

Nel rapporto «Economic benefits of methylmercury exposure control in Europe: Monetary value of neurotoxicity prevention» si evidenzia che in tutta l'UE oltre 1,8 milioni di bambini subisce un'esposizione superiore ai limiti di sicurezza stabiliti dall'UE stessa. Non solo: il rapporto, rilevando disomogeneità significative tra Paese e Paese, indica i Paesi del Sud Europa come quelli dove l'indice di esposizione è più alto.

Utilizzando modelli statistici e consolidata letteratura scientifica, la ricerca rivela inoltre che la perdita di QI, conseguente all'esposizione al mercurio, si traduce in una «perdita di produttività e di potenziale retributivo» quantificabile intorno agli 8 miliardi di euro per i Paesi UE.

Alla luce di tali risultati, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se intenda valutare il suddetto rapporto, in relazione a programmi e azioni concrete, sia sotto un profilo di pubblica incolumità che in relazione alle importanti implicazioni in termini di crescita e competitività delle economie europee;

2. se, in particolare, condivida la quantificazione del beneficio economico conseguibile attraverso la rimozione dell'eccessiva esposizione;

3. quali misure, in concreto, intenda adottare in merito, in termini sia di politiche ambientali sia di incentivo all'innovazione dei processi e degli standard di sicurezza alimentare nell'industria ittica.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione

(13 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del rapporto menzionato dall'onorevole deputato. Esso si basa su due progetti su grande scala finanziati dal Settimo programma di ricerca e sviluppo dell'UE (COPHES) e LIFE+ (DEMO-COPHES), rispettivamente ([1]). I livelli massimi di mercurio nei prodotti della pesca sono stati fissati dal regolamento (CE) n. 1881/2006 ([2]). La Commissione ha inoltre emanato linee guida all'indirizzo degli Stati membri in relazione al consumo di pesce ([3]).

L'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA), su richiesta della Commissione, ha valutato nuovamente il mercurio nel suo parere scientifico del 22 novembre 2012 ([4]) e ha stabilito una dose settimanale tollerabile (TWI) di 1,3 µg/kg di peso corporeo. L'EFSA è giunta alla conclusione che, in generale, l'esposizione media attraverso l'alimentazione tra le varie fasce d'età non supera il TWI, ma che i grandi consumatori di pesce possono superare di circa sei volte il TWI. L'EFSA però è giunta anche alla conclusione che si dovrebbe tenere inoltre conto degli effetti potenzialmente benefici derivati dal consumo di pesce. Pertanto, la Commissione ha chiesto all'EFSA di effettuare entro il dicembre 2013 una valutazione rischi/benefici.

Inoltre, sotto gli auspici del programma Ambiente delle Nazioni Unite, 140 paesi partecipanti si sono accordati recentemente sul testo di una futura convenzione sul mercurio che sarà aperta alla firma nell'ottobre 2013. La convenzione vieterà, tra l'altro, integralmente la produzione primaria di mercurio quindici anni dopo la sua entrata in vigore e determinerà la progressiva esclusione di tutto un elenco di prodotti addizionati di mercurio entro il 2020. Ciò contribuirà pertanto a ridurre significativamente l'immissione di mercurio e il suo accumulo nell'ambiente e nella catena alimentare.

([1]) http://www.eu-hbm.info
([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1881/2006 della Commissione, del 19 dicembre 2006, che definisce i tenori massimi di alcuni contaminanti nei prodotti alimentari (GU L 364 del 20.12.2006, pag. 5).
([3]) Information Note on methyl mercury in fish and fishery products, last updated on 21 April 2008: http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/contaminants/information_note_mercury-fish_21-04-2008.pdf
([4]) Scientific Opinion on the risks for public health related to the presence of mercury and methyl mercury in food. EFSA Journal 2012;10(12):2985.

La Commissione, nella sua proposta di programma specifico recante attuazione del programma Orizzonte 2020 ([5]) ha esplicitamente incluso la ricerca sulle tematiche legate alla sicurezza alimentare e ai processi innovativi nel settore agroalimentare.

([5]) Proposta di DECISIONE DEL CONSIGLIO che stabilisce il programma specifico recante attuazione del programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) «Orizzonte 2020» http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/proposals/proposal_for_a_council_decision_establishing_the_specific_programme_implementing_horizon_2020_-_the_framework_programme_for_research_and_innovation_(2014-2020).pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000251/13
to the Commission
Vito Bonsignore (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Mercury exposure prevention measures — economic benefits and consumer protection

Some 20 eminent research institutes have published the results of a study into the impact of excessive levels of mercury exposure on IQ, especially among children.

The report, 'Economic benefits of methylmercury exposure control in Europe: Monetary value of neurotoxicity prevention', shows that across the EU more than 1.8 million children suffer exposure THAT exceeds the safety limits set by the EU itself. That is not all, however; the report reveals significant differences between countries, and indicates that the highest levels of exposure are found in the countries of southern Europe.

Using statistical models and respected scientific literature, the research also reveals that the lowering of IQ caused by mercury exposure results in a 'loss of productivity and thus a lower earning potential', which can be quantified at around EUR 8 billion for the EU countries.

In view of these results, I would ask the Commission:

1. Does it intend to take the abovementioned report into consideration, with regard to specific programmes and measures, both from the point of view of public safety and in relation to the serious implications in terms of the growth and competitiveness of the EU economies?

2. In particular, does it agree with the quantification of the economic benefit that could be achieved by removing the excessive exposure?

3. What specific measures does it intend to take in this regard, in terms of environmental policy and of incentives for innovation in processes and food safety standards in the fishing industry?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission

(13 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the report mentioned by the Honourable Member. It is based on two large-scale projects funded by the 7th EU Research Framework Programme (COPHES) and LIFE+ (DEMO-COPHES), respectively ([1]).Maximum levels for mercury in fishery products have been established in Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 ([2]). Furthermore, the Commission issued guidance to Member States on fish consumption advice ([3]).

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), on request of the Commission, re-assessed mercury in its scientific opinion of 22 November 2012 ([4]) and established a tolerable weekly intake (TWI) of 1.3 µg/kg bodyweight. EFSA concluded that generally the mean dietary exposure across age groups does not exceed the TWI, but that high fish consumers may exceed the TWI by approximately six fold. However, EFSA also concluded that the potential beneficial effects of fish consumption should be taken into account. Therefore, the Commission has asked EFSA to carry out a risk benefit assessment by December 2013.

Furthermore, under the auspice of the United Nations Environment Programme, 140 participating countries agreed recently on the text of a future Mercury Convention that will be opened for signature in October 2013. The Convention will, *inter alia*, ban all primary mercury mining fifteen years after its entry into force at the latest and phase out a long list of mercury added products by 2020. It will thereby contribute to a significant reduction of mercury releases and mercury accumulation in the environment and in the food chain.

The Commission in its proposal for the Specific Programme implementing Horizon 2020 ([5]) has explicitly included research on food safety issues and innovation processes in the agri food sector.

([1]) http://www.eu-hbm.info/.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs (OJ L 364, 20.12.2006, p. 5).
([3]) Information Note on methyl mercury in fish and fishery products, last updated on 21 April 2008: http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/contaminants/information_note_mercury-fish_21-04-2008.pdf
([4]) Scientific Opinion on the risks for public health related to the presence of mercury and methyl mercury in food. EFSA Journal 2012;10(12):2985.
([5]) Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION establishing the Specific Programme Implementing Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/proposals/proposal_for_a_council_decision_establishing_the_specific_programme_implementing_horizon_2020_-_the_framework_programme_for_research_and_innovation_(2014-2020).pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000252/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(10 ianuarie 2013)

Subiect: Revizuirea Directivei privind pachetele de servicii pentru călătorii, vacanțe și circuite

În programul de lucru al Comisiei pentru anul 2012 era prevăzută revizuirea Directivei 90/314/CEE privind pachetele de servicii pentru călătorii, vacanțe și circuite. Scopul revizuirii acestei directive este de a moderniza actualele reguli pentru a proteja consumatorii care cumpără pachete turistice, în special pe internet, și să faciliteze cumpărarea de pachete turistice din alte state membre.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia când va prezenta această inițiativă legislativă și care sunt principalele îmbunătățiri ce vor fi aduse prezentei legislații?

Răspuns dat de Reding în numele Comisiei
(28 februarie 2013)

Ca răspuns la întrebarea distinșilor membri, Comisia vă invită consultați răspunsul la întrebarea parlamentară E-011191/2012 ([1])

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/ro/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=66E4568804D506BDCCB864EDD4635DDB.node1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000252/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Review of the directive on package travel, package holidays and package tours

The Commission's 2012 work programme was to include a review of Directive 90/314/EEC on package travel, package holidays and package tours, with a view to updating current provisions so as to protect consumers purchasing such packages, particularly online, and facilitate the purchase thereof from other Member States.

When will the Commission table this legislation and what are the principal improvements which will be made to current legislation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

In reply to the Honourable Members' question, the Commission refers to the answer to the parliamentary Question E-011191/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000253/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Situazione delle minoranze religiose nell'area irachena di Mossul

Lo scorso 6 gennaio la polizia di Mossul, nel nord dell'Iraq, ha rinvenuto il cadavere di una donna cristiana sgozzata. La donna, insegnante caldea di una scuola della città, è solamente l'ultima di una serie di vittime prese di mira con sequestri e omicidi per la loro appartenenza ad una minoranza religiosa. Nel 2008 vittima della violenza dei ribelli fu l'arcivescovo di Mossul, monsignor Faraj Rahho, ucciso dopo due settimane di sequestro, mentre il 3 giugno del 2007, sempre nella stessa area, fu ucciso il sacerdote Ragheed, vittima di un commando terrorista all'uscita della santa messa.

La situazione nell'area di Mossul, complici anche le sempre più crescenti tensioni tra sunniti e sciiti, sta diventando sempre più critica anche a causa della volontà dei fondamentalisti sunniti di formare uno Stato in cui l'Islam sia presente come unica religione, decisione che costringe gli appartenenti a minoranze religiose a lasciare il paese o, in alternativa, a pagare una tassa per i non musulmani subendo forti ripercussioni.

Tale situazione potrebbe presto sfociare in una persecuzione drammatica delle minoranze religiose dell'area di Mossul. Pertanto, alla luce di tali avvenimenti si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante:

1. È a conoscenza della tragica situazione delle minoranze religiose nell'area della città irachena di Mossul?

2. Dal 2007, anno dell'uccisione del sacerdote Ragheed, l'Unione europea ha adottato qualche provvedimento per risolvere la crisi religiosa in quest'area?

3. Quali sono i provvedimenti futuri che l'Unione europea ha intenzione di adottare per ristabilire l'ordine nell'area?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 marzo 2013)

L'AR/VP segue attentamente la situazione in Iraq ed è preoccupata per i ripetuti e inaccettabili atti di violenza commessi in tutto il paese e per le loro ripercussioni sulla situazione dei diritti umani. L'AR/VP è a conoscenza della situazione delle minoranze, che sono gruppi particolarmente vulnerabili.

L'AR/VP ha espresso sistematica e puntuale condanna pubblica per gli attentati terroristici in Iraq, deplorando la morte e la distruzione che questi occasionano, con il rischio di aggravare la già precaria situazione politica.

L'AR/VP fa sistematicamente appello al governo e ai gruppi politici iracheni perché si impegnino in un dialogo autentico e inclusivo, insistendo sul fatto che una governance democratica, efficace e inclusiva, estesa a tutto l'Iraq, imperniata sullo Stato di diritto e sul rispetto della Costituzione è il modo migliore per porre fine ai ripetuti e inaccettabili atti di violenza.

L'UE ha sollevato a più riprese con le autorità irachene, sia pubblicamente che attraverso i canali diplomatici, la questione dei diritti umani, ivi compresa la situazione delle minoranze nel paese, e ha costantemente sostenuto le misure volte a promuovere lo Stato di diritto e i diritti umani, anche attraverso la missione EUJUSTLEX sullo Stato di diritto. L'UE propone infine di migliorare considerevolmente la cooperazione sui diritti umani con l'Iraq attraverso l'attuazione dell'accordo di partenariato e cooperazione con questo paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000253/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation of religious minorities in the Mosul area of Iraq

On 6 January, police in Mosul, in northern Iraq, found the body of a Christian woman whose throat had been cut. The woman, a Chaldean teacher in a school in the city, is just the latest victim in a series of kidnappings and murders of people targeted for belonging to a religious minority. In 2008, the Archbishop of Mosul, Monsignor Faraj Rahho, fell victim to the violence of the insurgents and was murdered two weeks after being kidnapped, while on 3 June 2007, a priest, Father Ragheed, was slain in the same area by a terrorist group when leaving his church after celebrating mass.

The situation in the Mosul area, combined with the ever-increasing tensions between Sunnis and Shiites, is becoming ever more critical; another reason for this is the desire of Sunni fundamentalists to form a State where Islam is the only religion, a decision which would force followers of minority religions to leave the country or, alternatively, to pay a tax for non-Muslims and suffer severe consequences.

This situation could soon result in a tragic persecution of religious minorities in the Mosul area. In the light of these incidents, I would therefore ask the Vice-President/High Representative:

1. Is she aware of the shocking situation of religious minorities in the area in and around the Iraqi city of Mosul?

2. Since 2007, when Father Ragheed was murdered, has the European Union adopted measures to resolve the religious crisis in this area?

3. What future measures does the European Union intend to adopt to re-establish order in the area?

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

The HR/VP follows the situation in Iraq very closely. She is concerned about the continuing unacceptable violence across the country and the impact this has on the human rights situation. She is aware of the situation of minorities who are particularly vulnerable groups.

The HR/VP has consistently and repeatedly condemned the ruthless attacks in Iraq publicly, deploring the death and destruction caused by these acts of terrorism, which can exacerbate an already fragile political situation.

The HR/VP has repeatedly called on the Government and Iraqi political groups to engage in an inclusive and genuine dialogue, stressing that ensuring effective and inclusive democratic governance in all of Iraq, underpinned by rule of law and respect of the Constitution, stands the best chance to ultimately defy the continuing unacceptable violence.

The EU has voiced regularly its human rights concerns to the Iraqi authorities, both publicly and through diplomatic channels, including on the situation of Iraq's minorities. The EU has also consistently supported measures to improve the rule of law and human rights, including through the Rule of Law EUJUSTLEX mission. Finally, the EU proposes to substantially upgrade cooperation on human rights with Iraq through the implementation of the EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000254/13
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Cecilia Wikström (ALDE) en Michael Cashman (S&D)
(10 januari 2013)

Betreft: Vertrouwelijkheidsovereenkomsten gesloten vóór internationale onderhandelingen

Voorafgaand aan de onderhandelingen inzake de handelsovereenkomst ter bestrijding van namaak (ACTA) en de handelsovereenkomst tussen Canada en de EU (CETA) heeft de Commissie een overeenkomst inzake geheimhouding gesloten met de andere onderhandelende partijen, zodat de mogelijkheid voor het publiek en het Parlement om documenten betreffende de onderhandelingen in te zien bij voorbaat werd uitgesloten. Vanwege deze vertrouwelijkheidsovereenkomsten kunnen burgers en leden van het Europees Parlement zich in feite niet beroepen op het EU-recht inzake toegang tot documenten, dat hen in staat zou moeten stellen het Europees bestuur te controleren.

Met betrekking tot de toegang van het Parlement tot onderhandelingsdocumenten bevestigde commissaris voor Handel De Gucht tijdens een debat inzake ACTA op 9 maart 2010 dat „het EP adequaat geïnformeerd moet worden over de ontwikkeling van de onderhandelingen. We doen ons uiterste best op twee gebieden: het informeren van het Parlement en het overreden van onze onderhandelingspartners opdat zij instemmen met meer transparantie". Daarnaast stelde de heer De Gucht dat „de Commissie er voorstander van is om de onderhandelingsdocumenten zo snel mogelijk vrij te geven. Een aantal ACTA-onderhandelingspartners blijven echter tegen een vroege vrijgave".

1. In hoeverre is de Commissie van oordeel dat vertrouwelijkheidsovereenkomsten verenigbaar zijn met het EU-recht, en in het bijzonder met EU-wetgeving en -jurisprudentie met betrekking tot toegang van het publiek tot documenten (bijv. Verordening (EG) nr. 1049/2001)?

2. Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van alle internationale overeenkomsten die onder de beperkingen van een vertrouwelijkheidsovereenkomst of overeenkomst inzake geheimhouding vallen?

3. Welke vorderingen heeft de Commissie geboekt op het gebied van het verbeteren van de transparantie van internationale onderhandelingen sinds de verklaringen van de heer De Gucht tijdens het debat van 9 maart 2010 inzake ACTA, teneinde de parlementaire controle te verbeteren?

4. Zal de Commissie zich inzetten voor meer transparantie voor zowel het publiek als het Parlement in toekomstige internationale onderhandelingen? Zo ja, op welke manier?

5. Zal de Commissie zich inzetten om toekomstige vertrouwelijkheidsovereenkomsten die de Europese transparantieregels overschrijden, te voorkomen?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(15 maart 2013)

Het is volstrekt gebruikelijk alle internationale onderhandelingen, inclusief die van de Commissie, met een zekere mate van vertrouwelijkheid te behandelen daar de onderhandelende partijen een minimumniveau van vertrouwelijkheid nodig hebben om in alle rust verschillende opties te kunnen onderzoeken.

Dit niveau van vertrouwelijkheid is echter strikt gebonden aan het Kaderakkoord over de betrekkingen tussen het Europees Parlement en de Commissie, en Verordening (EC) nr. 1049/2001 inzake de toegang van het publiek tot documenten. Artikel 4 van deze verordening bepaalt onder welke voorwaarden de Commissie de toegang tot bepaalde documenten kan weigeren, met name wanneer het internationale onderhandelingen betreft. De Europese Ombudsman ([1]) heeft erkend dat geheimhouding met betrekking tot bepaalde belangrijke onderhandelingsdocumenten binnen de nauwkeurig bepaalde context van de ACTA-onderhandelingen gerechtvaardigd is.

De Commissie eerbiedigt volledig haar verplichtingen krachtens artikel 218, lid 10, van het VWEU en het Kaderakkoord om het Parlement onmiddellijk en volledig op de hoogte te houden van de voortgang van de onderhandelingen, in alle stadia van de procedure. Dit gebeurt zowel mondeling als schriftelijk, met name door het toezenden van verslagen van onderhandelingsronden aan INTA en andere relevante documenten die eveneens worden gedeeld met de Raad.

([1]) Zaak: 0090/2009/(JD) OV; Besluit van 23 juli 2010.

Wat de ACTA betreft, is de Commissie niet tegenstaande een overeenkomst tussen de onderhandelende partijen om bepaalde onderhandelingsdocumenten vertrouwelijk te houden, haar verplichtingen inzake transparantie jegens het Parlement en het grote publiek nagekomen. In dit verband wordt verwezen naar de verklaring van de Commissaris voor Handel in de plenaire vergadering van het Parlement op 9 maart 2010, die gunstig werd ontvangen door het Europees Parlement ([2]), en het antwoord van de Commissie op schriftelijke vraag E-0726/10.

([2]) P7_TA(2010)0432.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000254/13
till kommissionen
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Cecilia Wikström (ALDE) och Michael Cashman (S&D)
(10 januari 2013)

Angående: Förtrolighetsavtal som ingås före internationella förhandlingar

Innan förhandlingarna om handelsavtalet om åtgärder mot immaterialrättsintrång (Acta-avtalet) och handelsavtalet EU-Kanada inleddes, ingick kommissionen ett sekretessavtal med de övriga förhandlingsparterna, vilket redan i förväg gjorde det omöjligt för allmänheten och parlamentet att få tillgång till handlingar rörande förhandlingarna. Dessa förtrolighetsavtal hindrar såväl medborgare som Europaparlamentets ledamöter från att kunna åberopa EU:s lagar om tillgång till handlingar som borde gett dem möjlighet att granska EU-administrationen.

Under en debatt om Acta-avtalet den 9 mars 2010 bekräftade Karel De Gucht, kommissionsledamot med ansvar för handel, apropå parlamentets tillgång till förhandlingsdokument, att Europaparlamentet måste informeras ordentligt om hur förhandlingarna fortgår. Han sade vidare att kommissionen gör sitt yttersta på två olika områden för att informera parlamentet och för att övertyga sina förhandlingspartner att gå med på ökad transparens, och hävdade att kommissionen ställde sig positiv till att förhandlingsdokumenten offentliggörs så snart som möjligt, men att ett fåtal av Acta-avtalets förhandlingsparter fortfarande motsatte sig att dokumenten offentliggörs i förväg.

1. I vilken mån anser kommissionen att förtrolighetsavtal är förenliga med EU:s lagar, och i synnerhet den EU-lagstiftning och rättspraxis som rör allmänhetens tillgång till handlingar (t.ex. förordning (EG) nr 1049/2001)?

2. Kan kommissionen ge en överblick över samtliga internationella avtal som har ingåtts samtidigt som de omfattats av ett förtrolighetsavtal eller sekretessavtal?

3. Vilka framsteg har kommissionen gjort när det gäller att förbättra insynen i internationella förhandlingar som har ägt rum sedan Karel De Gucht gjorde sina uttalanden i debatten om Acta-avtalet den 9 mars 2010, för att förbättra parlamentets granskningsmöjlighet?

4. Kommer kommissionen att verka för ökad transparens för både allmänheten och parlamentet i framtida internationella förhandlingar? Och i så fall hur?

5. Kommer kommissionen att verka för att i framtiden undvika förtrolighetsavtal som går utanför EU:s transparensregler?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(15 mars 2013)

Vid alla internationella förhandlingar, även de som kommissionen deltar i, är det brukligt att iaktta en viss grad av förtrolighet eftersom förhandlingsparterna måste kunna lita på att de alternativ som diskuteras inte sprids.

Men även när det gäller förtrolighet måste ramavtalet om förbindelserna mellan Europaparlamentet och Europeiska kommissionen och förordning (EG) nr 1049/2001 om allmänhetens tillgång till Europaparlamentets, rådets och kommissionens handlingar tillämpas strikt. I artikel 4 i förordningen anges på vilka villkor kommissionen kan vägra att ge tillgång till vissa handlingar, i synnerhet om de rör internationella förhandlingar. När det gäller Acta-förhandlingarna har Europeiska ombudsmannen ([1]) konstaterat att det var befogat att inte lämna ut en del av de centrala förhandlingsdokumenten.

Kommissionen fullgör sin skyldighet att se till att Europaparlamentet informeras omedelbart och fullständigt i alla skeden av förfarandet, i enlighet med artikel 218.10 i fördraget om Europeiska unionens funktionssätt och med ramavtalet. Informationen ges både muntligt och skriftligt, t.ex. får utskottet för internationell handel rapporter om förhandlingarna och andra relevanta dokument som även delas med rådet.

([1]) Beslut av den 23 juli 2010 i klagomål 90/2009/(JD)OV.

När det gäller Acta-avtalet hindrade förhandlingsparternas överenskommelse att behandla vissa förhandlingsdokument förtroligt inte kommissionen från att uppfylla sin skyldighet ge Europaparlamentet och allmänheten insyn. Jag hänvisar till mitt uttalande vid Europaparlamentets plenarsammanträde den 9 mars 2010, vilket välkomnades av parlamentet ([2]), och till kommissionens svar på den skriftliga frågan E-0726/10.

([2]) P7_TA(2010)0432.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000254/13
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Cecilia Wikström (ALDE) and Michael Cashman (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Confidentiality agreements concluded prior to international negotiations

Prior to the negotiations on the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) and the Canada-EU Trade Agreement (CETA), the Commission signed a non-disclosure agreement with the other negotiating parties, ruling out in advance the possibility for the public and Parliament to access documents relating to the negotiations. These confidentiality agreements prevent both citizens and Members of the European Parliament from effectively invoking EC law on access to documents, which should enable them to scrutinise the European administration.

With regard to Parliament's access to negotiation documents, Trade Commissioner De Gucht affirmed during a debate on ACTA on 9 March 2010 that 'the EP needs to be adequately informed about the evolution of the negotiations. We are doing our utmost in two areas to inform the Parliament and to convince our negotiating partners to agree with more transparency'. Furthermore, Mr De Gucht stated that 'the Commission is in favour of releasing the negotiating documents as soon as possible. However, a few ACTA negotiating parties remain opposed to an early release.'

1. To what extent does the Commission deem confidentiality agreements to be compatible with EC law, and in particular with EU legislation and case law concerning public access to documents (e.g. Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001)?

2. Can the Commission provide an overview of all international agreements that have been concluded under the restrictions of a confidentiality agreement or a non-disclosure agreement?

3. What progress has the Commission made in increasing the transparency of international negotiations that have taken place since Mr De Gucht's statements in the debate of 9 March 2010 on ACTA, in order to increase Parliamentary scrutiny?

4. Will the Commission commit to more transparency both for the public and for Parliament in future international negotiations? If so, how?

5. Will the Commission commit to avoiding future confidentiality agreements that go beyond EU transparency rules?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2013)

It is standard practice for all international negotiations, including those pursued by the Commission, to respect some degree of confidentiality as parties need a minimum level of confidentiality to feel comfortable enough to explore different options.

However, this confidentiality is strictly bound by the framework Agreement on Relations between the European Parliament and the Commission and Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents. This regulation, under its Article 4, sets out the conditions under which the Commission can deny access to certain documents, notably where they concern international negotiations. The European Ombudsman ([1]) recognised, in the precise context of ACTA negotiations that it was justified to maintain confidentiality of some key negotiating documents.

The Commission fully respects its obligations under Article 218(10) of the TFEU and the framework Agreement to keep Parliament immediately and fully informed about the progress of negotiations, at all stages of the procedure. This is done both orally and in writing, notably by transmitting to INTA reports of negotiating rounds, and all relevant documents shared also with the Council.

([1]) Case: 0090/2009/(JD)OV; decision of 23 July 2010.

As regards ACTA, an understanding between negotiating parties to keep certain negotiating documents confidential did not prevent the Commission from fulfilling its transparency obligations vis-à-vis Parliament and the general public. In this regard reference is made to the statement made by the Commissioner for Trade in the Plenary Session of Parliament on 9 March 2010, welcomed by Parliament ([2]), and the Commission's reply to Written Question E-0726/10.

([2]) P7_TA(2010)0432.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000255/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Informazioni circa l'utilizzo dei fondi comunitari del periodo 2007-2013 da parte delle regioni italiane e nello specifico da parte della Regione Lazio

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 %, può la Commissione:

1. fornire un quadro dettagliato e aggiornato circa la situazione dell'utilizzo dei fondi comunitari nella regione Lazio;

2. fornire un quadro circa l'utilizzo dei seguenti fondi:

— Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR)

— Fondo di coesione (FC)

— Fondo sociale europeo (FSE)

— Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR)

— Fondo europeo per la pesca (FEP)?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(18 febbraio 2013)

Informazioni dettagliate e aggiornate sull'utilizzazione del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) e del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) si trovano al seguente indirizzo:

http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rapporti-f/Il-monitoraggio/

Anche il sito Web che segue, recentemente aperto dal Ministero per la coesione territoriale, dà informazioni molto chiare su tutti gli investimenti cofinanziati dai Fondi strutturali nel periodo 2007-2013:

http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/

Una panoramica sull'utilizzazione di tutti i programmi italiani di sviluppo rurale e del Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale si trovano sul sito Web della *rete rurale italiana* al seguente indirizzo:

http://www.reterurale.it

Quanto al Fondo europeo per la pesca, tutte le informazioni sull'attuazione delle misure e dei fondi versati ai beneficiari possono essere reperite al seguente sito Internet istituito dall'amministrazione regionale:

http://www.agricoltura.regione.lazio.it/agriweb/aree_tematiche.php?idat=22

L'Italia non è ammissibile al cofinanziamento da parte del Fondo di coesione.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000255/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Information about the use of Community funding by the Italian regions, particularly the Lazio Region, for the period 2007-2013

As the certified use made of Community funding for the period 2007-2013 in Italy stood at 37% as of 31 December 2012, can the Commission:

1. provide a detailed and up-to-date overview of the situation regarding the use of Community funds in the Lazio region;

2. provide an overview of the use of the following funds:

— the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

— the Cohesion Fund (CF)

— the European Social Fund (ESF)

— the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

— the European Fisheries Fund (EFF)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

Detailed and updated information on the implementation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) is available at: http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rapporti-f/Il-monitoraggio/

The following website recently created by the Ministry for Territorial Cohesion provides clear information on all investments co-financed by the Structural Funds over the 2007-2013 period: http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/

An overview on the implementation of all Italian Rural Development Programmes and of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development is available on the website of the Italian Rural Development Network at: http://www.reterurale.it

In respect of the European Fisheries Fund, all information on the implementation of the measures and the expenditure paid out to beneficiaries can be found on the following website created by the regional administration: http://www.agricoltura.regione.lazio.it/agriweb/aree_tematiche.php?idat=22

Italy is not eligible for co-financing from the Cohesion Fund.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000257/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Informazioni circa l'utilizzo dei Fondi strutturali per il periodo 2007-2013 da parte della Regione Lazio

In Italia la spesa certificata al 31 dicembre 2012 relativa all'utilizzo dei fondi dell'UE per il periodo 2007-2013 si attesta al 37 %.

Può la Commissione fornire un quadro dettagliato per la Regione Lazio circa la situazione dell'utilizzo dei fondi diretti, gestiti dalla Commissione o da Agenzie da essa delegate?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(28 febbraio 2013)

In base al principio di gestione condivisa la Commissione si affida alla regione Lazio per attuare una serie di strumenti dell'UE. Questo sistema di gestione interessa anche i Fondi strutturali (vale a dire, il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) e il Fondo sociale europeo (FSE)) nonché il Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR) e il Fondo europeo per la pesca (FEP).

Informazioni dettagliate e aggiornate sull'implementazione del FESR e del FSE sono reperibili all'indirizzo: www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rapporti-f/Il-monitoraggio/

Il seguente sito web, costituito dal ministero per la Coesione territoriale, fornisce informazioni chiare su tutti gli investimenti cofinanziati dai Fondi strutturali nel periodo 2007-2013: www.opencoesione.gov.it/

Una rassegna dell'attuazione di tutti i programmi di sviluppo rurale italiani e del FEASR è disponibile sul sito web della Rete di sviluppo rurale italiana all'indirizzo: www.reterurale.it

Per quanto concerne il FEP, tutte le informazioni in merito all'attuazione delle misure e della spesa all'indirizzo dei beneficiari nel Lazio sono reperibili nel seguente sito web costituito dall'amministrazione regionale: www.agricoltura.regione.lazio.it/agriweb/aree_tematiche.php?idat=22

La gestione centralizzata (diretta o indiretta) riguarda per l'essenziale le politiche interne ed è attuata o direttamente dai servizi della Commissione o indirettamente affidando compiti di esecuzione del bilancio ad agenzie esecutive, agenzie UE, altri organi dell'UE o «agenzie nazionali».

Per le operazioni condotte in base a questa modalità di gestione è possibile ottenere informazioni a livello nazionale consultando il seguente sito web: ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000257/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Information on the use of the Structural Funds by the Lazio Region for the period 2007-2013

In Italy, as at 31 December 2012, certified expenditure for the use of EU funds for the period 2007-2013 stood at 37%.

Can the Commission provide details on the situation of the Lazio Region in relation to the use of the direct funds that are managed by the Commission or its delegated agencies?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

Under shared management, the Commission relies on the Lazio region to implement a series of EU instruments. This management system includes the Structural Funds (i.e. the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund(ESF)), as well as the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Fisheries Fund (EFF).

Detailed and updated information on the implementation of the ERDF and the ESF is available at:

www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rapporti-f/Il-monitoraggio/

The following website recently created by the Ministry for Territorial Cohesion provides clear information on all investments co-financed by Structural Funds over the 2007-2013 period:

www.opencoesione.gov.it/

An overview on the implementation of all Italian rural development programmes and of EAFRD is available on the website of the Italian Rural Development Network, at:

www.reterurale.it

In respect of the EFF, all information on the implementation of the measures and the expenditure paid out to beneficiaries in Lazio can be found in the following website created by the regional administration.

www.agricoltura.regione.lazio.it/agriweb/aree_tematiche.php?idat=22

Centralised management (direct or indirect) modes concern mainly internal policies and are implemented either directly by Commission departments or indirectly by entrusting budget implementation tasks to executive agencies, EU agencies, other EU bodies, or 'national agencies'.

For operations carried out on the basis of this management mode, it is possible to have information at National level, by consulting the following website:

ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000258/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(10. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Wettbewerbspolitik

Die Kartellbehörde der USA entschied in der vergangenen Woche, eine 18 Monate dauernde Antitrust-Untersuchung von Google zu beenden, ohne dass der Suchmaschinenriese dazu aufgeforderte würde, sich zu einer substanziellen Änderung seiner Geschäftspraktiken zu verpflichten.

Kann die Kommission angesichts der Tatsache, dass Google in Europa einen signifikant höheren Marktanteil als in den Vereinigten Staaten hat — in zahlreichen Mitgliedstaaten mehr als 90 % — und sich die Auswirkungen der Google-Geschäftspraktiken auf die Wirtschaft in Europa als äußerst nachteilig erwiesen haben, bestätigen, dass sie sich dafür einsetzen wird, Google verbindliche Verpflichtungen aufzuerlegen, die alle vier Bereiche der Untersuchung betreffen, und zwar einschließlich der Diskriminierung bei Suchvorgängen, um den Wettbewerb im Internet-Suchmaschinengeschäft in Europa wiederherzustellen?

Kann die Kommission ferner mitteilen, wann mit der Veröffentlichung der Ergebnisse der laufenden Gespräche zur Beilegung des Konflikts gerechnet werden kann?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(20. Februar 2013)

Wie der Herr Abgeordnete weiß, hat die Kommission bezüglich vier Geschäftspraktiken von Google wettbewerbsrechtliche Bedenken geäußert, da in diesen Fällen ein Missbrauch einer marktbeherrschenden Stellung im Sinne des Artikels 102 AEUV vorliegen könnte. Die Bedenken der Kommission beziehen sich auf i) die Art und Weise, wie bei allgemeinen Suchergebnissen die vertikalen Suchdienste von Google im Vergleich zu den Diensten von Wettbewerbern angezeigt werden; ii) die Art und Weise, wie Google auf seinen vertikalen Suchdiensten Inhalte Dritter nutzen und anzeigen kann; iii) die Ausschließlichkeitsvereinbarungen für die Platzierung von Google-Diensten in Suchergebnissen auf anderen Websites und iv) die Auflagen für die Übertragbarkeit von Werbung auf der Plattform AdWords auf andere Plattformen.

Google legte Ende Januar einen detaillierten Zusagenkatalog vor, der zurzeit von den Kommissionsdienststellen daraufhin geprüft wird, ob die Kommission auf der Grundlage der vorgelegten Verpflichtungszusagen das Verfahren zur Annahme eines Beschlusses nach Artikel 9 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2003 des Rates ([1]) einleiten kann.

([1]) ABl. L 1 vom 4.1.2003, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000258/13
to the Commission
Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Competition policy

Last week, the US Federal Trade Commission decided to close an 18-month anti-trust investigation into Google without requiring any strong commitments from the search giant to substantially change its core business practices.

Given that Google's market share in Europe is significantly higher than that in the US — reaching over 90 % in many Member States — and that the impact of Google's practices on European businesses has been shown to be especially harmful, can the Commission confirm that it will seek to impose binding commitments on Google which address all four areas of concern identified in its investigation, including search discrimination, in order to restore competition for the Internet search business in Europe?

Also, can the Commission indicate when we can expect the result of the ongoing settlement talks to be announced?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

As the Honourable Member knows, the Commission has expressed competition concerns that four types of Google business practices may constitute an abuse of a dominant position within the meaning of Article 102 TFEU, namely: (i) the way in which Google's vertical search services are displayed within general search results as compared to services of competitors; (ii) the way Google may use and display third party content on its vertical search services; (iii) exclusivity agreements for the delivery of Google search advertisements on other websites; and (iv) restrictions in the portability of AdWords advertising campaigns.

Google submitted a detailed commitment text at the end of January 2013. The Commission's services are currently analysing Google's proposal with a view to deciding whether it would allow the Commission to commence the process for the adoption of a decision pursuant to Article 9 of Regulation 1/2003 ([1]).

([1]) OJ L 1, 4.1.2003, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000259/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Martin (S&D)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Disappearance of Sombath Somphone

An NGO worker in Laos, Sombath Somphone, has disappeared in Vientiane. The Lao Government is apparently denying responsibility for his disappearance. I am aware that a spokesperson for Vice-President/High Representative Catherine Ashton has issued a statement of concern.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative confirm whether she has raised this issue with the Lao authorities and what further action she intends to take?

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

The disappearance of Mr Sombath Somphone is a very serious matter which the EU is pursuing not merely through the usual diplomatic channels, but also in close cooperation with like-minded countries, including some Asian countries.

Since 15 December 2012, the EU Delegation in Vientiane has been in contact with Mr Somphone's spouse and has kept this issue high on the agenda in all its meetings with high-ranking Laotian officials and civil society representatives. A demarche by the EU was delivered to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Laotian diplomats have also been informed by the EEAS of the deep concern expressed by Members of the European Parliament.

Furthermore, the EU held a Human Rights dialogue with Laos on 4 February 2013 in Vientiane. The matter of Mr Somphone featured prominently at this dialogue.

As the Honourable Member is aware, on 7 February 2013 the European Parliament held an urgency debate about Mr Somphone's disappearance and adopted a Resolution. In her speech at that occasion Commissioner Hedegaard stressed that his situation is of great concern, she called for stepping up the investigation and for keeping up international engagement.

HR/VP Ashton reacted publicly already on 21 December 2012 by way of a statement by her spokesperson.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000260/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Investimenti cinesi in Europa

Negli ultimi anni paiono essere in continuo aumento gli investimenti cinesi in Europa, accresciuti anche dalla crisi che ha fortemente colpito il Vecchio Continente ma che ha in parte risparmiato il Paese asiatico.

Una recente indagine pubblicata in Italia esprime forti preoccupazioni da parte dei servizi di sicurezza del nostro Paese per il continuo incremento di acquisizioni da parte di imprese cinesi di attività strategiche italiane, principalmente nei settori del lusso, dell'automazione industriale, dei beni strumentali e delle tecnologie ambientali. Da ultimo sembra che anche per quanto concerne la riconversione di grandi aree industriali vi siano pesanti interessi cinesi, con lo spettro di una pericolosa speculazione immobiliare.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere a quanto segue:

1. Può la Commissione indicare come si siano evoluti gli investimenti diretti cinesi nell'Unione europea negli ultimi cinque anni? Quali sono i dati specifici riferiti all'Italia e ai più grandi Paesi europei?

2. Può altresì mostrare come si siano sviluppati gli investimenti diretti europei (ed italiani in particolare) verso la Repubblica Popolare Cinese nel medesimo arco temporale?

3. Quali misure si possono utilizzare per difendere settori europei strategicamente importanti da acquisizioni estere? Nel caso, come intende essa intervenire per tutelare le nostre imprese e le nostre eccellenze?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(12 marzo 2013)

La Commissione non è al corrente dell'indagine cui l'onorevole deputato si riferisce e non è pertanto in grado di esprimersi in merito. Per quanto riguarda le tendenze generali degli investimenti, la Commissione rinvia alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-011308/2012 e allo studio della Camera di commercio UE in Cina sugli investimenti cinesi nell'UE ([1]).

Dai dati disponibili risulta un aumento significativo dell'afflusso degli investimenti esteri diretti dalla Cina nell'UE negli ultimi cinque anni. Tuttavia, con un afflusso pari a 6 miliardi di EUR nel 2012 e stock pari allo 0,4 % del totale degli investimenti di paesi non appartenenti all'UE nel 2011 ([2]), gli afflussi di investimenti cinesi nell'UE restano inferiori a quelli dei nostri partner principali, ad esempio gli Stati Uniti. Nel 2012, i principali destinatari nell'UE degli investimenti diretti dalla Cina sono stati il Portogallo seguito da Regno Unito, Germania e Francia. Nel 2012 in Italia è entrato circa il 6 % dell'afflusso degli investimenti esteri diretti dalla Cina. Gli stock degli investimenti dell'UE in Cina sono aumentati dell'85 % tra il 2008 e il 2011. A differenza di quello dall'UE in generale, il flusso d'investimenti dall'Italia verso la Cina è sensibilmente diminuito tra il 2008 e il 2012 ([3]).

In merito alla necessità di difendere determinati settori dalle acquisizioni estere o di tenere sotto controllo gli investimenti esteri, la Commissione rinvia alla risposta che ha dato all'interrogazione scritta E-008926/2012 ([4]). La Commissione è del parere che il miglior modo di migliorare le condizioni del nostro settore industriale sia assicurare che l'Europa resti un mercato aperto e attraente per gli investimenti.

([1]) http://www.europeanchamber.com.cn/en/publications-chinese-outbound-investment-eu-european-union.
([2]) Per ulteriori informazioni, vedi il Comunicato stampa di Eurostat: STAT/13/11, pubblicato nel gennaio 2013.
([3]) Fonte: EU China Economic Observatory http://www.chinaobs.eu/.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-008926%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000260/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Chinese investment in Europe

In recent years, Chinese investment in Europe seems to be on the increase, also due to the crisis that has severely affected Europe but has partly spared China.

A recent survey published in Italy has expressed great concern on the part of the Italian security services over the continuous growth in acquisitions of Italian strategic businesses by Chinese companies, mainly in the fields of luxury goods, industrial automation, capital goods and environmental technologies. Recently, it appears that the Chinese are taking a key interest also in the conversion of large industrial areas, raising the spectre of dangerous property speculation.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Can it say how Chinese direct investment in the European Union has evolved the over the past five years? What are the specific data relating to Italy and to the largest European countries?

2. Can it also say how European direct investment (and Italian investment in particular) in the People's Republic of China has developed over the same period of time?

3. What measures can be used to defend strategically important sectors in Europe from foreign acquisitions? If necessary, what action does the Commission intend to take to protect our businesses and our excellence?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the survey to which the Honourable Member refers and is therefore not in a position to comment on this. For general investment trends the Commission would refer to its reply to Written Question E-011308/2012 and to the EUCCC study on Chinese investment in the EU ([1]).

According to the available data, there has been a significant increase of FDI inflows from China into the EU over the past five years. However, with inflows amounting to EUR 6 billion in 2012 and stocks representing 0.4% of the total from extra-EU in 2011 ([2]), inflows from China into the EU still remain lower than those from other major partners like the US. The main EU recipients of Chinese FDI in 2012 were Portugal followed by the UK, Germany and France. In 2012, Italy received around 6% of the Chinese FDI inflows. EU investment stocks in China increased by 85% between 2008 and 2011. In contrast to those from the EU in general, Italy's outflows to China decreased significantly between 2008 and 2012 ([3]).

As regards the need to defend certain sectors from foreign acquisition or to review foreign investments, the Commission would refer to its reply to Written Question E-008926/2012 ([4]). The Commission is of the opinion that the best way to improve the conditions for our industry is to ensure that Europe remains an open and attractive place to invest.

([1]) http://www.europeanchamber.com.cn/en/publications-chinese-outbound-investment-eu-european-union
([2]) For more info, see Eurostat news release: STAT/13/11, published on January 2013.
([3]) Data *Source:* EU China Economic Observatory http://www.chinaobs.eu/
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-008926%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000261/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Adozioni internazionali

Nel 2012 vi è stato un crollo di oltre il 20 per cento delle adozioni internazionali in Italia, di fronte ai 4 022 casi del 2011. Alcuni affermano che la crisi ha colpito anche questo settore. In realtà, la causa principale di questo calo sembrano essere le lungaggini imposte dalla burocrazia e i costi dell'operazione, che arrivano fino a 30 000 euro per completare l'intera procedura, tanto che alcuni istituti di credito, tra cui BNL-Paribas e Credito cooperativo hanno messo a punto finanziamenti specifici, anche a tassi agevolati. Per completare l'iter dell'adozione occorrono in media 2-3 anni, ma frequentemente si arriva anche a cinque. Per migliorare la situazione, alcuni propongono una riforma della legge sulle adozioni internazionali — risalente a trent'anni fa — con una serie di revisioni che ridurrebbero i tempi e sottrarrebbero spazio alle varie burocrazie. Gli enti autorizzati a trattare le adozioni sembrano troppi (66 in Italia, 30 in Francia, 16 in Germania, ecc.), con regole diverse da paese a paese. La molteplicità va a scapito della semplicità e dell'efficienza, con costi alti e tempi lunghi.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Non ha mai valutato la possibilità di armonizzare nell'UE il diritto di famiglia per quanto riguarda in particolare la questione delle adozioni all'interno dei paesi dell'Unione?

2. Non ritiene possibile definire regole per un'«adozione europea» tra gli Stati membri, valide anche per le adozioni da paesi al di fuori dei confini dell'Unione?

3. Per rendere valida un'adozione europea è necessaria la modifica dei trattati?

4. Ha una sua opinione in merito al problema complessivo delle adozioni, che ora sono definite internazionali anche se si tratta di adozioni tra gli stessi paesi appartenenti all'Unione?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(22 febbraio 2013)

Nel 2007 la Commissione ha condotto uno studio comparativo relativo alle procedure di adozione tra gli Stati membri dell'UE, alle difficoltà pratiche rilevate in quest'ambito dai cittadini europei e alle soluzioni possibili per risolvere questi problemi e tutelare i diritti dei minori ([1]). Nel 2009 il Parlamento europeo ha effettuato uno studio simile.

Entrambi gli studi sono stati discussi in occasione di un convegno congiunto organizzato con il Consiglio d'Europa, intitolato «*Challenges in Adoption Procedures in Europe: ensuring the best interests of the child*» («Le sfide delle procedure d'adozione in Europa: garantire il reale interesse del bambino»), svoltosi a Strasburgo il 30 novembre e il 1° dicembre 2009.

La Commissione sottolinea che attualmente le adozioni tra Stati membri sono considerate adozioni internazionali e sono regolate dalla Convenzione dell'Aia del 29 maggio 1993 sulla protezione dei minori e sulla cooperazione in materia di adozione internazionale. Tutti gli Stati membri hanno aderito a questa convenzione e quindi al momento non sono necessarie ulteriori misure.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/civiljustice/publications/publications_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000261/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: International adoptions

In 2012 the number of international adoptions in Italy fell sharply, by more than 20%, from the 2011 figure of 4022. Although some observers claim that this is just one more side effect of the current economic and financial crisis, in fact the main cause would appear to bureaucratic delays and the cost of adopting a child, which can run to as much as EUR 30 000 for the procedure as a whole. So high are the costs, indeed, that some banks, including BNL-Paribas and the Italian Credito Cooperativo, have developed special assistance schemes, some of which offer loans at reduced rates of interest. It takes on average two to three years to complete the adoption procedure, but five years is not unusual. With a view to improving the situation, proposals have been made to reform the law on international adoptions, which is 30 years old, in order to reduce the delays and red tape involved. There are clearly too many bodies authorised to deal with adoptions (66 in Italy, 30 in France, 16 in Germany, etc.), and the rules differ from country to country. Would-be adoptive parents are thus faced with complicated, cumbersome procedures, high costs and long waiting periods.

1. Has the Commission ever given any thought to the scope for harmonising family law at EU level, in particular as regards the issue of adoptions within the EU?

2. Would it be possible to lay down rules governing 'European adoptions' between Member States which would also apply to adoptions involving children from countries outside the EU?

3. Would changes to the Treaties be required in order to make a European adoption system workable?

4. What view does the Commission take of the broader problem that adoptions are defined as international even if they involve two countries which are both EU Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The Commission has carried out in 2007 a comparative study relating to adoption procedures among EU Member States, the practical difficulties encountered in this area by European citizens, the possibilities of solving these problems and of protecting children's rights ([1]). A similar study was carried out in 2009 by the European Parliament.

Both studies were discussed in a joint conference organised with the Council of Europe, entitled 'Challenges in Adoption Procedures in Europe: ensuring the best interests of the child', which took place in Strasbourg on 30 November and 1 December 2009.

The Commission points out that currently, adoptions between Member States are considered as international adoptions and are regulated by The Hague Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption. All Member States are Party to this Convention and thus no additional measures are needed at this stage.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/civiljustice/publications/publications_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000262/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(10 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Gap di genere in Germania

La Germania, virtuosa e severa in fatto d'economia e di bilanci, sembra diventata un punto di riferimento ed un monito rigoroso per i Paesi ad economia debole, con debiti sovrani forti e con deficit che oltrepassano i parametri comunitari. Eppure tutto questo virtuosismo pare nascondere incongruenze e debolezze, come ad esempio il gap esistente nel settore dei salari tra lavoratori maschi e lavoratrici femmine, che mediamente raggiunge il 22 %. L'Ufficio federale tedesco di statistica ha addirittura comunicato che le donne manager, pur essendo abbastanza numerose rispetto ad altri Paesi europei, a parità di posizione guadagnano il 30 % in meno rispetto ai colleghi maschi.

La Commissione:

1. può confermare questo dato?

2. In caso affermativo, come può spiegare che in un Paese fondatore della prima Comunità europea, la Ceca, il cui trattato istitutivo già prevedeva la parità di genere in fatto di salario, a distanza di 60 anni si verifichi ancora un gap così elevato?

3. Conosce le cause di questo divario in un Paese considerato avanzato per quanto riguarda il welfare?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(20 febbraio 2013)

Il divario di retribuzione tra i generi:è un fenomeno complesso, legato a una serie di fattori giuridici, sociali ed economici che vanno ben oltre la questione della parità salariale per uno stesso lavoro. Diverse cause sono all'origine della disuguaglianza tra donne e uomini e questo fenomeno può essere spiegato mediante un approccio basato sul ciclo di vita: sottovalutazione e segregazione settoriale e occupazionale, segregazione verticale, disparità nei compiti di assistenza e discriminazione diretta, in particolare.

Dai più recenti dati Eurostat (del 2010), in Germania il divario di genere ha un'incidenza del 22,3 % ([1]). Eurostat non dispone di dati su detto divario a livello dirigenziale in generale, ma suddivide questa categoria in sottocategorie: tra i dirigenti nei settori dei servizi alle imprese o alberghiero e della ristorazione questo fenomeno supera il 30 %, tra i dirigenti del settore industriale raggiunge il 23 % e infine, tra i dirigenti nei settori dei servizi professionali o delle vendite e del marketing, è inferiore al 20 %. Da un documento di lavoro pubblicato dalla Commissione nel 2011 ([2]) risulta che in Germania il divario di retribuzione tra i generi per i dirigenti d'impresa era del 37 % circa nel 2006.

In questo Stato membro, numerosi motivi all'origine del divario di retribuzione sono collegati alla segregazione orizzontale (ossia donne e uomini scelgono professioni diverse in settori differenti) e alla percentuale più elevata di donne in mestieri con prospettive di guadagno inferiori e possibilità di carriera più limitate, come «mini-job» e lavori a tempo parziale (questi ultimi in molti casi associati a una ineguale ripartizione delle responsabilità familiari). Infine, come in tutti i paesi, vi è sempre una quota del divario retributivo che resta inesplicata ([3]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsdsc340&plugin

([2]) The pay gap for women in decision-making positions (Il divario di retribuzione per donne con posizioni decisionali): increasing responsibilities, increasing pay gap (crescenti responsabilità, crescente divario retributivo).
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/working_paper_gpg_for_women_in_decision-making_positions_en.pdf

([3]) Fonti: Ufficio statistico federale della Germania, marzo 2012
https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2012/03/PD12_101_621.html. ENEGE (Rete europea di esperti sulla parità di genere).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000262/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(10 January 2013)

Subject: Gender gap in Germany

Germany, virtuous and severe in economic and fiscal matters, has apparently become a reference point and a hard taskmaster for economically weak countries with high sovereign debt and deficits exceeding EU limits. And yet what seems to lie hidden beneath all this virtuousness are inconsistencies and weaknesses, for example the gender pay gap, which averages 22%. The German Federal Statistical Office has even said that, although their numbers are fairly high compared with other European countries, women managers — when their respective positions rank equally — earn 30% less than their male colleagues.

1. Can the Commission confirm this figure?

2. If the above information is accurate, can the Commission say why, in a country that helped to establish the first European Community, the ECSC, under a Treaty which, even in those days, called for equal pay, there is still, 60 years on, such a wide pay gap?

3. Does the Commission know the reasons for the gap, bearing in mind that the country in question is considered to be advanced as far as welfare is concerned?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The gender pay gap (GPG) is a complex phenomenon linked to a number of legal, social and economic factors which go far beyond the issue of equal pay for equal work. Various causes can explain this inequality between women and men, which can be illustrated through a life-cycle approach to the GPG: undervaluation and sectorial and occupational segregation; vertical segregation; unequal care burden; and direct discrimination, among others.

According to the latest GPG figures from Eurostat (2010) the GPG in Germany was 22.3% ([1]). Eurostat does not have data on the GPG at managerial level in general, but it breaks this category down into sub-categories: managers in business services or HORECA show a GPG of more than 30%; managers in the industry sector show a GPG of 23%. Finally, managers in professional services or sales and marketing show a GPG of less than 20%. A working paper published by the Commission in 2011 ([2]) showed that the GPG in Germany for corporate managers was around 37% in 2006.

Several reasons causing the GPG in Germany relate to horizontal segregation (i.e. women and men choosing different professions in different sectors) and the fact that the proportion of women in jobs with fewer potential earnings and less chance of career advancement, such as mini-jobs and part-time jobs (the latter related in many cases to unequal share of family care responsibilities), is higher. Finally, as in all countries, there is always a residual part of the GPG which remains unexplained ([3]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsdsc340&plugin

([2]) The pay gap for women in decision-making positions: increasing responsibilities, increasing pay gap. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/working_paper_gpg_for_women_in_decision-making_positions_en.pdf

([3]) *Sources:* German Federal Statistical Office, March 2012 https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2012/03/PD12_101_621.html. ENEGE (European Network of Experts on Gender Equality).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-000263/13
adresată Comisiei
George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)
(11 ianuarie 2013)

Subiect: Paradisuri fiscale

Salut lansarea setului de standarde minime în materie de transparență, schimb de informații și concurență fiscală loială (C(2012)8805) pe care îl menționați în răspunsul dumneavoastră din 18 decembrie 2012 (P-010648/2012). Cu toate acestea, consider că trebuie mers mai departe — o listă europeană a paradisurilor fiscale fiind o necesitate.

Această listă ar fi de folos în numeroase domenii de factură europeană, precum politica economică, cea comercială, sau în desfășurarea activității unor instituții, printre care se număra și Banca Europeană de Investiții. Banca este des criticată pentru participarea sa în proiecte care implică evaziune fiscală prin intermediul jurisdicțiilor secrete ([1]) . În acest context, o listă europeană a paradisurilor fiscale ar permite Băncii să își aleagă proiectele, beneficiarii și intermediarii în cunoștință de cauză, banii cetățenilor fiind folosiți într-un mod mai responsabil și generând mai multă creștere economică.

Având în vedere aceste considerații, crede Comisia în necesitatea realizării unei astfel de liste europene a paradisurilor fiscale, dedicate în mod special ariilor de competență și instituțiilor cu caracter european? Pe termen scurt, intenționează Comisia să inițieze un dialog cu Banca Europeană de Investiții pentru a o ajuta să aplice standardele minime de bună guvernanță în chestiuni fiscale atunci când își selecționează proiectele, beneficiarii și intermediarii?

Răspuns dat de dl. Šemeta în numele Comisiei
(6 februarie 2013)

Politica UE privind buna guvernanță fiscală (transparență, schimb de informații și concurență fiscală loială) este elaborată de mai mulți ani în cadrul instituțiilor UE și promovată și în alte structuri. Drept urmare, politicile actuale ale Băncii Europene de Investiții (BEI) și ale Fondului European de Investiții (FEI) privind gestionarea instrumentelor financiare ale UE sunt compatibile cu criteriile utilizate în Recomandarea (C(2012)8805) privind măsuri menite să încurajeze țările terțe să aplice standarde minime de bună guvernanță în chestiuni fiscale ([2]). Atât politica revizuită a BEI față de jurisdicțiile slab reglementate, netransparente și necooperante din 15 decembrie 2010 ([3]) cât și politica revizuită a FEI privind centrele financiare offshore și transparența guvernanței din 14 decembrie 2009 ([4]) se referă în esență la standardele internaționale în materie de transparență și schimb de informații în scopuri fiscale și la principiile Codului de conduită în domeniul impozitării întreprinderilor. BEI și FEI sunt în dialog permanent cu Comisia pentru a asigura coerența cu evoluțiile politicii UE în domeniu.

Comisia nu consideră că este necesar să întocmească ea însăși o listă a paradisurilor fiscale, fiind de părere că statele membre sunt cele mai în măsură să facă acest lucru, după cum s-a subliniat în recenta recomandare.

([1]) http://www.counterbalance-eib.org/?p=621

([2]) C(2012) 8805 final.

([3]) http://www.eib.org/attachments/strategies/ncj_policy_en.pdf

([4]) http://www.eif.org/attachments/publications/about/2009_OFC_and_Governance_Transparency_Policy.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000263/13
to the Commission
George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Tax havens

While welcoming the package of minimum standards regarding transparency, exchange of information and fair tax competition (C(2012)8805) referred to in the Commission's answer of 18 December 2012 (P-010648/2012), I nevertheless consider further measures to be necessary, for example a European list of tax havens.

Such a list would be useful in numerous areas at European level, encompassing economic and trading activities as well as the activities of a number of institutions, including the European Investment Bank, which has frequently come under fire for its involvement in projects facilitating tax avoidance through non-transparent jurisdictions ([1]). In this connection, a European list of tax havens would enable the bank to select projects, recipients and intermediaries in full knowledge of the facts, thereby ensuring that public funds were used in a more responsible manner, generating economic growth more effectively.

In view of this, does the Commission consider it necessary to draw up a list of European tax havens, focusing in particular on areas of competence and European institutions? Does the Commission intend in the near future to launch a dialogue with the European Investment Bank so as to assist it in applying minimum standards of good governance with regard to tax issues arising in connection with the selection of projects, recipients and intermediaries?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

The EU policy on good governance in tax matters (transparency, exchange of information and fair tax competition) has been developing over several years within EU institutions and spreading beyond. As a result, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF) current policies relating to the management of EU financial instruments are consistent with the criteria used in the recommendation (C(2012)8805) regarding measures to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters ([2]). Both the EIB revised policy towards weakly regulated, non-transparent and uncooperative jurisdictions of 15 October 2010 ([3]) and the EIF Policy on Offshore Financial Centres & Governance Transparency of 14 December 2009 ([4]) refer in substance to the international standard of transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes and to the principles of the Code of conduct for business taxation. The EIB and the EIF are in ongoing dialogue with the Commission to maintain consistency with EU policy developments in the area.

The Commission does not consider it necessary to draw up itself a list of tax havens but believes Member States are best placed to do this, as outlined in the recent Recommendation.

([1]) http://www.counterbalance-eib.org/?p=621
([2]) C (2012) 8805 final.
([3]) http://www.eib.org/attachments/strategies/ncj_policy_en.pdf
([4]) http://www.eif.org/attachments/publications/about/2009_OFC_and_Governance_Transparency_Policy.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000265/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(11 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Gestione sostenibile delle foreste e comunicazione sociale ai giovani: quali le risorse e i falsi miti

Il valore delle foreste va ben oltre la semplice produzione di legname e di biomassa per il riscaldamento e la produzione di energia. Con questo intento di sensibilizzare i più giovani alla gestione sostenibile delle foreste e all'uso responsabile dei suoi derivati, è partito il concorso a premi «Do the right thing, save the forest!» destinato proprio ai giovani che vogliono cimentarsi nella creazione di prodotti di comunicazione sociale. Il concorso internazionale è promosso da ONG italiane e associazioni ambientaliste di Italia, Spagna, Romania, Polonia e Malta vuole coinvolgere scuole o gruppi di studenti e mira anche a premiare la creatività dei giovani e fare in modo che la vincita possa essere utilizzata per un impiego di utilità comune: implementare attività o progetti che mirino ad aumentare la sostenibilità all'interno della scuola e dei contesti quotidiani e familiari. Gestione sostenibile delle foreste e comunicazione sociale ai giovani sono anche i temi dell'iniziativa italiana «Naturalmente io amo la carta», che vuole sfatare i luoghi comuni che vedono la carta come sinonimo di deforestazione e inquinamento e di informare i consumatori sul carattere naturale e rinnovabile del legno, materia prima che insieme alla carta da macero viene impiegata per produrre carta.

Considerato che il 70 % della carta utilizzata in Europa viene raccolta e riciclata (con 2 000 kg riciclati al secondo, la carta è il materiale più riciclato a livello europeo); che la superficie forestale in Europa è cresciuta del 30 % rispetto al 1950 e ogni anno le foreste aumentano di un'area pari a 1,5 milioni di campi da calcio (circa 850 000 ha).

Si chiede alla Commissione se intende promuovere e finanziare per il 2013 una nuova campagna informativa e di comunicazione sociale, con l'obiettivo di rinnovare non solo l'impegno comune per la gestione sostenibile delle foreste, ma anche di raggiungere un target di popolazione che coinvolga e sensibilizzi maggiormente i giovani ad avvalersi, in un mondo di risorse esauribili e tecnologiche, anche dei mezzi versatili di comunicazione e di marketing con caratteristiche di riciclabilità e rinnovabilità, quali i mezzi stampati.

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(22 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è del tutto consapevole dell'importanza dell'attività di comunicazione relativa alle foreste. La strategia di comunicazione sulle foreste dell'UE, elaborata dal comitato permanente forestale nel 2011 e che illustra azioni e responsabilità dei soggetti in causa, è un importante strumento di informazione pubblica sulla gestione sostenibile delle foreste.

In tale contesto, la Commissione ha previsto diverse iniziative in materia di comunicazione per il 2013, volte a sensibilizzare la società alle foreste.

— Tra tali iniziative rientra il concorso di disegno per bambini dai 6 ai 10 anni sul tema «Cosa significa la foresta per me», attualmente in corso. Ulteriori informazioni al riguardo sono disponibili sul sito internet: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/forest-drawing-competition/index_it.htm.

— La campagna «Generation awake» promuove l'uso sostenibile delle risorse naturali, tra cui il legno. Ulteriori informazioni sono disponibili sui siti internet: www.generationawake.eu/ e www.facebook.com/generationawake.

— Sono previste inoltre diverse pubblicazioni sul ruolo delle foreste e della silvicoltura nell'UE, di cui una destinata ai bambini.

Oltre a ciò, la Commissione sta definendo una nuova strategia forestale dell'UE che affronta la questione della sensibilizzazione dell'opinione pubblica da parte degli operatori del settore.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000265/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Sustainable forest management and social communication with young people: resources and myths

The value of the forests goes much further than the straightforward production of timber and biomass for heating and energy production. With the aim of increasing young people's awareness about the need for sustainable forest management and the responsible use of its products, the 'Do the right thing, save the forests!' prize competition has been launched for young people who want to engage in creating social communication products. The international competition is sponsored by Italian NGOs and environmental organisations from Italy, Spain, Romania, Poland and Malta. It seeks to involve schools and student groups and also aims to reward the creativity of young people and ensure that the winnings can be used to benefit everyone: to implement activities or projects aimed at increasing sustainability in school and in everyday life. Sustainable forest management and social communication aimed at young people are also the themes of the Italian initiative entitled 'Naturalmente io amo la carta' [Of course I love paper], the aim of which is to clarify the misunderstandings that paper equals deforestation and pollution and to inform consumers about the natural and renewal nature of wood, a raw material which together with waste paper is used to produce paper.

Given that 70 % of paper used in Europe is collected and recycled (2 000 kg is recycled per second, paper being the most commonly recycled material in Europe); that Europe's forest area has grown by 30 % since 1950; and that each year forests are increasing by an area equivalent to 1.5 million football fields (approximately 850 000 hectares):

Does the Commission intend to promote and fund a new information and social communication campaign for 2013, with the aim of renewing a shared commitment to sustainable forest management and reaching a sector of the population that will raise awareness among the young and get them involved, encouraging them, in a world of exhaustible and technological resources, also to make use of versatile means of communication and marketing that are inherently recyclable and renewable, such as printed matter?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the importance of communication linked to forests and would like to inform the Honourable Member about the EU Forest Communication Strategy developed by the Standing Forestry Committee in 2011 describing actions and responsibilities to be taken by all actors, which plays an important role providing information about sustainable forest management to the general public.

In this context, the Commission has undertaken several communication activities for 2013 which contribute to raise awareness among the society about forests:

— Among them a drawing competition with the theme 'What is the forest for me' for children of 6-10 years old has been involved and is ongoing. For further information please refer to: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/forest-drawing-competition/index_en.htm

— The 'Generation Awake' campaign promotes sustainable use of natural resources including wood. For more information please refer to: www.generationawake.eu/ and www.facebook.com/generationawake

— In addition several Publications on the role of the Forest and Forestry in the EU, including a publication with children as target audience are planned.

Furthermore, the Commission is currently working on a new EU Forest Strategy where the issue of communication between society and the sector is being addressed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000266/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(11 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Land grabbing nei Paesi in via di sviluppo: quale tutela per le popolazioni indigene

L'Africa subsahariana è oggetto delle mire espansionistiche di Paesi, multinazionali e fondi di investimento alla ricerca di vaste aree fertili in Paesi in via di sviluppo per coltivare generi alimentari, mangimi e biocombustibili ed esportarli all'estero senza fornire alcun beneficio per le popolazioni locali. Il *land grabbing* è la pratica di vendita e affitto di vaste estensioni di terreno e rappresenta una delle più grandi minacce allo sviluppo del continente africano. È difficile stimare quanto sia diffuso il fenomeno: Oxfam riporta che siano 227 milioni gli ettari venduti a livello globale nell'ultimo decennio e che il 60 % di questi sia stato acquistato in Paesi in via di sviluppo che devono fronteggiare i più gravi problemi di carenza alimentare, mentre la Banca mondiale riporta che tra il 2008 e il 2009 siano stati affittati o venduti 46 milioni di ettari. Paesi come Arabia Saudita, Stati Uniti, Corea del Sud, Cina e India sono i più attivi ad acquisire in Sudan, Etiopia, Mali, Madagascar e Liberia, dove la maggior parte dei terreni è di proprietà dei governi e le popolazioni indigene vengono sfrattate con la forza e senza alcun preavviso.

Considerato che:

— la debolezza e la scarsa definizione dei diritti legali di proprietà dei piccoli agricoltori è alla base della maggior parte degli episodi di *land grabbing*;

— spesso queste pratiche implicano lo sfratto di popolazioni indigene — usando la forza, per mezzo di abusi e torture — da territori che hanno abitato per secoli;

— gli investimenti dovrebbero essere un incentivo che coinvolga in primis la popolazione del luogo e l'indotto del Paese, invece di aumentare, come spesso accade, povertà, fame o problemi per la popolazione;

— una popolazione sradicata dal proprio territorio perde la propria dimensione identitaria e questo si riflette nei comportamenti e nella psiche delle persone coinvolte e delle generazioni future;

l'interrogante si rivolge alla Commissione per sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza che il 30 % dei progetti finanziati dalla Banca mondiale stessa ha causato un ricollocamento forzato della popolazione indigena;

2. ritiene opportuno vagliare e indagare attentamente le dinamiche contrattuali e legali alla base del *land grabbing* ed eventualmente attuare misure che permettano un maggiore rispetto delle popolazioni indigene e dell'economia dei Paesi sottosviluppati.

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2013)

Le acquisizioni di terreni su vasta scala sono attentamente monitorate da sistemi globali finanziati dalla Commissione (come il database *Land Matrix*, a cura dell'*International Land Coalition*). Nella riunione della FAO dell'ottobre 2012 la Banca mondiale è stata chiamata a rispondere della conformità dei progetti da essa finanziati agli orientamenti volontari per una governance responsabile in materia di proprietà fondiaria, pesca e foreste (*Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forestry and Fisheries* — VGGT).

Per tutelare gli agricoltori e garantire alle comunità rurali l'accesso alla terra, è indispensabile che gli Stati dispongano di politiche e leggi fondiarie efficaci che inducano i governi ad intraprendere azioni prioritarie sul territorio. Aiutare i paesi a definire e ad attuare regimi esaustivi di proprietà fondiaria è una priorità della cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'UE nei settori della sicurezza alimentare e dello sviluppo rurale.

In tale contesto la Commissione segue con attenzione e sostiene il processo volto a tradurre gli orientamenti volontari VGGT in norme e sistemi di governance nazionali e contribuisce a finanziare il lavoro di coordinamento della FAO.

La Commissione sta attualmente collaborando con le principali istituzioni competenti in materia di ordinamento fondiario e sostiene l'attuazione del quadro e degli orientamenti di politica fondiaria promossi dalla *African Land Policy Initiative*, adottata dal vertice dell'Unione africana nel luglio 2010.

Inoltre, sulla scorta dell'impegno contratto dai leader del G8 nell'ambito della nuova Alleanza per la sicurezza alimentare, la Commissione sta preparando un progetto volto a sostenere, con una dotazione di almeno 20 milioni di EUR, il recepimento degli orientamenti VGGT nelle politiche fondiarie e nei sistemi di governance nazionali. Una componente del progetto mira a sostenere la sperimentazione dei principi di investimento responsabile in agricoltura (*Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture* — PRAI) e la negoziazione di investimenti agricoli responsabili a livello del comitato per la sicurezza alimentare mondiale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000266/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: 'Land grabbing' in developing countries: protection for indigenous peoples

Sub-Saharan Africa is in the expansionist sights of countries, multinational corporations and investment funds seeking vast areas of fertile land in developing countries to grow foodstuffs, animal feed and biofuels and export them overseas without providing any benefit to the local people. 'Land grabbing' involves the sale and leasing of vast swathes of land and poses one of the greatest threats to the development of the African continent. It is difficult to estimate how widespread this practice has become. Oxfam reports that 227 million hectares were sold off globally in the last decade and that 60 % of this land was acquired in developing countries with the most serious food shortage problems, while the World Bank reports that 46 million hectares were either leased or sold between 2008 and 2009. Countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United States, South Korea, China and India are the most active in acquiring land in Sudan, Ethiopia, Mali, Madagascar and Liberia, where the majority of land belongs to governments and the indigenous peoples are evicted by force and without any warning.

Given that:

— the fragility and the inadequate definition of the legal property rights of small farmers is at the root of most instances of 'land grabbing';

— these events often involve evicting the indigenous people by force, through abuse and torture, from areas they have inhabited for centuries;

— investment should be an incentive that first and foremost involves the local population and stakeholders of the country, instead of increasing poverty, hunger or problems for the population, as often happens;

— a population uprooted from its land loses its very identity, which can be seen in the behaviour and mental state of the people involved and of future generations;

1. Is the Commission aware that 30 % of projects funded by the World Bank itself have brought about the forced resettlement of indigenous populations?

2. Does it believe that it is appropriate to evaluate and carefully assess the contractual and legal aspects underlying 'land grabbing' and, if necessary, to put measures in place which allow greater respect of indigenous peoples and the economy of underdeveloped countries?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

Large scale acquisitions are monitored with attention by global systems supported by the Commission (Land Matrix, hosted by the International Land Coalition). The World Bank was questioned on the compliance of their projects with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forestry and Fisheries (VGGTs), in the October 2012 FAO meeting.

To ensure respect of farmers and communities access to land, effective national land policies and laws are essential, requiring Governments to take priority action on land. Helping countries to design and implement comprehensive land tenure systems is a priority in EU development cooperation for food security and rural development.

In this respect, the Commission closely follows and supports the process of translating the VGGTs into national legislation and governance systems, and financially supports FAO in its coordination.

The Commission is currently working with the main institutions involved in the area of land tenure and support the implementation of the framework and Guidelines on Land Policy promoted by the African Land Policy Initiative adopted by the African Union summit in July 2010.

Furthermore following a commitment to the New Alliance for Food Security at the G8, the Commission is preparing a project to support the transposition of the VGGTs into national land policies and governance systems, for at least EUR 20 million, including a component to support testing of the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture (PRAI) and negotiation of responsible agricultural investments at the Committee on World Food Security.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000267/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(11 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Nuove disposizioni dal Consiglio Nazionale Forense in Italia: esclusioni conformi alla direttiva 98/5/CE

Con parere 31/2012 ([1]) , il Consiglio Nazionale Forense ha ritenuto che l'avvocato di un paese membro stabilito in Italia in base alla direttiva 98/5/CE, debba dichiarare l'intesa con un avvocato locale per ogni singola procedura, escludendo la possibilità di intesa per il tramite di un'unica scrittura privata, a valere indifferenziatamente per una serie indeterminata di processi. Inoltre, il parere imporrebbe ad un avvocato proveniente da uno stato membro plurilingue di avvalersi del titolo nella lingua in uso nel territorio ove ha sede l'organizzazione di iscrizione, escludendo quello in altre lingue pure proprie dello Stato membro di origine.

Sono tali esclusioni conformi alle norme dell'Unione, in particolare a quelle della direttiva 98/5/CE?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(6 marzo 2013)

In riferimento al parere del Consiglio Nazionale Forense italiano, l'onorevole parlamentare solleva due questioni legate all'interpretazione della direttiva 98/5/CE ([2]).

La prima questione riguarda la disposizione della direttiva in base alla quale lo Stato membro ospitante può esigere che un avvocato che lavora in tale territorio con il proprio titolo professionale d'origine debba agire di concerto con un avvocato ivi stabilito per l'esercizio delle attività relative alla rappresentanza ed alla difesa di un cliente in giudizio. L'onorevole parlamentare desidera sapere se il Consiglio Nazionale Forense, escludendo la possibilità di concludere tale intesa per il tramite di un'unica scrittura privata, a valere indifferenziatamente per una serie indeterminata di processi, stia interpretando correttamente la direttiva. Il parere 31/2012 del Consiglio Nazionale Forense non è sufficientemente particolareggiato su questo punto per consentire una valutazione della sua compatibilità con il diritto dell'UE. La Commissione chiederà chiarimenti alle autorità italiane, in base ai quali fornirà una risposta all'onorevole parlamentare.

La seconda domanda riguarda il titolo professionale che gli avvocati rientranti nel campo d'applicazione della direttiva devono usare nello Stato membro ospitante. In base al sistema istituito dalla direttiva, l'avvocato deve usare il titolo o i titoli esatti che la specifica autorità competente presso cui è registrato nello Stato membro d'origine lo autorizza ad usare. La questione è quindi disciplinata dalla legge dello Stato membro d'origine. Eventuali dubbi possono quindi essere esposti all'autorità competente dello Stato membro d'origine dall'autorità competente dello Stato membro ospitante.

Risposta complementare di Michael Barnier a nome della Commissione
(14 agosto 2013)

La Commissione ha trasmesso una richiesta di informazioni alle autorità italiane. Non appena perverrà la relativa risposta, i servizi della Commissione ne comunicheranno i contenuti direttamente all'onorevole deputato.

([1]) www.codicedeontologico-cnf.it/?tag=312012.
([2]) Direttiva 98/5/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 febbraio 1998, volta a facilitare l'esercizio permanente della professione di avvocato in uno Stato membro diverso da quello in cui è stata acquistata la qualifica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000267/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: New provisions from Italy's Consiglio Nazionale Forense [National Forensic Council]: exemptions complying with Directive 98/5/EC

In its Opinion 31/2012 ([1]), the National Forensic Council decided that lawyers from a Member State who are established in Italy must declare their agreement with a local lawyer for each individual proceeding in accordance with Directive 98/5/EC, thereby ruling out the possibility of agreement by means of a single private deed to cover an unspecified number of processes indiscriminately. Furthermore, the opinion would compel lawyers from a Member State where several languages are spoken to use their qualification in the language used in the state where the registration authority is based, ruling out qualifications in other languages spoken in their Member State of origin.

Do these exemptions comply with EU provisions, particularly with those of Directive 98/5/EC?

Preliminary answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2013)

The Honourable Member raises two questions on the interpretation of Directive 98/5/EC ([2]), with reference to the opinion of the Italian Consiglio Nazionale Forense.

The first question relates to the provision of the directive according to which the host Member State may require that lawyers practising in its territory under their home Member State professional title must work in conjunction with a local lawyer in the pursuit of activities relating to the representation or defence of a client in legal proceedings. The Honourable Member wishes to know whether the Consiglio Nazionale Forense is correctly interpreting the directive in apparently excluding the possibility of agreement to work in conjunction by means of a single private deed to cover an unspecified number of processes indiscriminately. Opinion 31/2012 of the Consiglio Nazionale Forense is not sufficiently detailed on this point to allow for an assessment of compatibility of the opinion with EC law. The Commission will request clarification from the Italian authorities and provide an answer to the Honourable Member's question on receipt of their response.

The second question concerns the professional title which is to be used in the host Member State by lawyers benefiting from the directive. Under the system introduced by the directive, the lawyer must use the exact title (or titles) which the specific competent authority with which he is registered in the home Member State authorises him to use. This question is thus governed by the law of the home Member State. Any doubts can be addressed to the home competent authority by the competent authority of the host Member State.

Supplementary answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2013)

The Commission has sent an information request to the Italian authorities. Once the Commission receives a response, the Honourable Member will be informed directly by the Commission services about its findings.

([1]) www.codicedeontologico-cnf.it/?tag=312012.

([2]) Directive 98/5/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 16 February 1998 to facilitate practice of the profession of lawyer on a permanent basis in a Member State other than that in which the qualification was obtained.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000268/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(11 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Nuove vernici ecologiche dagli imballaggi: un possibile impiego ecosostenibile nel settore automobilistico

Le bottiglie e le confezioni alimentari — purché rigorosamente 100 % plastica PET — sono destinate a diventare vernice spray per la carrozzeria delle auto. L'obiettivo è quello di abbattere i solventi e ridurre le emissioni nocive, anche facilitando il lavoro in officina e accorciando i tempi di asciugatura.

La realizzazione di questo sistema nasce da un noto centro di eccellenza, una multinazionale della chimica che, con un centinaio di giovani specializzati, si occupa di sviluppare le tecnologie più ecosostenibili per il settore carrozzeria, ovvero le vernici ad acqua che nel settembre 2011 hanno fatto registrare cifre da record nella vendita di tali prodotti. I settori interessati sono diversi: dalla fibra di vetro ai parabrezza per le automobili sino all'ottica. Ma il core sono le vernici per le carrozzerie, anticorrosivi per la marina e isolanti per l'aerospazio, che da soli costituiscono circa due terzi del fatturato globale della società.

Esemplare e innovativa soprattutto la linea ad acqua che riduce le emissioni di solvente del 93 % rispetto ad un sistema di basi a solvente convenzionale, quello che consente un'essiccazione di soli 10 minuti, risparmiando tempo, energia e dispersione di emissioni nocive. Oppure l'agente che permette alla carrozzeria di pulire le attrezzature e di separare il materiale di scarto dall'acqua utilizzata, consentendone il riutilizzo. Infine, l'ultimo brevetto: il primo prodotto per il refinish che contiene molecole di PET da materiale plastico riciclato. Negli ultimi due anni, questi i risultati raggiunti: una riduzione del 30 % dei consumi di acqua, del 15 % delle emissioni azoto e di oltre il 70 % degli incidenti sul lavoro e delle malattie connesse alle emissioni nocive.

Considerato che:

— da ogni tonnellata di vernici evaporano circa 400 kg di solventi tossici per l'uomo e dannosi per l'ambiente;

— tutti i componenti delle vernici ecologiche sono prodotti composti da materie rinnovabili, prive da emissioni nocive, la cui trasformazione avviene nel rispetto dell'ambiente;

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. intende promuovere iniziative volte alla diffusione e alla produzione di tali vernici, utilizzando un sistema di riciclaggio dei prodotti indicati, in particolare nel settore automobilistico?

2. intende predisporre un piano d'azione europeo che permetta ai consumatori di identificare facilmente tali prodotti come «eco-compatibili e ecosostenibili»?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(1º marzo 2013)

La Commissione, seppure non intenda adottare misure specifiche riguardanti le vernici in questione, promuove lo sviluppo e la diffusione di tecnologie ecologiche, ad esempio tramite il programma LIFE ([1]) e il piano d'azione per l'ecoinnovazione ([2]). Inoltre incoraggia il riutilizzo e il riciclaggio dei rifiuti, in conformità con la gerarchia dei rifiuti stabilita dalla direttiva quadro in materia ([3]) (direttiva 2008/98/CE).

Tuttavia, dal 2008 le pitture e le vernici per interni ed esterni rientrano nel sistema UE del marchio di qualità ecologica (Ecolabel UE). Ecolabel UE è un marchio facoltativo volto a incentivare le aziende a sviluppare e commercializzare — e i consumatori ad acquistare — prodotti e servizi caratterizzati da un minore impatto ambientale durante l'intero arco di vita. Pitture e vernici costituiscono uno dei gruppi di prodotti che hanno maggiormente aderito a questo sistema: alla fine del 2012 il marchio era stato assegnato a 2 571 prodotti differenti appartenenti a questa categoria.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/themes/environment.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/getting-funds/index_en.htm
([3]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000268/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: New environmentally friendly paints from packaging: a potential environmentally sustainable use in the automotive industry

Bottles and food packaging — provided that they are made of 100 % PET plastic — can be now be turned into spray paint to be used on the bodywork of cars. The aim of this is to destroy solvents and to reduce harmful emissions. This also assists work in the body shop and reduces drying time.

This system has been developed by a well-known centre of excellence, a chemical industry multinational which employs approximately 100 young specialised workers. Its mission is to develop more environmentally sustainable technologies for the body shop industry, such as water-based paints, which achieved record sales in September 2011. There are various industries interested in this technology ranging from windscreen glass fibre for cars to optics. Its core business is however the sale of body shop paints, anti-corrosive paints for the navy and insulating paints for the aerospace industry, which together make up around two thirds of the company's overall turnover.

The water-based paint is a market-leading and innovative product range, which reduces solvent emissions by 93 % compared to a conventional solvent-based system. This enables the paint to dry within just 10 minutes, saving time, energy and the reducing harmful emissions. The agent enables the body shop to clean equipment and to separate the waste material from waste water, meaning that this water can be re-used. Lastly, the latest patent relates to the first refinishing product to contain PET molecules from recycled plastic material. Within the last two years, the following results have been achieved: a 30 % reduction in water use, a 15 % reduction in nitrogen emission and also a 70 % reduction in work-related incidents and illnesses related to harmful emissions.

Given that:

— for each tonne of paint, approximately 400 kg of solvents evaporate which are harmful to man and cause environmental damage;

— all the components of environmentally friendly paints are produced from renewable material, free from harmful emissions, which are created in an environmentally respectful way;

1. Does the Commission intend to promote initiatives aimed at distributing and manufacturing these paints, using a recycling system for the stated products, particularly in the automotive industry?

2. Does it intend to prepare a European action plan which enables consumers easily to identify these paints as 'environmentally friendly and environmentally sustainable' products?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission does not intend to take specific action on these paints. It does promote the development and uptake of environmentally-friendly technologies, including via its LIFE Programme ([1]) and its Eco-Innovation Action Plan ([2]). It also encourages the reuse and recycling of waste, in line with the waste hierarchy set out in the EU Waste Framework Directive ([3]) (Directive 2008/98/EC).

However, indoor and outdoor paints and varnishes have been covered by the EU Ecolabel scheme since 2008. The EU Ecolabel is a voluntary label to encourage businesses to develop and market — and consumers to purchase — products and services that have a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle. Paints and varnishes are among the most popular product groups under the scheme: up to the end of 2012, the label has been awarded to 2571 distinct products in this category.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/themes/environment.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/getting-funds/index_en.htm
([3]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000269/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Control of volume of adverts during television programmes

Following the implementation by the US Government of a law to limit the volume of television adverts to the same audio level as the surrounding television programme, does the Commission consider discrepancy in volume to be a problem in the EU?

Does the Commission currently have any plans to draft legislation on the audio level of television adverts, to prevent them being aired at a higher volume than the main television programme?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive (Directive 2010/13/EU) ([1]) lays down a set of minimum harmonisation rules at European level, including rules on commercial communications.

A possible regulation of the volume at which commercials can be played was discussed during the adoption process of Directive 2007/65/EC ([2]) amending the 'television without frontiers' Directive (Directive 89/552/EEC) ([3]). However, the amended Directive, which has been codified under Directive 2010/13/EU and renamed the 'Audiovisual Media Services Directive' (AVMSD), does not contain provisions concerning this issue, which was considered more appropriate for possible regulation at national level, in line with the subsidiarity principle.

Some Member States have implemented stricter rules in this particular area.

The Commission plans to adopt a Green Paper on Connected TV and convergence shortly, which will launch a wide public consultation. This consultation will address amongst other things the regulatory framework for audiovisual media services.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:EN:PDF
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:332:0027:0045:EN:PDF
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1989L0552:20071219:EN:PDF

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000270/13
à Comissão
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(11 de janeiro de 2013)

Assunto: Número Europeu de Emergência — localização de chamadas

Quando uma chamada é feita para o 112, os operadores em cada Estado-Membro devem fornecer a localização aproximada do chamador às autoridades de emergência para que estas possam enviar ajuda imediata.

A capacidade de localizar o autor da chamada em caso de uma emergência pode ser de grande importância se a pessoa for incapaz de identificar a sua localização (o que pode acontecer especialmente em chamadas a partir de telefones móveis ou durante percursos no estrangeiro).

Porém, a implementação deste sistema não se encontra totalmente operacional em todos os Estados-Membros; nos que o aplicam, o método utilizado é o de Cell Id, caracterizado pela sua simplicidade e fraca precisão.

De acordo com o artigo 26.°, n.° 7, da Diretiva 2009/136/CE, «*para assegurar a efetiva implementação dos serviços "112" nos Estados-Membros, a Comissão, após consulta do ORECE, pode aprovar medidas técnicas de execução* (…) *sem prejuízo para a organização dos serviços de emergência, nem (…) qualquer impacto na mesma, que continua a ser da exclusiva competência dos Estados-Membros*».

Neste sentido gostaria de saber que medidas já adotou ou está prestes a adotar a Comissão de forma a garantir a efetiva implementação do Serviço 112, nomeadamente a questão da localização das chamadas?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

A Comissão está fortemente empenhada em assegurar que os serviços de emergência em toda a Europa tenham a possibilidade de determinar a localização de quem telefona para o 112. Foi essa, aliás, a razão pela qual lançou uma série de processos de infração contra os Estados-Membros que ainda não tinham essa característica do serviço disponível (pondo em risco vidas humanas). Por força dessas medidas, a função de localização da pessoa que telefona está atualmente operacional em todos os Estados-Membros.

No que diz respeito à técnica utilizada para localizar a pessoa que efetua a chamada, a Diretiva Serviço Universal (artigo 26.°, n.° 5) determina que as autoridades reguladoras competentes devem estabelecer critérios para a precisão e a fiabilidade da informação fornecida sobre a localização da pessoa. Por conseguinte, cabe aos Estados-Membros impor critérios nessa matéria.

Atualmente, a grande maioria das empresas utiliza o sistema Cell ID para a localização do autor da chamada, embora a indústria tenha comunicado a existência de soluções tecnológicas que podem garantir uma determinação mais exata da posição. Para garantir um acesso efetivo ao serviço 112, a Comissão está neste momento em discussões com os peritos dos Estados-Membros tendo em vista ajudar a divulgar as melhores soluções para implementar critérios mais rigorosos de localização da pessoa que efetua a chamada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000270/13
to the Commission
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: European emergency number — caller location

When a call is made to the 112 emergency number, operators in the Member States must provide the emergency services with the caller's approximate location so that they can dispatch assistance immediately.

The ability to locate callers in an emergency may be extremely important if the person concerned is unable to identify their location themselves (which may be the case where calls are made from mobile phones or when abroad).

However, this system is not operational in all the Member States. Where it is in operation, it uses Cell-ID, which is a simple technique that lacks precision.

Article 26(7) of Directive 2009/136/EC stipulates that 'in order to ensure effective access to "112" services in the Member States, the Commission, having consulted BEREC, may adopt technical implementing measures (…) without prejudice to (…) the organisation of emergency services, which remains of the exclusive competence of Member States.'

What measures has the Commission adopted or will it adopt to ensure effective access to the 112 service, in particular as regards caller location?

Answer given by Mrs Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Commission is strongly committed to ensure that caller location for calls to 112 is available to emergency services throughout Europe. This is why in the past it launched a number of infringment proceedings against Member States where this life saving service was not available. As a result caller location is currently operational in all Member States.

As regards the technique used to identify the location of the caller, the Universal Service Directive (Article 26 paragraph 5) provides that competent regulatory authorities shall lay down criteria for the accuracy and reliability of the caller location information provided. Consequently, it is for Member States to impose caller location criteria.

At present the vast majority of undertakings provide cell ID as caller location, while the industry has reported the existence of technological solutions which could provide more accurate positioning. To ensuring effective access to the 112 service, the Commission is currently in discussions with Member States' experts in view of helping to disseminate the best solutions for implementing more stringent caller location criteria.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000271/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Decreto Ley nº 179/2012, de 18 de diciembre, sobre medidas urgentes de crecimiento económico en Italia

El Decreto Ley 179/2012 establece, en su artículo 33, la concesión de un crédito con deducción fiscal de hasta el 50 % del costo total de ejecución a titulares de contratos de iniciativas público-privadas de realización y gestión de obras públicas. Es indiscutible que hay medidas del decreto que solo favorecen a determinadas empresas de determinados sectores, quienes gracias al crédito fiscal llegan a un equilibrio financiero que les permite, por ejemplo, el acceso al mercado de crédito bancario con mayor facilidad que a otras.

Sobre el punto 3 de la medida en cuestión, el Viceprimer Ministro, Dr. Ciaccia, identificó en una entrevista obras públicas ya autorizadas (sin las ayudas públicas en las bases del concurso) que podrían beneficiarse también de la ayuda; entre ellas el corredor vial Tirreno-Brennero (Ti.Bre), donde se está construyendo en particular el tramo Fontevivo-Nogarole Rocca. La obra en cuestión había sido objeto de un procedimiento de infracción por la Comisión (nº 2006/4419), cerrado tras un acuerdo que incluía lo siguiente:

a) prórroga de la concesión hasta 2031 a Autocisa spa, con el compromiso de construir la autopista Fontevivo-Nogarole Rocca (84 km);

b) obligación de presentar, antes del 31.12.2010, el proyecto de ruta definitivo para la totalidad de la carretera;

c) un plan financiero licitado por el VIII Comité Permanente ([1]), sujeto a la aprobación del Parlamento italiano ([2]), que se utilizaría para actualizar en 2031 el plazo de la concesión, que prevé la autofinanciación total de Autocisa spa, sin ningún tipo de aportación de capital del Estado italiano.

Tras el cierre del procedimiento de infracción en estos términos firmado por el Gobierno italiano, este mismo emitió a través del CIPE ([3]) la Resolución nº 2/2010, de 22 de enero, que dispone lo siguiente:

— autorización y proyecto definitivo únicamente del primer tramo, Fontevivo-Trecasali/Terre Verdiane, de solo 12 km;

— nuevo plan financiero, que pasa de los 2 039 millones EUR autorizados por el Parlamento italiano el 22.11.2007, a 3 400 millones, proporcionando una subvención estatal de 900 millones de euros para el reequilibrio.

En consecuencia, se pregunta a la Comisión:

1. si las medidas previstas por el artículo 33 del DL179/2012 se contemplan como ayuda estatal de conformidad con el artículo 107 del TFUE y, de ser así, si el Gobierno italiano ha puesto en marcha todas las formalidades exigidas por el artículo 108 del TFUE;

2. si la autorización para el Corredor Vial Ti.Bre y en particular el tramo Fontevivo-Nogarole Rocca entra conflicto con los acuerdos con la Comisión para el cierre del procedimiento de infracción nº 2006/4419, dada la concesión de crédito con deducción fiscal del nuevo artículo 33 DL 179, lo que se sumaría a la contribución estatal ya prevista por la autorización del CIPE;

3. si dichas ayudas públicas no representan medidas contrarias a los objetivos europeos de consolidación fiscal y reducción del déficit público.

([1]) Medio Ambiente, Suelo y Obras Públicas.
([2]) Cámara de Diputados y Senado.
([3]) Comité Interministerial para la Programación Económica.

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de marzo de 2013)

1. Las autoridades italianas no han notificado todavía a la Comisión el Decreto Ley n° 79/2012 para su examen con arreglo a las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE.

2. El artículo 33 del Decreto Ley n° 179/2012 establece que se puede conceder un crédito fiscal si se cumple una serie de condiciones. No está claro si este crédito fiscal se podría conceder o si se va a conceder para la construcción de la autopista Tirreno-Brennero. A juzgar por la información disponible, la Comisión no puede adoptar una postura sobre si la concesión de dicho crédito fiscal afectaría a los compromisos de las autoridades italianas en el marco del procedimiento de infracción n° 2006/4419.

3. Según el Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento (PEC), la disciplina presupuestaria se evalúa respecto a unos valores de referencia para el déficit de las administraciones públicas y la deuda no distingue entre los diferentes tipos de gastos ([4]). Sin embargo, las inversiones públicas han de tenerse en cuenta en el informe de la Comisión Europea que esta debe elaborar antes de poderse adoptar una decisión de someter a un Estado miembro al procedimiento de déficit excesivo. Asimismo, los gastos de inversión reciben tratamiento especial en virtud del nuevo índice de referencia del gasto de la vertiente preventiva del PEC, ya que se calcula un promedio durante una serie de años a fin de evitar que los Estados miembros se vean penalizados por picos anuales de inversión.

La Comisión estudiará otras formas, dentro de la vertiente preventiva del PEC, de incluir los programas de inversión en la evaluación de los programas de estabilidad y convergencia. Concretamente, en determinadas condiciones, no recurrentes, los programas de inversión pública que tengan un impacto demostrado en la sostenibilidad de las finanzas públicas podían acogerse a una desviación temporal respecto del objetivo presupuestario a medio plazo o respecto de la senda de ajuste para alcanzarlo.

([4]) Incluidas las ayudas estatales o los ingresos no cobrados debido a créditos fiscales, como en este caso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000271/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Decree Law No 179/2012 of 18 December 2012 on emergency economic growth measures in Italy

Article 33 of Decree Law No 179/2012 provides that the holders of public-private public works contracts may be granted a tax credit amounting to as much as 50 % of the cost of implementing a project. Some of the provisions of the decree benefit only certain undertakings from certain sectors, in that banks are more likely to award them loans because the tax credit makes their financial position appear healthier.

Speaking in an interview about point three of the provision in question, the Italian Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Mario Ciaccia, referred to public works projects which have already been approved (with no provision for public assistance as part of the tender procedure) and which could also be eligible for a tax credit, such as the Tirreno-Brennero road corridor. The section of motorway between Fontevivo and Nogarole Rocca is currently being built as part of that project. The Commission had initiated infringement proceedings (procedure No 2006/4419) in respect of that specific section of the project. The matter was settled by means of an agreement which included the following terms:

(a) Extension of the concession contract with the firm Autocisa until 2031, including a commitment to build the Fontevivo-Nogarole Rocca motorway (84 km);

(b) Requirement to submit a definitive plan of the route of the motorway by 31 December 2010;

(c) A financing plan endorsed by the eighth standing committee ([1]) and subject to approval by the Italian Parliament ([2]), which will serve as the basis for the renewal of the concession contract in 2031, and which stipulates that Autocisa will not receive any form of financial assistance from the Italian Government.

Once the infringement proceedings had been closed and the agreement signed by the Italian Government, the latter issued, through the CIPE Committee ([3]), Resolution No 2/2010 of 22 January 2010, which:

— definitively approved only the first section of the motorway, from Fontevivo to Trecasali/Terre Verdiane (only 12 km);

— endorsed a new financing plan, increased from the EUR 2.039 billion approved by the Italian Parliament on 22 November 2007 to EUR 3.4 billion, which included a state subsidy of EUR 900 million to cover additional costs.

1. Can the Commission say whether the tax credit provisions of Article 33 of Decree Law No 179/2012 can be regarded as a form of state aid, as defined in Article 107 TFEU? If so, has the Italian Government met all the requirements laid down in Article 108 TFEU?

2. The tax credit provided for under Article 33 of Decree Law No 179/2012 would come on top of the state aid already approved by the CIPE Committee. On that basis, can the Commission say whether the decision to approve the construction of the Tirreno-Brennero motorway, and the Fontevivo-Nogarole Rocca section in particular, breaches the terms of the agreements concluded with the Commission in order to settle infringement procedure No 2006/4419?

3. Does it think that this decision to provide state aid runs counter to the EU's objectives of budgetary consolidation and public deficit reduction?

([1]) The Environment, Land and Public Works.
([2]) Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.
([3]) Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning.

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

1. The Italian authorities have not yet notified Decree Law 179/2012 to the Commission for scrutiny under EU State aid rules.

2. Article 33 of DL 179/2012 says a tax credit can be granted if a number of conditions are fulfilled. It is not clear whether this tax credit could or will be granted for the construction of the Tirreno-Brennero motorway. Based on available information, the Commission cannot take a position on whether granting this tax credit would impinge on the Italian authorities' commitments under infringement procedure No 2006/4419.

3. According to the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), budgetary discipline is assessed against reference values for the general government deficit and debt that do not differentiate among different kinds of expenditure ([4]) . However, public investments have to be taken into account in the EC Report which the Commission has to prepare before a decision can be taken to place a Member State in Excessive Deficit Procedure. Also, investment expenditure receives special treatment under the new expenditure benchmark of the preventive arm of the SGP, as it is averaged over a number of years to avoid penalizing Member States for annual peaks in investments.

The Commission will explore further ways within the preventive arm of the SGP to accommodate investment programmes in the assessment of Stability and Convergence Programmes. Specifically, under certain conditions, non-recurrent, public investment programmes with a proven impact on sustainability of public finances could qualify for a temporary deviation from the medium-term budgetary objective or the adjustment path towards it.

([4]) Including state aid or foregone revenues due to tax credits, as in this case.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000272/13
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(11 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Condena del asesinato de activistas kurdas en París

El reciente asesinato en París de tres activistas de la causa kurda ha vuelto a traer a primera página la trágica realidad del pueblo kurdo. Engañados tras la Primera Guerra Mundial por la comunidad internacional y sometidos a la soberanía de cuatro Estados diferentes, los kurdos de Siria están sufriendo las consecuencias de la actual guerra civil y los kurdos de Turquía e Irán sufren la represión y persecución de los respectivos Gobiernos. Únicamente los kurdos de Irak gozan de una cierta autonomía y estabilidad.

Por otra parte, las autoridades turcas y representantes de la comunidad kurda han comenzado recientemente una ronda de contactos para empezar a desbrozar la resolución democrática y pacífica del conflicto kurdo en Turquía.

Turquía está a la espera de iniciar un proceso hacia la integración en la Unión, en el que debe cumplir el acervo comunitario de respeto de los principios democráticos y de respeto de las libertades y derechos civiles, incluido el respeto de los derechos del pueblo kurdo.

Manifestamos nuestra condena enérgica a este terrible asesinato de personas que luchaban por los derechos de su pueblo como militantes políticas. Las circunstancias en las que se ha producido el asesinato ponen en evidencia que se trata de un crimen premeditado, respecto del que se están realizando en estos momentos todas las investigaciones pertinentes.

Desde nuestro Grupo parlamentario, instamos a la Alta Representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad a que intermedie urgentemente en la resolución democrática del conflicto kurdo en Turquía.

¿Considera la Comisión que la resolución del conflicto kurdo en Turquía es una condición necesaria para comenzar el proceso de integración de dicho país en la Unión Europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de febrero de 2013)

La UE apoya plenamente las negociaciones en curso encaminadas a poner fin al conflicto y que se espera sienten las bases de una solución global de la cuestión kurda. La Unión Europea se felicita de que el proceso haya recabado el apoyo de todas las partes interesadas y, en especial, de la oposición y de que haya sido bien acogida por importantes sectores de la sociedad turca.

La resolución pacífica de la cuestión kurda tendría un efecto decisivo en la continuación de las reformas políticas y constitucionales y sería un paso importante para abordar problemas persistentes relacionados con los criterios políticos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000272/13
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Condemnation of the assassination of Kurdish activists in Paris

The recent assassination in Paris of three activists for the Kurdish cause has once again brought the tragic reality of the Kurdish people to the fore. Deceived by the international community after the First World War and subjected to the sovereignty of four different states, Syria's Kurds are suffering the consequences of the current civil war, and the Kurds of Turkey and Iran are suffering the repression and persecution of their respective governments. Only the Iraqi Kurds enjoy a certain autonomy and stability.

Furthermore, the Turkish authorities and representatives of the Kurdish community have recently begun a round of talks to start clearing a path to a democratic and peaceful resolution of the Kurdish conflict in Turkey.

Turkey is hoping to initiate a process that will lead to integration into the Union, in which it must comply with the body of EC law with regard to respect for democratic principles, liberties and civil rights, including respect for the rights of the Kurdish people.

We declare our strong condemnation of this terrible assassination of individuals who were fighting for the rights of their people as political militants. The circumstances in which this assassination took place make it clear that it was a premeditated crime, which is currently being investigated appropriately.

Our political group urges the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to mediate urgently in the democratic resolution of the Kurdish conflict in Turkey.

Does the Commission consider the resolution of the Kurdish conflict in Turkey to be a necessary condition for beginning the process of that country's integration into the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The EU gives its full support to the ongoing talks that aim at ending the conflict and would hopefully pave the way to an overall solution of the Kurdish issue. The EU welcomes that the process has met the support of all stakeholders, notably the opposition, and has been welcomed by important parts of Turkish society.

A peaceful resolution of the Kurdish issue would have a crucial impact on the continuation of the political and constitutional reforms and would be an important step towards addressing long-standing problems arising under the political criteria.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000273/13
an die Kommission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(11. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Pläne der spanischen Regierung, den 20 spanischen Profi-Fußballklubs zumindest einen Teil ihrer insgesamt 1,3 Mrd. EUR an Steuer- und Sozialversicherungsschulden zu erlassen

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission fiskalpolitisch die Pläne der spanischen Regierung, insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund des derzeitigen Haushaltsdefizits Spaniens in Höhe von 5,8 Prozent?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Vorwurf, dass der Schuldenerlass eine Begünstigung der spanischen Profi-Fußballklubs darstellt, die den Wettbewerb verfälscht oder zu verfälschen droht, da die verschuldeten Profisportvereine Spaniens von Steuererleichterungen profitieren, die andere Gesellschaften in gleicher Finanzlage nicht nutzen können?

3. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Vorwurf, dass ein derartiger Schuldenerlass wettbewerbsverzerrende Konsequenzen haben kann, die sich letztlich auch auf den Handel zwischen den EU-Mitgliedstaaten auswirken, da einige Tätigkeiten der betroffenen Sportvereine — wie der Erwerb von Spielern/innen oder die Vermarktung der Fernseh- und Übertragungsrechte für europäische Wettbewerbe wie die Champions League — auf internationaler Ebene ausgeübt werden?

4. Wie wird die GD Wettbewerb in diesem Fall ihre Pflicht zur Durchsetzung der EU-Wettbewerbsvorschriften wahrnehmen, damit alle Berufsfußball-Vereine, die aufgrund ihrer wirtschaftlichen Tätigkeiten als Unternehmen im Sinne der Wettbewerbsbestimmungen des EG-Vertrags angesehen werden, unter gerechten und fairen Bedingungen miteinander in Wettbewerb treten können?

5. In welcher Form wird die Kommission konkret sicherstellen, dass die spanischen Regierungspläne mit den Beihilfebestimmungen der EU im Sinne von Art. 87 Abs. 1 EGV im Einklang stehen?

6. Inwiefern sieht die Kommission anlässlich dieses Falles grundsätzlichen Handlungsbedarf, die europaweite Gleichbehandlung von Profisportvereinen im Bereich der Besteuerung zu verwirklichen?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(12. März 2013)

Wie die Kommission in ihren Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-005751/2012, E-005768/2012 und E-011276/2012 ([1]) erläutert hat, hat sie Kenntnis von Berichten über hohe Steuer- und Sozialversicherungsschulden spanischer Profifußballclubs.

Die Kommission ist ebenfalls der Auffassung, dass Steuer- und Sozialversicherungsschulden von Profifußballvereinen nach den Beihilferechtsvorschriften nicht anders als entsprechende Schulden anderer Wirtschaftsbeteiligter behandelt werden dürfen, zumal finanzielle Vorteile für Profifußballvereine Wettbewerbsverzerrungen zur Folge haben könnten.

Die Kommission hat die spanischen Behörden um Übermittlung der Auskünfte ersucht, die sie für die Prüfung des von dem Herrn Abgeordneten dargelegten Sachverhalts benötigt. Da die Prüfung der eingeholten Auskünfte noch nicht abgeschlossen ist, kann sie sich noch nicht zu den einzelnen Fragen äußern.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000273/13
to the Commission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Plans by the Spanish Government to allow 20 Spanish professional football clubs a waiver on at least part of their tax and social security debts, totalling EUR 1.3 billion

1. How does the Commission view the Spanish Government's plans in terms of fiscal policy, particularly in the context of Spain's current budget deficit of 5.8 %?

2. How does the Commission view the accusation that the waiving of debt gives the Spanish professional football clubs an advantage that distorts or threatens to distort competition, because they are benefiting from fiscal reliefs unavailable to other enterprises in the same financial position?

3. How does the Commission view the accusation that such a waiving of debt may have the effect of distorting competition, thus impacting on trade between the EU Member States, because some of the activities of the relevant sports clubs — such as the purchase of players or the marketing or television and broadcasting rights for European competitions like the Champions' League — take place at international level?

4. In this case, how does the Directorate General for Competition intend to meet its obligations to implement EU competition regulations so that all professional football clubs, which, because of their economic activity, are regarded as enterprises under the competition rules of the EC Treaty, can compete with each other under fair and equitable conditions?

5. What specific steps will the Commission take to ensure that the Spanish Government's plans do not contravene EU aid rules under the terms of Article 87(1) EC Treaty?

6. To what extent does the Commission recognise a fundamental need for action in this case in order to ensure equal treatment for professional sports clubs across Europe when it comes to taxation?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2013)

As the Commission has explained in its answers to written questions E-005751/2012, E-005768/2012 and E-011276/2012 ([1]), it is aware of reports on substantial amounts of taxes and social security contributions which professional football clubs owe to the Spanish Government.

The Commission shares the view that, under the state aid rules, tax and social security debts of professional football clubs should not be treated differently from similar debts of other economic actors. It agrees that financial advantages for professional football clubs are liable to result in a distortion of competition.

In order to be able to assess the situation referred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission asked the Spanish authorities to provide relevant information. It is currently analysing this information, and so is not yet in a position to comment on the issues raised.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000274/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η συγκρότηση του μηχανισμού «Τριμερής Αλληλεγγύη για την οικοδόμηση της ειρήνης»

Σε συνάντηση των Υπουργών Εξωτερικών (ΥΠΕΞ) Τουρκίας, Σουηδίας και Βραζιλίας, ανακοινώθηκε η συγκρότηση, από τις τρεις χώρες, ενός τριμερούς μηχανισμού για την ειρήνη, με την ονομασία «Τριμερής Αλληλεγγύη για την οικοδόμηση της ειρήνης». Ο Τούρκος ΥΠΕΞ, κ. Αχμέτ Νταβούτογλου, δήλωσε πως πρόκειται «για μια απόφαση για την ανάπτυξη μιας κοινής προοπτικής για τα περιφερειακά και παγκόσμια ζητήματα». Ο ΥΠΕΞ της Σουηδίας Καρλ Μπιλτ είπε χαρακτηριστικά, πως «η ενότητα της Συρίας είναι εξίσου σημαντική με εκείνη της Κύπρου, του Λιβάνου, του Ιράκ και του Αζερμπαϊτζάν». Αναφερόμενος επίσης στις προοπτικές ένταξης της Τουρκίας στην ΕΕ, πρόσθεσε: «Μη με ρωτάτε πότε ακριβώς στο μέλλον, πιστεύω πάντως πως η Τουρκία θα γίνει μέλος της ΕΕ».

1. Πώς σχολιάζει η ΕΕ, και ειδικά η αρμόδια Επίτροπος Εξωτερικών Θεμάτων κ. Άστον, τη συγκρότηση του πιο πάνω μηχανισμού για την ειρήνη. Πώς εξυπηρετούνται τα συμφέροντα της ΕΕ από έναν τέτοιο μηχανισμό;

2. Πώς είναι δυνατόν μια χώρα όπως η κατοχική Τουρκία, η οποία για 39 ολόκληρα χρόνια κατέχει παράνομα εδάφη της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας, να συμμετέχει σε μηχανισμούς που στοχεύουν στην οικοδόμηση της ειρήνης, όταν μάλιστα στη δική της γεωστρατηγική περιοχή δεν διατηρεί καλές σχέσεις γειτονίας με γειτονικές χώρες;

Απάντηση του Επιτρόπου κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Μαρτίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει αυτή την τριμερή πρωτοβουλία. Καταρχήν, η Επιτροπή επικροτεί όλες τις προσπάθειες συνεργασίας για την εξεύρεση λύσεων σχετικά με μεγάλες διεθνείς προκλήσεις και ιδιαίτερα για αυτές που προέρχονται από σημαντικές αναδυόμενες χώρες.

Όσον αφορά τις σχέσεις καλής γειτονίας, η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί να υπενθυμίσει τα πρόσφατα συμπεράσματα της 11ης Δεκεμβρίου 2012, όταν το Συμβούλιο υπογράμμισε ότι, σύμφωνα με το πλαίσιο διαπραγμάτευσης και προηγούμενα συμπεράσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, η Τουρκία πρέπει να δεσμευθεί κατηγορηματικά υπέρ των σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας και του ειρηνικού διακανονισμού διαφορών βάσει του Χάρτη των Ηνωμένων Εθνών, προσφεύγοντας κατά περίπτωση στο Διεθνές Δικαστήριο. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Ένωση εκφράζει και πάλι σοβαρές ανησυχίες και απευθύνει έκκληση στην Τουρκία για την αποφυγή κάθε απειλής ή ενέργειας κατά ενός κράτους μέλους, ή αιτίας προστριβών ή ενεργειών, που μπορούν να βλάψουν τις σχέσεις καλής γειτονίας και τον ειρηνικό διακανονισμό διαφορών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000274/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Creation of a mechanism entitled 'Trilateral Solidarity for Building Peace'

At a meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Sweden and Brazil, the three countries announced the establishment of a trilateral mechanism for peace, entitled 'Trilateral Solidarity for Building Peace'. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said: 'It is a decision to develop a common perspective to regional and global issues'. The Foreign Minister of Sweden, Carl Bildt, said that the unity of Syria was as important as that of Cyprus, Lebanon, Iraq and Azerbaijan. Referring also to the prospects of Turkey joining the EU, Bildt also said he did believe Turkey would join the EU. 'Don't ask me when but I do believe it.'

1. How does the EU, and especially Baroness Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, view the establishment of the above mechanism for peace? How does such a mechanism serve the EU's interests?

2. How can a country like Turkey, which for 39 long years has illegally occupied territories of the Republic of Cyprus, participate in a mechanism aimed at building peace, given that even in its own geostrategic region, it does not enjoy good neighbourly relations with neighbouring countries?

Answer given by Commissioner Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2013)

The Commission is aware of this trilateral initiative. In principle, the Commission welcomes all efforts to cooperate in seeking solutions to key international challenges and particularly from key emerging countries.

As for good neighbourly relations, the Commission would like to recall the recent conclusions of 11 December 2012, where the Council underlined that, in line with the Negotiating Framework and previous European Council and Council conclusions, Turkey needs to commit itself unequivocally to good neighbourly relations and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice. In this context, the Union expresses once again serious concern, and urges Turkey to avoid any kind of threat or action directed against a Member State, or source of friction or actions, which could damage good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000275/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μέτρα στήριξης στις ευάλωτες πληθυσμιακές ομάδες

Με πρόσφατες δηλώσεις του, ο Ιβ Ντακόρ, Γενικός Διευθυντής της Διεθνούς Επιτροπής του Ερυθρού Σταυρού, κρούει τον κώδωνα του κινδύνου που απειλεί την Ευρώπη, λόγω των αυξανόμενων τιμών των τροφίμων και της έλλειψης εμπιστοσύνης στις κυβερνήσεις. Κι αυτό, γιατί οι ίδιοι παράγοντες που συνέβαλαν στο ξέσπασμα των εξεγέρσεων της Αραβικής Άνοιξης, ενδέχεται να προκύψουν και στην Ευρώπη, σε συνδυασμό με την οικονομική κρίση και την ανεργία, και να πυροδοτήσουν τη βία. Σημειωτέον πως ο Ερυθρός Σταυρός στην Ελλάδα, βρίσκεται στα πρόθυρα της χρεοκοπίας, ενώ στην Ισπανία βοηθά πέραν των 300 000 «εξαιρετικά ευάλωτων» ανθρώπων.

1. Ποια μέτρα λαμβάνει η Επιτροπή για στήριξη των ευάλωτων ομάδων πληθυσμού στις χώρες μέλη της ΕΕ, και ιδιαίτερα στις χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου που έχουν πληγεί από την οικονομική κρίση;

2. Πόσο πιθανό είναι το ενδεχόμενο η κρίση στην ΕΕ να πάρει μορφή εξέγερσης, ιδιαίτερα στις χώρες του «μνημονίου», και πόσο προετοιμασμένη είναι η ΕΕ για να αντιμετωπίσει ένα τέτοιο ενδεχόμενο;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή συμμερίζεται την ανησυχία της κας. βουλευτή σχετικά με τον αντίκτυπο της κρίσης στις ευάλωτες ομάδες. Έχει κινητοποιήσει διάφορα μέσα πολιτικής και οικονομικών πόρων, με σκοπό να αντιμετωπίσει τις κοινωνικές συνέπειες της κρίσης και τον δυσμενή αντίκτυπο στους οικονομικά ασθενέστερους. Η μείωση της φτώχειας είναι ένας από τους πέντε πρωταρχικούς στόχους βάσει της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020», η οποία προβλέπει επίσης μια ευρωπαϊκή πλατφόρμα ενάντια στη φτώχεια και τον κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό. Η Επιτροπή σύντομα θα παρουσιάσει μια δέσμη μέτρων για τις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις, ορίζοντας μια νέα ημερήσια διάταξη για την κοινωνική πολιτική, με σκοπό να βοηθήσει τα κράτη μέλη να εκσυγχρονίσουν τα κοινωνικά συστήματα, να αντιμετωπίσουν την αύξηση της φτώχειας και τον κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό, καθώς και να εξέλθουν από την κρίση πιο ισχυρά, πιο συνεκτικά και περισσότερο ανταγωνιστικά.

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο στοχεύει στην αντιμετώπιση της φτώχειας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού, διευκολύνοντας την πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση και καταπολεμώντας την ανεργία. Κατά τη διάρκεια της προγραμματικής περιόδου 2007-13, πόροι του ΕΚΤ ύψους 3 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, έχουν δεσμευτεί για το επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα (ΕΠ) «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού» και περίπου 159 εκατομμύρια για το ΕΠ «Εθνικό αποθεματικό για τα απρόβλεπτα», στην Ελλάδα. Επιπλέον, χρηματοδοτήσεις από το ΕΚΤ, ύψους 450 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ περίπου, έχουν δεσμευτεί για την προώθηση των μέτρων ενίσχυσης για τη νεολαία, ενώ 600 εκατομμύρια ευρώ επιπλέον από τους πόρους του ΕΚΤ και του ΕΤΠΑ θα διατεθούν για νέες δράσεις ή για την ενίσχυση εκείνων που υφίστανται ήδη.

2. Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τα κράτη μέλη βοηθώντας να διασφαλίσουν ότι οι μεταρρυθμίσεις διεξάγονται με ένα κοινωνικά υπεύθυνο τρόπο, ενώ τα κράτη μέλη είναι αυτά που φέρουν την τελική ευθύνη για τον σχεδιασμό των μέτρων αυτών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000275/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Measures to support vulnerable population groups

In recent statements, Yves Daccord, Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross, has sounded the alarm about the threat to Europe posed by rising food prices and a lack of confidence in governments. In his view, the same factors that contributed to the outbreak of the Arab Spring may occur in Europe, coupled with the economic crisis and unemployment, and trigger violence. It should be noted that the Red Cross in Greece is on the verge of bankruptcy, while in Spain it is helping more than 300 000 'highly vulnerable' people.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What measures is the Commission taking to support vulnerable population groups in EU Member States, particularly in southern Europe, which have been affected by the economic crisis?

2. How likely is it that the crisis in the EU will take the form of a popular uprising, particularly in the 'Memorandum' countries, and how prepared is the EU to face such an eventuality?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

1. The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concern at the social impact of the crisis on vulnerable people. It has mobilised various policy instruments and financial resources to tackle the social consequences of the crisis and address its adverse impact on the economically weakest. Reducing poverty is one of five EU headline targets under the Europe 2020 strategy, which also provides for a European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion. The Commission will soon be presenting a Social Investment Package setting out a new agenda for social policy to help the Member States modernise their social systems, address the increase in poverty and social exclusion, and emerge from the crisis stronger, more cohesive and more competitive.

The European Social Fund aims to tackle poverty and social exclusion by facilitating access to employment and combating unemployment. During the 2007-13 programming period, ESF resources worth approximately EUR 3 billion have been earmarked for the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (OP) and approximately EUR 159 million for the National Contingency Reserve OP in Greece. ESF funds worth approximately EUR 450 million have also been committed to promoting youth-related assistance, while a further EUR 600 million of ESF and ERDF resources have been set aside for new actions or the reinforcement of existing ones.

2. The Commission supports the Member States by helping ensure that reforms are conducted in a socially responsible way, while the Member States are ultimately responsible for the design of such measures.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000276/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(11 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Gli aborti selettivi in India

Non vale più l'assunto secondo il quale l'aborto è frutto della miseria e della povertà. Secondo un recente e sconcertante studio dell'Università di Toronto, gli aborti selettivi in India (12 milioni in 25 anni) aumentano con l'incremento dell'affermazione economica e professionale delle donne indiane. Più sono emancipate, più utilizzano l'aborto selettivo se — tramite le tecnologie — sanno di aspettare la seconda femmina. Quindi — afferma il periodico femminile «Io donna» del 10 novembre scorso — se decine di milioni di donne mancano all'appello in India, non è solo per le condizioni di vita miserabili di quasi metà della popolazione, dell'impossibilità del padre di provvedere alla dote di una seconda figlia, o per effetto della credenza indù secondo cui unicamente il figlio maschio può celebrare il rito funebre dei genitori e permetterne la reincarnazione: sotto accusa sono anche de donne dell'India moderna, tecnologica, quelle nuove borghesi che cavalcano il benessere e si adeguano al più barbaro conformismo maschilista. La pratica infanticida è atavica anche nei villaggi contadini dove si produce il cotone per le grandi marche internazionali. È una pratica omertosa, anche dove prosperano le «botteghe» clandestine dotate di screening agli ultrasuoni, vietati dalla legge proprio perché si sa a che cosa servono. Nonostante il cosiddetto progresso economico e sociale e l'inarrestabile crescita, la mattanza continua, tanto che su ogni mille maschi si contano 905 femmine.

1. È in grado la Commissione di esercitare sulle autorità locali un'influenza culturale tendente a salvaguardare la vita delle bambine?

2. Non crede che la questione possa essere affrontata nel corso dei negoziati commerciali con quel popoloso paese?

3. È da ingenui pensare che la vita umana ha un valore superiore al cotone o a qualsiasi altra merce commerciabile?

4. Sarebbe disponibile a utilizzare i mezzi dell'aiuto umanitario per cooperare con le autorità locali alla diffusione di una cultura per la vita e al sostegno di organizzazioni internazionali come «Rescuing Female Babies» di Terre des Hommes?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 febbraio 2013)

L'Unione europea è fortemente impegnata ad eliminare tutte le forme di discriminazione contro le bambine e le cause all'origine della preferenza per i figli maschi, che conducono a pratiche quali l'infanticidio femminile e la selezione prenatale del sesso. L'approccio dell'UE si fonda su tre principi: la promozione dell'uguaglianza di genere e dell'emancipazione femminile; la lotta alle discriminazioni di genere e alla violenza contro donne e bambine; la protezione e la promozione dei diritti dei minori, in particolare delle bambine.

Da qualche anno è stato avviato un dialogo con le autorità e la società civile indiane su questi temi, e la questione occupa un posto di rilievo negli incontri che si tengono nell'ambito del dialogo sui diritti umani tra UE e India.

L'impegno a favore dei diritti umani e dei principi democratici fa già parte dell'accordo di cooperazione del 1994 sulla compartecipazione e lo sviluppo. Nell'ambito dei negoziati tra UE e India per un accordo di libero scambio figurano temi quali la governance, la crescita inclusiva, lo sviluppo sostenibile e il dialogo con le organizzazioni della società civile.

Inoltre le questioni di genere fanno parte integrante delle attività di cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'Unione europea, che sono incentrate sul benessere delle donne e delle bambine; numerosi sono i progetti che hanno sostenuto le organizzazioni della società civile nel fronteggiare la discriminazione nei confronti delle bambine e la violenza contro le donne, compresi fenomeni quali la tratta di minori, i matrimoni infantili, la violenza domestica e l'HIV/AIDS. Tali attività, che prevedono la partecipazione sia dell'UE che delle ONG locali, vengono portate avanti in stretta collaborazione con le autorità del posto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000276/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Selective abortions in India

The hypothesis that abortion is due to poverty and hardship is no longer valid. According to a recent and disconcerting study by the University of Toronto, selective abortions in India (amounting to 12 million over 25 years) are rising in line with the increase in the economic and professional prosperity of Indian women. The more women are emancipated, the more they use selective abortion if pre-natal testing shows that their second baby is a girl. However, as stated in the women's magazine *Io donna*, published on 10 November 2011, the reason why tens of millions of women are unaccounted for in India is not simply the misery in which almost half of the population live, the father's inability to provide a dowry for a second daughter, or the Hindu belief that only a son can celebrate the funeral rite of his parents and bring about their reincarnation. The finger is also pointed at women in the modern, technologically advanced India: middle-class women who are acquiring wealth and conforming to the most barbarous, chauvinistic orthodoxy. Infanticide is also widespread in rural areas where cotton is produced for large international markets. The practice, in which illegal 'workshops' with ultrasound screening equipment flourish, which are illegal precisely because of what they are and what they do, is protected by a code of silence. Despite so-called economic and social progress and inexorable growth, the killings continue, so much so that 905 females are born for every 1000 males.

1. Is the Commission able to exert any cultural influence over the local authorities to protect the life of female children?

2. Does it believe that the issue can be tackled during trade negotiations with this densely populated country?

3. Is it naive to think that human life has a higher value than cotton or any other commercial product?

4. Would it be possible to use humanitarian aid to cooperate with the local authorities in spreading a culture that values life and in supporting international organisations such as 'Rescuing Female Babies' run by the Terre des Hommes Federation?

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

The EU is fully committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination against the girl child and the root causes of the preference for sons, which result in practices such as female infanticide and prenatal sex selection. The EU approach is based on three principles: promoting gender equality and women's empowerment; combating gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls; and protecting and promoting the rights of children, especially girls.

Dialogue with Indian authorities and civil society on these issues has been ongoing since some years already, and the topic features prominently in the meetings of the EU-India Human Rights Dialogue.

A commitment to human rights and democratic principles is already included in the cooperation agreement of 1994 on partnership and development. The negotiations between the EU and India on a Free Trade Agreement include issues such as governance, inclusive growth, sustainable development and dialogue with civil society organisations.

Gender issues are also mainstreamed into the EU's development cooperation activities, which have a strong focus on women and girls' welfare; numerous projects have assisted civil society organisations in addressing discrimination against girls and violence against women, including trafficking and child marriage, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. Such activities, open to the participation of both EU and local NGOs, are carried out in close cooperation with the local authorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-000277/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Expulsión de ciudadanos europeos de El Aaiún en noviembre de 2012

En la pasada pregunta parlamentaria presentada con la referencia E-010245/2012 y firmada por 27 diputados al Parlamento Europeo, solicitábamos la opinión de la Comisión con respecto a los hechos acaecidos en El Aaiún el 7 de noviembre de 2012.

En dicha jornada, como explicamos en la anterior pregunta, las autoridades marroquíes de ocupación expulsaron de la ciudad de El Aaiún a varios ciudadanos europeos que participaban en una misión internacional de observación, entre ellos varios ciudadanos españoles y noruegos. En la respuesta a la citada pregunta, recibida el 8 de enero de este año, existe una única, y poco clara, referencia a los hechos: «Los incidentes registrados en El Aaiún son lamentables». No queda claro si esta escueta frase se refiere a los hechos citados o a los acaecidos el 1 de noviembre de 2010.

¿Está la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante lamentado con la citada frase la expulsión de la misión de observación acaecida el 7 de noviembre? En dicho caso, ¿ha trasladado a las autoridades marroquíes su repulsa a dicha expulsión? ¿En qué forma?

En caso de no referirse a los hechos sobre los cuales habíamos preguntado, volvemos a preguntarle: ¿condena la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante la expulsión por la fuerza de los observadores internacionales? A la vista de estos actos, ¿no considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que Marruecos está vulnerando flagrantemente el artículo 2 del Acuerdo de Asociación, que obliga a ambas partes a respetar en todo momento los principios democráticos básicos y los derechos humanos fundamentales en su política interior y exterior?

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante justificada la expulsión de ciudadanos de la Unión sin que se aleguen motivos sujetos al Derecho internacional? ¿Exigirá al Gobierno marroquí que rinda cuentas por la expulsión de ciudadanos europeos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta, Sra.Ashton, en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de febrero de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta ha solicitado a sus servicios que investiguen los hechos acaecidos el 7 de noviembre de 2012 en colaboración con las autoridades marroquíes y la Embajada de España en Rabat. Según esta última, los ciudadanos españoles afectados se mantuvieron en contacto con las autoridades consulares españolas y recibieron toda la asistencia consular necesaria. Ni los ciudadanos en cuestión ni la Embajada de España solicitaron la intervención de la Delegación de la UE.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta reafirma su pleno apoyo a los esfuerzos del Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas, elogia el trabajo de su Enviado Personal, el Embajador Christopher Ross, y, como ya ha hecho anteriormente, insta a todas las partes a evitar la violencia.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000277/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Expulsion of European citizens from Laayoune in November 2012

In Written Question E-010245/2012, which was signed by 27 MEPs, the Commission was asked for its views on the events that occurred in Laayoune on 7 November 2012.

As we explained previously, the Morrocan occupation authorities expelled a number of European citizens from Laayoune on 7 November 2012. Those expelled, including a number of Spanish and Norwegian citizens, had been taking part in an international observer mission. The answer to the question, received on 8 January 2013, only makes one, ambiguous, reference to the events: 'Any incidents that have taken place in Laayoune are regrettable'. It is not clear whether this brief comment refers to the events of 7 November 2012 or those of 1 November 2010.

Was the Vice-President/High Representative referring to her regret at the expulsion of those taking part in the observer mission on 7 November 2012? If so, has she expressed her condemnation of the events to the Moroccan authorities, and in what way?

If the Vice-President/High Representative was not referring to the events of 7 November 2012, could our original questions be answered again: Does the Vice-President/High Representative condemn the expulsion by force of international observers? In light of these acts, does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that Morocco is blatantly violating Article 2 of the EU-Morocco Association Agreement, which requires both parties continually to respect basic democratic principles and fundamental human rights in both their domestic and external affairs?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider the expulsion of EU citizens to be justified when no grounds under international law for doing so have been given? Will the Vice-President/High Representative ask the Moroccan government to account for its expulsion of European citizens?

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

The HR/VP has requested her services to enquire about the events of 7 November 2012 with the Moroccan authorities and the Spanish Embassy. According to the Spanish Embassy in Rabat the Spanish citizens concerned have been in contact with their consular authorities and have received all necessary consular assistance. Neither the persons in question nor the Spanish Embassy have asked the EU Delegation to intervene.

The HR/VP reaffirms her full support for the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General's efforts, commends the work of his Personal Envoy Ambassador Christopher Ross and calls, as she has done in the past, on all parties to restrain from violence.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-000278/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE)
(11 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Ayudas a los astilleros — Posible ilegalidad

El sistema fiscal de los Países Bajos permitía hasta 2010 la amortización de determinados bienes de manera anticipada y acelerada. Esta medida, combinada con el «régimen de tributación por tonelaje» y el arrendamiento financiero para la adquisición de buques, les permite rebajas sustanciales en el precio final de los buques en comparación con sus competidores europeos.

Esta ayuda, de acuerdo con el artículo 107, apartado 1, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea:

— confiere a los Países Bajos una ventaja económica que tiene por consecuencia que el precio de los buques sea entre un 33 % y un 38 % inferior al de sus competidores europeos;

— es selectiva, ya que otorga la ventaja solo a determinados sectores, y depende de una autorización individualizada por parte de las autoridades competentes;

— implica una transferencia de recursos estatales, debido a que el sistema minora las obligaciones fiscales de los participantes, además de utilizarse para la compensación de bases imponibles positivas por parte de los inversores; y

— supone una distorsión de la competencia y afecta al comercio entre Estados miembros, ya que los beneficiarios compiten con otras empresas del sector del transporte marítimo; además, los descuentos mencionados de entre el 33 % y el 38 % son muy relevantes.

¿Ha recibido la Comisión alguna notificación por parte de los Países Bajos en relación con este régimen combinado de ayudas? Si no ha sido así, ¿cuándo iniciará la Comisión el correspondiente procedimiento de infracción contra los Países Bajos? ¿En qué condiciones sería necesaria la devolución de las ayudas percibidas?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión no ha recibido ninguna notificación de los Países Bajos de un régimen correspondiente al descrito por Su Señoría. Sin embargo, en junio de 2012, la Comisión inició una investigación preliminar y preguntó a los Países Bajos acerca de las disposiciones que permiten amortizar más rápidamente el coste de los activos. Más recientemente, transmitió a los Países Bajos una denuncia que había recibido sobre el mismo tema.

La Comisión no está en situación de confirmar el alcance de la ventaja mencionada al describir el régimen. En la medida en que se obtendría gracias a la aplicación de medidas generales, es decir, de medidas fiscales aplicables a todas las empresas, esta ventaja no sería constitutiva de ayuda estatal.

La Comisión evaluará cada una de las diferentes medidas a que hace referencia la descripción. También las evaluará juntas si puede demostrarse que existen vínculos claros entre ellas, sea establecidos por ley, sea consagrados por la práctica administrativa.

Con arreglo al Reglamento (CE) n° 659/99 ([1]), al final de la investigación preliminar, la Comisión podrá decidir que las medidas en cuestión no constituyen ayudas, que constituyen ayudas compatibles o incoar un procedimiento de investigación formal si la medida parece ser constitutiva de ayuda estatal ilegal e incompatible. Si la Comisión considera que una medida constituye una ayuda incompatible, exigiría que el Estado miembro recuperara esa ayuda, a menos que eso fuera contrario a un principio general del Derecho de la Unión.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 659/1999 del Consejo de 22 de marzo de 1999 por el que se establecen disposiciones de aplicación del artículo 93 del Tratado CE, artículos 4 y 14.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000278/13
to the Commission
Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Possible illegality of aid granted to shipyards

Early and accelerated depreciation of assets was allowed under the Netherlands' tax system until 2010. This facility, combined with the 'tonnage tax scheme' and leases for acquiring ships, provides significant reductions in the final price of ships compared with prices in other European countries.

If the aid is examined in relation to Article 107(1) TFEU,

— it gives the Netherlands an economic advantage, resulting in ship prices that are between 33 % and 38 % lower than those in other European countries;

— it is selective, since it only benefits certain sectors, and requires an individual authorisation from the competent authorities;

— it involves a transfer of State resources, due to the fact that the scheme reduces tax obligations on its beneficiaries, and investors may use these resources to offset positive tax bases;

— and it constitutes distortion of competition and affects trade between Member States, since the beneficiaries compete with other maritime transport sector undertakings in other EU countries. Furthermore, the discounts of between 33 % and 38 % are substantial.

Has the Commission received a notification from the Netherlands regarding this combined aid scheme? If not, when will the Commission start infringement proceedings against the Netherlands? Under what conditions would the aid granted have to be repaid?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission has not received any notification from the Netherlands of a scheme corresponding to the description given by the Honourable Member. However, in June 2012, the Commission initiated a preliminary investigation and asked the Netherlands about measures allowing faster deduction of the cost of assets. More recently, it forwarded a complaint that it had received on the same subject to the Netherlands.

The Commission is not in a position to confirm the size of the advantage mentioned in the description of the scheme. To the extent it would result from the use of general measures, i.e. fiscal measures that apply to all undertakings, such advantage would not amount to state aid.

The Commission will assess each of the different measures mentioned in the description individually. It will also assess them together if clear links between them — established by law or by administrative practice — can be demonstrated.

Pursuant to Regulation 659/99 ([1]), at the end of the preliminary investigation, the Commission can either decide that the measures concerned do not constitute aid, that they constitute compatible aid, or open a formal investigation if the measure appears to constitute unlawful and incompatible state aid. If the Commission considered that a measure constituted incompatible aid, it would require the Member State to recover this aid unless that was contrary to a general principle of Community law.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 659/1999 of 22 March 1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty, Articles 4 and 14.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000279/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Nabucco oraz rurociąg transkaspijski

Jednym z kluczowych punktów budowy niezależności energetycznej Unii Europejskie jest powstanie połączeń energetycznych umożliwiających ominięcie rosyjskiego monopolu na dostawy gazu. Najważniejszą alternatywą jest rurociąg Nabucco oraz rurociąg transkaspijski umożliwiający dostawy gazu z bogatych złóż w Turkmenistanie przez Azerbejdżan, Gruzję i Turcję do Europy.

1. Jakie środki Komisja przeznaczyła w celu wsparcia budowy gazociągu Nabucco oraz gazociągu transkaspijskiego.

2. Jak Komisja ocenia efektywność przeznaczonych środków?

3. Czy gazociąg Nabucco może liczyć na dodatkowe wsparcie ze strony Komisji oraz statut priorytetowego projektu energetycznego?

4. Proszę o przedstawienie aktualnego stanu negocjacji w sprawie przesyłu gazu prowadzonych pomiędzy UE a Turkmenistanem i Azerbejdżanem.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(27 lutego 2013 r.)

1. Projektowi Nabucco przyznano pomoc finansową UE w ramach programu TEN-E na potrzeby studiów przygotowawczych w 2005 r. (4,8 mln EUR) i w 2009 r. (3,37 mln EUR). Projektowi przyznano ponadto dotację wynoszącą 200 mln EUR w ramach Europejskiego programu energetycznego na rzecz naprawy gospodarczej (EPENG). Środki z powyższej dotacji nie zostały jeszcze wykorzystane, ponieważ projektodawca jest zobowiązany do wykonania oceny oddziaływania na środowisko i podjęcia ostatecznej decyzji inwestycyjnej, która jeszcze nie zapadła.

Pomoc finansowa UE nie została przyznana na budowę rurociągu transkaspijskiego. Ze środków programu INOGATE jest jednak finansowane badanie zakresu oddziaływania na środowisko, które jest obecnie prowadzone.

2. Pomoc finansowa UE miała kluczowe znaczenie dla przygotowania projektu Nabucco. Bez badań przygotowawczych projektodawcy nie mogliby rozpocząć negocjacji handlowych z producentem gazu.

3. W ramach określania projektów będących przedmiotem wspólnego zainteresowania projektodawcy przedłożyli do oceny projekt Nabucco-West. Proces określania jest w toku i nie są jeszcze dostępne jego wyniki.

4. W trakcie poprzedniej rundy negocjacji z Azerbejdżanem i Turkmenistanem poczyniono znaczne postępy w zakresie struktury umowy ramowej dotyczącej rurociągu transkaspijskiego. Dalsze rundy negocjacji zaplanowano w roku 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000279/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Nabucco and the Trans-Caspian pipeline

One of the key factors involved in achieving energy independence for the European Union is establishing energy connections which make it possible to circumvent the Russian monopoly on gas supplies. The Nabucco and Trans-Caspian pipelines, which would allow gas to be supplied to Europe from the rich deposits in Turkmenistan via Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, represent the most important alternative.

1. What funding has the Commission allocated to support the construction of the Nabucco and Trans-Caspian gas pipelines?

2. In the Commission's opinion, how effective has this funding been?

3. Is it likely that the Nabucco gas pipeline will receive additional support from the Commission, or be named a priority energy project?

4. What is the current state of the gas transmission negotiations between the EU on the one hand and Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan on the other?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

1. The Nabucco project received EU financial aid under the TEN-E programme for project preparatory studies in 2005 (EUR 4.8 million) and in 2009 (EUR 3.37 million). Furthermore, it was awarded a EUR 200 million grant under the European Energy Programme for Recovery (EEPR). This grant has not yet been drawn as the promoter is required to complete an environmental impact assessment and take a final investment decision, which is currently pending.

No EU financial aid has been allocated to the construction of a Trans-Caspian Pipeline. However, an environmental scoping study, financed under the INOGATE programme, is currently underway.

2. EU financial aid was instrumental to the preparation of the Nabucco project. Without these preparatory activities, it would not have been possible for the promoters to enter into commercial negotiations with the gas producer.

3. In the context of the identification of Projects of Common Interest (PCI), Nabucco-West has been proposed for assessment by its promoters. The identification process is still ongoing and no results are available yet.

4. During the previous sessions of negotiations with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, considerable progress has been made on the design of the framework agreement for the Trans-Caspian Pipeline. Additional rounds of negotiations are planned in 2013.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000280/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Europejski Fundusz Społeczny

Zgodnie z art. 162 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu UE:

„W celu poprawy możliwości zatrudniania pracowników w ramach rynku wewnętrznego i przyczyniania się w ten sposób do podniesienia poziomu życia, ustanawia się zgodnie z poniższymi postanowieniami Europejski Fundusz Społeczny; dąży on do ułatwienia zatrudniania pracowników i zwiększania ich mobilności geograficznej i zawodowej wewnątrz Unii, jak również do ułatwienia im dostosowania się do zmian w przemyśle i systemach produkcyjnych, zwłaszcza przez kształcenie zawodowe i przekwalifikowanie."

1. Jakie środki przeznaczono w latach 2004-2012 dla Polski z EFS?

2. Jakie branże były największymi beneficjentami środków EFS?

3. Jak Komisja ocenia efektywność wykorzystania tych środków?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(1 marca 2013 r.)

W latach 2004-2012 r. środki przyznane Polsce z budżetu na EFS wyniosły łącznie ponad 10,5 mld EUR.

Środki te przeznaczone są na wspieranie głównego strategicznego celu, jakim jest zwiększenie zatrudnienia i pogłębienie spójności społecznej. Działania podejmowane w ramach EFS w Polsce są wyjątkowo szeroko zakrojone i obejmują „tradycyjne" obszary, do których należą priorytety w zakresie wspierania zatrudnienia, zwalczanie wykluczenia społecznego oraz doskonalenie umiejętności pracowników. Środki EFS przeznaczane są również na wyzwania w dziedzinie kształcenia i szkolenia przez całe życie, w tym na szkolnictwo wyższe i badania naukowe. Ponadto fundusz promuje wsparcie dla administracji publicznej, dążąc do osiągnięcia rzeczywistych zmian w sektorze publicznym. W programie położono również szczególny nacisk na rozwój obszarów wiejskich i zdrowie pracowników.

Komisja uważa, że efektywność wykorzystania środków z EFS w Polsce jest zadowalająca. Na przykład w ramach perspektywy finansowej na lata 2004-2006 ponad 700 tys. bezrobotnych uczestniczyło w różnych formach aktywizacji, a 58 % z nich powróciło na rynek pracy. Stworzono ponad 90 tys. mikroprzedsiębiorstw, a ponad 0,5 mln pracowników podniosło swoje kwalifikacje. Działania finansowane z EFS przyczyniły się także do poprawy jakości kształcenia i szkolenia poprzez wyposażenie 250 tys. szkół w narzędzia informatyczne, szkolenia dla nauczycieli oraz upowszechnianie uczenia się przez całe życie. W odniesieniu do obecnej perspektywy finansowej, skuteczność wykorzystania środków wdrażanych w obszarze rynku pracy wynosiła 57 %. Dzięki dotacjom na inwestycje powstało ponad 125 tys. miejsc pracy. Wsparcie otrzymało prawie 85 tys. osób zagrożonych wykluczeniem społecznym, a w gospodarce społecznej powstało 1,5 tys. miejsc pracy. Ponadto prawie 370 mln EUR przeznaczono na zwiększenie dostępu do nauczania przedszkolnego.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000280/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: The European Social Fund

According to Article 162 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;

'In order to improve employment opportunities for workers in the internal market and to contribute thereby to raising the standard of living, a European Social Fund is hereby established in accordance with the provisions set out below; it shall aim to render the employment of workers easier and to increase their geographical and occupational mobility within the Union, and to facilitate their adaptation to industrial changes and to changes in production systems, in particular through vocational training and retraining.'

1. What funding was allocated from the ESF to Poland between 2004 and 2012?

2. Which sectors benefited most from ESF funding?

3. In the Commission's opinion, how effectively was the funding used?

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

Between 2004 and 2012 the total ESF budget granted to Poland was over EUR 10.5 billion.

The funds promote the principal strategic objective of increasing employment and social cohesion. The ESF intervention in Poland is exceptionally wide-reaching, covering 'traditional' areas like getting people into work, combating social exclusion priorities and enhancing the skills of the workforce. The ESF addresses also the challenges in education and training in a life-cycle perspective, including tertiary education and research. Furthermore, it promotes support to public administration with prospects for making a real difference in the public sector. The programme sets finally a focus on the development of rural areas and of a healthier workforce.

The Commission considers the effectiveness of the ESF spending in Poland satisfactory. For instance, as regards financial perspective 2004-2006, over 700 000 unemployed participated in various forms of activation and 58% of them returned onto the labour market. Over 90 000 micro-enterprises were created and more than 0.5 million of employees upgraded their qualifications. The ESF intervention contributed also increasing the quality of education and training by equipping 250 000 schools with IT tools, training of teachers and popularisation of lifelong learning. As regards current financial perspective, the employment effectiveness of measures implemented in the area of the labour market stood at 57%. More than 125 000 jobs were created thanks to the investment grants. Nearly 85 000 persons at the risk of social exclusion were supported and 1 500 job places were created in the social economy. Finally, nearly EUR 370 million has been allocated to increase the access to pre-school education.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000281/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Rezerwy walutowe państw strefy euro

Zgodnie z traktatami, po przystąpieniu do strefy euro, Unia Europejska przejmie rezerwy walutowe polskiego NBP. Do nich zalicza się: wszystkie rezerwy w obcej walucie, zapasy złota, prawa państwa wobec instytucji finansowych np. Międzynarodowego Funduszu Walutowego (udziały w tych instytucjach).

Czyją własność stanowić wtedy będzie? Traktaty unijne literalnie mówią o „utrzymywaniu i zarządzaniu" rezerwami, a więc pozostawiają kwestię własności otwartą.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącego Olliego Rehna w imieniu Komisji
(1 marca 2013 r.)

Krajowe banki centralne wchodzące w skład Eurosystemu przekazują EBC część swoich rezerw walutowych, do uzgodnionej wysokości. EBC ma pełne prawo do utrzymywania tych rezerw i zarządzania nimi oraz do korzystania z nich do celów określonych w Statucie Europejskiego Systemu Banków Centralnych i Europejskiego Banku Centralnego. Każdemu krajowemu bankowi centralnemu przyznawane jest roszczenie względem EBC stanowiące równowartość przekazanych rezerw. Transfer rezerw walutowych i zarządzanie nimi regulują art. 30 i 31 statutu.

Więcej informacji na temat traktowania międzynarodowych rezerw Eurosystemu znajduje się w dokumencie EBC (w tym kwestia własności rezerw – pkt 1.2.): http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/other/statintreservesen.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000281/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Foreign reserves of euro area Member States

In accordance with the Treaties, when Poland becomes part of the euro area the European Union will assume responsibility for managing the foreign reserves held by the National Bank of Poland. These include all foreign exchange reserves, gold reserves and the rights of the state in respect of financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and shares held in these institutions.

Who will be the owner of these reserves? The Treaties talk in literal terms about whose role it is 'to hold and manage' the reserves, so the question of ownership is left open.

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

Eurosystem national central banks transfer a share of their foreign exchange reserves to the ECB, up to an agreed limit. The ECB has the full right to hold and manage these reserves and to use them for the purposes set out in the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the ECB. Each national central bank is credited with a claim towards the ECB equivalent to its transfer of reserves. The transfer and management of foreign exchange reserves is governed by Articles 30 and 31 of the Statute.

For more information regarding the treatment of the Eurosystem's international reserves, please see the following ECB document (including the issue of ownership of reserves — point 1.2.):

http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/other/statintreservesen.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000282/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Monopol Gazpromu na europejskim rynku energetycznym

W listopadzie 2012 Gazprom poinformował o przejęciu 100 proc. udziałów w spółce Wingas, która prowadzi dystrybucję gazu w Niemczech, ma tam gazociągi oraz magazyny. Jednocześnie rosyjski potentat posiada kontrolny pakiet akcji Nord Streamu, budowanego South Streamu oraz przejął 80 % udziałów w gazociągu OPAL.

1. Czy zdaniem Komisji taka koncentracja właścicielska w rękach jednej firmy nie kłóci się z zapisami trzeciego pakietu liberalizującego rynek energii w UE, które mówią, że ta sama firma nie może być jednocześnie dostarczycielem surowca i kontrolować jego sieci przesyłu?

2. Czy, i jakie Komisja zamierza podjąć działania w celu ograniczenia monopolu Gazpromu oraz zwiększenia konkurencyjności na rynku wewnętrznym energii w UE?

3. Jak Komisja ocenia ewentualną możliwość arbitracji w tej sprawie przez WTO?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(1 marca 2013 r.)

1. i 2. Do chwili obecnej Komisja nie została powiadomiona o zapowiadanym przejęciu spółki WINGAS przez Gazprom. Jeśli transakcja zostałaby notyfikowana, zostałaby poddana ocenie na podstawie unijnego rozporządzenia w sprawie kontroli łączenia przedsiębiorstw.

Z wyjątkiem przypadków takich jak rurociąg Nord Stream, który nie przebiega przez terytorium UE, przedmiotowa infrastruktura musi być zgodna z unijnymi przepisami dotyczącymi rynku wewnętrznego, w szczególności z przepisami dotyczącymi rozdzielenia elementów działalności i dostępu stron trzecich. Komisja zapewniała i będzie nadal zapewniać pełne przestrzeganie tych przepisów.

Dotyczy to również egzekwowania przez Komisję przepisów dotyczących konkurencji w tym sektorze. Niedawno Komisja wszczęła postępowanie antymonopolowe w stosunku do Gazpromu w związku z możliwym nadużyciem pozycji dominującej odnoszącym się do działalności tego przedsiębiorstwa w kilku państwach członkowskich z Europy Wschodniej.

W kontekście zapewnienia zarówno bezpieczeństwa dostaw, jak i konkurencji, Komisja promuje ponadto naprawdę aktywnie dywersyfikację źródeł gazu w ramach projektu dotyczącego południowego korytarza gazowego, budowy terminali LNG i innych środków.

3. WTO nie zajmuje się regulacją spraw dotyczących konkurencji. Nie można brać pod uwagę żadnego postępowania arbitrażowego w celu poprawy sytuacji w zakresie konkurencji na wewnętrznym rynku gazu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000282/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Gazprom's monopoly in the European energy market

In November 2012 Gazprom announced that it is acquiring 100% of the shares in WINGAS, a company which distributes gas in Germany and has gas pipelines and storage facilities there. The Russian giant also holds a controlling interest in Nord Stream and the South Stream pipeline which is currently under construction, and has acquired an 80% share in the OPAL gas pipeline.

1. In the opinion of the Commission, is such a concentration of ownership in the hands of a single company not inconsistent with the provisions of the EU's Third Energy Liberalisation Package, which say that a company which supplies an energy source must not also control the transmission network of that energy source?

2. Does the Commission intend to take action to reduce Gazprom's monopoly and increase competitiveness in the EU's internal energy market, and, if so, what measures are being planned?

3. How does the Commission view the possibility of arbitration in this matter by the World Trade Organisation?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

1 and 2. So far the Commission has not been notified of Gazprom's announced acquisition of WINGAS. If the transaction were to be notified it would be assessed under the EU Merger Regulation.

Except for cases like Nord Stream, which is not running on EU territory, the infrastructure mentioned needs to be in compliance with EU internal market rules, specifically on unbundling and third-party access. The Commission has ensured and will continue to ensure that these rules are fully respected.

This is also true as regards its enforcement of competition rules in the sector. The Commission has recently opened antitrust proceedings against Gazprom for the possible abuse of a dominant position related to its activities in several Eastern European Member States.

Furthermore, in the context of assuring both security of supply and competition in the market, the Commission does actively promote the diversification of gas sources via the Southern Corridor project, construction of LNG terminals and other measures.

3. The WTO does not regulate competition issues. No arbitration case can be considered to improve the competition situation on the internal gas market.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000283/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Koszty ponoszone przez Polskę ze względu na używanie złotówki

Polska znajdując się poza strefą euro ponosi koszty z tytułu posługiwania się własną walutą; są to na przykład koszty przewalutowania, koszty obsługi długu publicznego.

Czy Komisja dysponuje własną ekspertyzą dotyczącą kosztów, jakie gospodarka polska ponosi z tytułu posiadania własnej waluty w latach 2008–2012? Jakiego rodzaju są to kategorie kosztów i jak się przedstawiały roczne koszty z tego tytułu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącego Olliego Rehna w imieniu Komisji
(25 marca 2013 r.)

Pod warunkiem właściwego przygotowania i spełnienia odpowiednich warunków wprowadzenie euro przyniosłoby Polsce szereg korzyści, w tym ograniczenie ryzyka kursowego, zmniejszenie kosztów transakcji, ewentualnie obniżenie nominalnych stóp procentowych i zwiększenie przejrzystości cen. Czynniki te przyczyniłyby się do dalszej integracji wymiany handlowej z gospodarką strefy euro dzięki stworzeniu nowych możliwości gospodarczych, wspieraniu wzrostu gospodarczego i tworzeniu miejsc pracy.

Analiza stabilności kursu walutowego jest elementem oceny konwergencji, która znajduje się na następującej stronie internetowej:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/pdf/ee-2012-3_en.pdf.

Należy przy tym zaznaczyć, że korzyści wynikające z wprowadzenia euro zależą od zdolności państwa członkowskiego do prawidłowego funkcjonowania w ramach unii walutowej, w oparciu o stabilne strategie polityczne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000283/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: The costs to Poland of using the zloty

Poland, which is not part of the euro area, is having to pay for using its own currency. The costs involved include, for example, the costs of currency conversions and the costs of servicing public debt.

Does the Commission have an analysis available of the costs incurred by the Polish economy for having its own currency between 2008 and 2012? What kind of costs were they and how much did they amount to per year?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

Provided that it is well-prepared and meets the necessary conditions, introducing the euro would bring a range of benefits to Poland, including a reduction in exchange rate risk, reducing transaction costs, possibly decreasing nominal interest rates and enhancing price transparency. These factors would foster further trade integration with the euro area economy, creating new economic opportunities and strengthening growth and job creation.

The analysis of exchange rate stability is an element of the convergence assessment to be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/pdf/ee-2012-3_en.pdf

That said, it is worth making the point that the benefits of the euro depend on the Member State's capacity to operate smoothly within the framework of monetary union, based on sound policies.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000284/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Realizacja unijnej agendy cyfrowej w ramach strategii Europa 2020

Unijna agenda cyfrowa realizowana w ramach strategii Europa 2020 zakłada miedzy innymi, że do 2020 r. w każdym domu znajdzie się łącze 30 Mb/s, a w co drugim europejskim domu łącze 100 Mb/s.

1. Czy Komisja może przedstawić aktualny stan realizacji założeń agendy cyfrowej, z rozbiciem danych na państwa wspólnoty?

Proszę o dane dotyczące planowanego finansowania zapisów agendy cyfrowej w poszczególnych państwach UE do 2020.

2. Jakie Państwa najwolniej wprowadzają w życie zapisy dotyczące dostępu do Internetu oraz sieci dostępu nowej generacji (NGA)? Jakie środki podejmuje Komisja, aby zachęcić je do większej aktywności na tym polu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącą Neelie Kroes w imieniu Komisji
(19 lutego 2013 r.)

Pod koniec 2011 r. 50,1 % gospodarstw domowych w UE znajdowało się w zasięgu co najmniej jednej sieci dostępu nowej generacji (NGA), zapewniającej prędkość pobierania danych wynoszącą co najmniej 30 Mb/s. Docelowo w 2020 r. 100 % gospodarstw domowych w UE powinno znaleźć się w zasięgu sieci zapewniających taką prędkość, a więc UE jest w pół drogi do osiągnięcia wytyczonego celu ([1]). Najmniej zaawansowane pod tym względem państwa członkowskie to Cypr, Grecja i Włochy, gdzie zasięgiem sieci NGA objętych jest mniej niż 10 % gospodarstw domowych. Jeśli chodzi o cel zakładający, że do 2020 r. 50 % gospodarstw domowych w UE będzie mieć dostęp do sieci zapewniających przepustowość wynoszącą co najmniej 100 Mb/s, pod koniec 2011 r. mniej niż 1 % gospodarstw domowych korzystało z tego typu usług. Państwa członkowskie o najniższym wskaźniku rozpowszechnienia tych usług to Grecja, Francja, Cypr, Włochy i Zjednoczone Królestwo ([2]).

Komisja nie ma dostępu do informacji na temat planowanych inwestycji w sieci szerokopasmowe, chyba że znajdują się one w krajowych planach operacyjnych dotyczących dostępu szerokopasmowego.

Komisja zamierza pomóc państwom członkowskim w osiągnięciu tych celów poprzez: 1) stymulowanie inwestycji sektora prywatnego poprzez zapewnienie wyższych zwrotów i zmniejszenie ryzyka inwestycyjnego (deklaracja polityczna członka Komisji odpowiedzialnego za agendę cyfrową z dnia 12 lipca 2012 r. ([3])); 2) udzielanie wsparcia dla inwestycji w mniej zaludnionych obszarach w celu zapobiegania pogłębianiu się przepaści cyfrowej; oraz poprzez 3) zwiększenie zakresu i skali pomocy technicznej w dziedzinie dostępu szerokopasmowego.

([1]) Dane dotyczące poszczególnych państw członkowskich znajdują na następującej stronie internetowej: Point Topic: Broadband coverage in Europe in 2011.

([2]) Dane dotyczące poszczególnych państw członkowskich znajdują się w tabeli wyników agendy cyfrowej: Indicators about fixed broadband lines and subscription (xls).

([3]) Communiqué de presse – Poprawa warunków dla inwestycji w sieci szerokopasmowe – deklaracja polityczna wiceprzewodniczącej Kroes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000284/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the EU Digital Agenda within the Europe 2020 strategy

The EU Digital Agenda being pursued as part of the Europe 2020 strategy aims among other things to ensure that every household in Europe has a broadband connection of at least 30 Mbps and that one in two households has a connection of 100 Mbps by 2020.

1. Can the Commission give details of the current position with regard to achievement of the targets of the Digital Agenda, with a breakdown of the data for each Member State?

Could the Commission also provide information on the funding planned for the requirements of the Digital Agenda in each EU Member State up to 2020?

2. Which Member States are making the least progress in reaching the targets on Internet access and New Generation Access networks? What measures is the Commission using to encourage these Member States to be more active in this area?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

50.1% of EU households were covered by at least one Next Generation Access (NGA) network providing a download speed of minimum 30 Mbps at the end of 2011. The target coverage at that speed is 100% in 2020, so the EU is halfway there ([1]). The least advanced Member States are Cyprus, Greece and Italy, where NGA networks cover less than 10% of the homes. As for the target of 50% take-up on minimum 100 Mbps services in 2020, less than 1% of EU households were subscribed to such services at the end of 2011. The Member States with the lowest penetration rates for this target are Greece, France, Cyprus, Italy and the UK ([2]).

Information on the planned broadband investment funding, unless already detailed in operational national broadband plans, is not available to the Commission.

The Commission aims to help attain these targets by the Member States by: (1) stimulating investment activity of the private sector by ensuring higher returns and reducing investment risk (policy statement by the Member of the Commission responsible for Digital Agenda on 12 July 2012 ([3])); (2) providing support in less populated areas to avoid any further digital divide, and (3) by reinforcing the scope and scale of technical assistance for broadband.

([1]) For Member State level charts please check: Point Topic: Broadband coverage in Europe in 2011,.
([2]) For Member State level charts, please check the Digital Agenda Scoreboard: Indicators about fixed broadband lines and subscription (xls).
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-554_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000285/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja społeczna w Polsce

1. Czy Komisja dysponuje wiarygodnymi danymi dotyczącymi sytuacji społecznej Polski, przede wszystkim dotyczącymi poziomu biedy? W jaki sposób definiuje minimum egzystencjalne, a w jaki sposób minimum socjalne?

2. Czy dysponuje danymi dotyczącymi liczby osób w Polsce, które żyją poniżej minimum egzystencjalnego i poniżej minimum socjalnego w latach 2004-2012?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(6 marca 2013 r.)

Komisja otrzymuje, przetwarza, ujednolica i konsoliduje porównywalne dane gromadzone przez urzędy statystyczne państw członkowskich, w tym Polski, a następnie udostępnia je na szczeblu europejskim. Ponadto Komisja udostępnia roczne sprawozdanie dotyczące zatrudnienia i rozwoju społecznego w Europie ([1]). Jego najnowsza wersja opublikowana została w styczniu.

Komisja nie określa minimum egzystencjalnego ani minimalnych kosztów utrzymania gospodarstwa domowego. Komisja nie określa również żadnego stałego progu dochodowego jako absolutnej granicy ubóstwa.

Komisja śledzi sytuację socjalną oraz warunki życia, wykorzystując zestaw wskaźników uzgodnionych formalnie z państwami członkowskimi ([2]). Komisja monitorowała również strategię „Europa 2020", zwłaszcza za pośrednictwem jej naczelnych celów związanych z ograniczeniem ubóstwa.

Komisja zlicza osoby „zagrożone ubóstwem lub wykluczeniem społecznym" w każdym państwie członkowskim, to znaczy osoby, które są:

— W dużym stopniu pozbawione środków materialnych. Celem tego wskaźnika jest określenie bezwzględnej granicy ubóstwa, mimo że nie jest to wskaźnik pieniężny z natury.

— Zagrożone ubóstwem po transferach socjalnych – o łącznym dochodzie netto po transferze socjalnym (dochód całkowity) odpowiadającym wartości poniżej 60 proc. krajowej mediany dochodów. Wskaźnik ten stanowi ubóstwo względne, określane na poziomie krajowym.

— Zamieszkałe w gospodarstwach domowych o bardzo małej intensywności pracy oraz osoby w wieku poniżej 60 lat zamieszkałe w gospodarstwach domowych, w których osoby dorosłe pracowały krócej niż 20 proc. łącznego potencjału pracy w ciągu minionego roku.

Komisja mierzy również ilość osób, które pozbawione są środków materialnych. Dane dotyczące Polski obejmują okres od 2005 do 2011 r. i są dostępne ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=fr&pubId=7315
([2]) EU-SILC.
([3]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/main_tables

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000285/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: The social situation in Poland

1. Does the Commission have reliable data on the social situation in Poland and in particular on the level of poverty? How does the Commission define the minimum subsistence level and the minimum cost of maintaining a household?

2. Does the Commission have data on the numbers of people in Poland living below the minimum subsistence level and below the minimum cost of maintaining a household between 2004 and 2012?

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

The Commission does indeed receive, process, harmonise and consolidate comparable data collected by statistical authorities of the Member States, including Poland and provide them at the European level. Furthermore it provides an annual report on the Employment and Social Development in Europe ([1]). The latest issue of which has been released in January.

The Commission doesn't define a minimum subsistence level nor a minimum cost of maintaining a household, neither does it use any fixed income threshold as absolute poverty line.

It follows the social situation and the living conditions using a set of indicators formally agreed with the Member States ([2]) and used to monitor the Europe 2020 strategy, in particular, through its poverty reduction headline target.

The Commission is counting persons 'at risk of poverty or social exclusion' in each Member State, i.e. persons who are:

— severely materially deprived; this indicator, even if not monetary in nature, aims to draw an absolute poverty line;

— at risk of poverty after social transfers — with an equivalent total net income after social transfers (total income) below the 60% national median income; this indicator represents a nationally defined relative poverty;

— living in households with very low work intensity and aged less than 60 who are living in households where the adults worked less than 20% of their total work potential during the past year.

The Commission measures also the proportion of persons who are materially deprived. The data for Poland exist for the period of 2005-2011 and are available ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=fr&pubId=7315
([2]) EU-SILC.
([3]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/main_tables

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000286/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sprawozdanie w sprawie sytuacji demograficznej UE

Zgodnie z art. 159 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu UE:

„Komisja opracowuje co roku sprawozdanie w sprawie postępów w osiąganiu celów określonych w artykule 151, w tym sytuacji demograficznej w Unii. Przesyła ona to sprawozdanie do Parlamentu Europejskiego, Rady i Komitetu Ekonomiczno-Społecznego".

1. Czy Komisja wyprowadza z tego rodzaju sprawozdań wnioski polityczne?

2. Czy pracuje nad zasadami polityki demograficznej UE, które pozwoliłyby na uniknięcie katastrofy demograficznej w Europie? Jeśli nie, czy w najbliższej przyszłości nie powinna się tym zająć? Jest to bardzo ważne z perspektywy Polski, której sytuacji demograficzna jest jedną z najgorszych w UE.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(7 marca 2013 r.)

1. W ostatnim sprawozdaniu demograficznym, wydanym w marcu 2011 r., podkreślono średnioterminowe wyzwania związane ze starzeniem się społeczeństwa ([1]). Przedstawione scenariusze oparto na prognozach demograficznych Eurostatu z 2011 r. Na tej samej podstawie Komisja opublikowała sprawozdanie na temat starzenia się społeczeństwa ([2]), w którym ostrzega o długoterminowym wzroście wydatków publicznych na skutek tego zjawiska.

2. Komisja Europejska dostrzega istotny wpływ zmian demograficznych na nasze społeczeństwa, co podkreśliła w swoim komunikacie z 2006 r. „Demograficzna przyszłość Europy – przekształcić wyzwania w nowe możliwości" ([3]), w którym wskazała pięć obszarów polityki na rzecz przeciwdziałania pogarszającej się sytuacji demograficznej oraz na rzecz rozwoju zasobów ludzkich. W przyjętym w dniu 20 lutego 2013 r. pakiecie dotyczącym inwestycji społecznych ([4]) określa się zmiany demograficzne jako jedno z głównych wyzwań wymagających reformy modelu państwa opiekuńczego. W pakiecie tym ujęto wskazówki dla państw członkowskich w zakresie bardziej efektywnej i skutecznej polityki społecznej, kładąc nacisk na inwestycje w kapitał ludzki i spójność społeczną.

W dniach 6 i 7 maja 2013 r. Komisja organizuje Forum Demograficzne w celu omówienia środków przewidzianych w pakiecie dotyczącym inwestycji społecznych, co ma umożliwić lepsze przygotowanie na długoterminowe wyzwania demograficzne, przed jakimi stoi Europa.

([1]) Zob. §I.6.2.2 w http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=502&newsId=1007&furtherNews=yes
([2]) Zob. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/2012-ageing-report_en.htm
([3]) Zob. http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en
([4]) Zob. COM(2013)83.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000286/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Report on the demographic situation in the EU

Article 159 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union reads as follows:

'The Commission shall draw up a report each year on progress in achieving the objectives of Article 151, including the demographic situation in the Union. It shall forward the report to the European Parliament, the Council and the Economic and Social Committee.'

1. Does the Commission draw conclusions on policy issues from reports of this kind?

2. Is it working to develop the principles of an EU demographic policy which would allow a demographic catastrophe in Europe to be avoided? If not, should it not give its attention to this in the near future? This is very important from Poland's point of view, because Poland's demographic situation is one of the worst in the EU.

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

1. The latest Demography Report, issued in March 2011, highlights the medium term challenges of an ageing population ([1]). The scenarios are based on population projections Eurostat issued in 2011. On the same basis, the Commission published the 'Ageing Report' ([2]), warning of long-term increases in public spending as a result of ageing.

2. The European Commission recognises the significant impact of demographic developments on our societies, 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. The Social Investment Package (SIP) ([4]) adopted on 20 February 2013 identifies demographic change as one of the key challenges calling for welfare state reform. The Social Investment Package gives guidance to Member States on more efficient and effective social policies, shifting their focus to investment in human capital and social cohesion.

On 6 and 7 May 2013 the Commission is organising a Demography Forum to debate measures in line with the Social Investment Package to better respond to the longer-term demographic challenges Europe is facing.

([1]) See §I.6.2.2 in http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=502&newsId=1007&furtherNews=yes
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/2012-ageing-report_en.htm
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en
([4]) See COM(2013) 83.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000287/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Komitet ds. ochrony socjalnej

Jakie wnioski dotyczące Polski sformułował w ostatnich 5. latach działający zgodnie z art. 160 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu UE komitet ds. ochrony socjalnej? W szczególności, jak ocenia on rozwój sytuacji społecznej w Polsce i stan ochrony socjalnej?

Czy komitet ten przygotował sprawozdania, opinie lub podejmował inne prace w ramach swoich kompetencji, które odnosiły się do Polski?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(27 lutego 2013 r.)

Opinie Komitetu Ochrony Socjalnej na temat sytuacji społecznej i stanu ochrony socjalnej w Polsce zawarto w jego sprawozdaniu rocznym za 2012 r., które ma zostać przyjęte w lutym 2013 r. Zawiera ono szczegółowy opis sytuacji społecznej w Europie dokonany w oparciu o najnowsze dane Eurostatu oraz inne właściwe źródła. Sprawozdanie może zostać udostępnione szanownemu Panu Posłowi po tym jak zostanie przyjęte.

Komitet Ochrony Socjalnej wspiera również proces wzajemnej oceny między poszczególnymi państwami członkowskimi UE, aby umożliwić otwartą dyskusję na temat ich polityki ochrony socjalnej i integracji społecznej oraz ułatwia proces wzajemnego uczenia się. W dniu 29 października 2012 r. Polska zorganizowała wzajemną ocenę dotyczącą produktów i usług przyjaznych dla osób starszych – możliwości rozwoju socjalnego i gospodarczego (ang. „Age friendly goods and services – an opportunity for social and economic development"; więcej informacji na stronie internetowej Komitetu Ochrony Socjalnej ([1])).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1024&langId=pl&newsId=1395&furtherNews=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000287/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Social Protection Committee

What conclusions have been reached about Poland in the last five years by the EU Social Protection Committee pursuant to Article 160 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union? In particular, how does it view the development of the social situation in Poland and the state of social protection?

Has the Committee prepared reports, formulated opinions or undertaken other work within its field of competence which relate to Poland?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

As concerns the views of the Social Protection Committee on the social situation and the state of social protection in Poland, the 2012 SPC Annual Report (to be adopted in February 2013) gives a detailed description of the social situation in Europe underpinned by the most recent Eurostat and other relevant data sources. Once adopted, the report can be shared with the Honorable Member of Parliament.

The SPC also foster peer reviews between the different EU Member States to enable an open discussion on their social protection and social inclusion policies and facilitate the mutual learning process among them. On 29 October 2012 Poland hosted a peer review on 'Age friendly goods and services — an opportunity for social and economic development' (more information available on the SPC website ([1])).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1024&langId=fr&newsId=1395&furtherNews=yes.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000288/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wzrost cen cyny

W ostatnim roku zanotowano znaczny wzrost cen cyny na rynkach międzynarodowych. Niestety beneficjentami wzrostu nie są zakłady produkujące w Unii Europejskiej. Wraz z wprowadzeniem zapisów pakietu energetyczno-klimatycznego koszty ich produkcji znacznie wzrastają. Jest to silnie związane ze wzrostem ceny energii elektrycznej niezbędnej w procesie elektrolizy (ok. 25 % wszystkich kosztów) oraz zbyt małą ilością darmowych pozwoleń na emisję gazów cieplarnianych.

1. Jak Komisja ocenia przyszłość sektora produkującego cynę w Państwach Wspólnoty?

2. Jakie działania podejmuje Komisja, aby wspomóc przemysł cyny w obliczu rosnących kosztów produkcji będących wynikiem wprowadzenia zapisów pakietu energetyczno klimatycznego?

3. Czy Komisja zamierza przyznać zakładom produkującym cynę zwiększoną ilość darmowych pozwoleń na emisję gazów cieplarnianych w nowym systemie handlu emisjami?

4. Jak wzrost cen cyny wpłynie na zakładane koszty wprowadzenia zapisów pakietu energetyczno-klimatycznego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(21 lutego 2013 r.)

UE zdecydowała się, w ramach art. 10b dyrektywy ETS ([1]) (2003/87/WE), na stosowanie bezpłatnych uprawnień i dostępu do międzynarodowych jednostek emisji jako środków w celu zmniejszenia ryzyka ucieczki emisji w odniesieniu do energochłonnych sektorów przemysłu. Sektor produkcji cyny uznaje się za narażony na znaczące ryzyko ucieczki emisji i co za tym idzie podmioty gospodarcze korzystają z bezpłatnych uprawnień na poziomie 100 % odpowiednich wartości odniesienia.

Liczba uprawnień przekazanych podmiotom gospodarczym będzie określana przez państwa członkowskie zgodnie z krajowymi środkami wykonawczymi na podstawie art. 10a dyrektywy 2003/87/WE i art. 7 i 15 decyzji Komisji 2011/278/UE ([2]).

Ponadto Komisja w wytycznych w sprawie pomocy państwa związanej z handlem uprawnieniami do emisji ([3]), uznała sektor produkcji cyny za kwalifikujący się do pomocy państwa w celu zrekompensowania części wyższych kosztów energii elektrycznej, które muszą ponosić najbardziej efektywne przedsiębiorstwa.

Państwa członkowskie mają swobodę decydowania, czy przyznawać pomoc państwa przedsiębiorstwom prowadzącym działalność w sektorach kwalifikujących się do kompensaty takich kosztów.

([1]) Dz.U. L 140 z 5.6.2009, s. 63.
([2]) Dz.U. L 130 z 17.5.2011, s. 1.
([3]) Dz.U. C 154 z 5.6.2012, s. 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000288/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Rise in tin prices

Last year international markets recorded a substantial rise in the price of tin. Unfortunately, tin producers in the European Union have not benefited from this rise. Implementing the requirements of the Climate and Energy Package has led to a significant increase in their production costs. This is strongly related to the increased price of the electricity needed for the process of electrolysis (around 25 % of all costs) and the fact that the amount of free greenhouse gas emissions allowances is too low.

1. How does the Commission assess the future of the tin production sector in the Member States?

2. What measures is the Commission using to help the tin industry in the face of the rising production costs which are the result of adopting the provisions of the Climate and Energy Package?

3. Does the Commission intend to give tin producers a greater amount of free greenhouse gas emissions allowances in the new Emissions Trading System?

4. What impact will the increase in tin prices have on the expected costs of introducing the provisions of the Climate and Energy Package?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The EU has opted, in the framework of Article 10b of the ETS Directive ([1]) (2003/87/EC), for the use of free allowances and access to international credits as measures to reduce the risk of carbon leakage for its energy intensive industry. Tin production is deemed to be exposed to a significant risk of carbon leakage and the operators therefore benefit from free allocation at 100% of the relevant benchmark.

The number of allowances given to the operators will be determined by the Member States in accordance of the National Implementation Measures pursuant Article 10a of Directive 2003/87/EC and Articles 7 and 15 of Commission Decision 2011/278/EU ([2]).

In addition, the Commission in the state aid Guidelines related to the Emission Trading Scheme ([3]) recognised the tin sector as eligible for state aid to compensate part of the increased electricity costs faced by the most efficient companies. Member States are free to decide whether or not to grant any state aid to companies active in the eligible sectors to compensate for such costs.

([1]) OJ L 140, 5.6.2009, p. 63.
([2]) OJ L 130, 17.5.2011, p. 1.
([3]) OJ C 154, 5.6.2012, p. 4.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000289/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Koszty backloading

W ostatnim czasie Komisja przedstawiła propozycję zawieszenia części darmowych emisji gazów cieplarnianych na lata 2013-2015 oraz dodania zawieszonej ilości do pozwoleń na lata 2015-2020. Działania te (backloading) mają wymóc przyspieszenie przejścia państw Wspólnoty na tzw. zieloną energię oraz przyspieszyć realizację założeń pakietu energetyczno-klimatycznego.

1. Proszę Komisję o dokładną analizę SWOT proponowanych zmian z osobnym przedstawieniem każdego państwa Wspólnoty.

2. Według obliczeń polskich analityków z Krajowego Ośrodka Bilansowania i Zarządzania Emisjami (KOBiZE) Polska straci na takich rozwiązaniach ponad 1 mld euro. Co więcej, proponowane zmiany wyraźnie dzielą Europę na nowe kraje, które tracą oraz kraje tzw. starej Unii, które zyskują. W jaki sposób Komisja zamierza zrównoważyć negatywne skutki wprowadzenia zmian, które odczują nowe kraje unijne?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(21 lutego 2013 r.)

Skutki wprowadzenia zmian zostały gruntownie przeanalizowane w ramach przeprowadzonej przez Komisję oceny skutków towarzyszącej wnioskowi dotyczącemu rozporządzenia Komisji w sprawie przeglądu harmonogramu aukcji (powszechnie znanego jako „opóźnienie sprzedaży") dla systemu handlu uprawnieniami do emisji (ETS). Projekt rozporządzenia jest omawiany z państwami członkowskimi w ramach Komitetu ds. Zmian Klimatu i Komisja przedstawiła również na jego forum analizę oczekiwanych skutków budżetowych na poziomie państw członkowskich.

Oczekiwane skutki budżetowe będą zależały od faktycznej ceny emisji dwutlenku węgla. W ocenie skutków przedstawiono informacje na temat szeregu potencjalnych możliwości kształtowania się ceny emisji dwutlenku węgla w oparciu o prognozy analityków rynku. Według tych prognoz prawdopodobne jest, że krótkoterminowe skutki budżetowe opóźnienia sprzedaży będą zasadniczo pozytywne dla państw członkowskich. Próba oszacowania skutków długoterminowych byłaby wysoce hipotetyczna ze względu na konieczność dokonania krytycznych, lecz bardzo niepewnych założeń na temat tego, co wydarzy się do końca 2020 r.

Jeżeli bardzo ograniczona liczba państw członkowskich poniesie straty w przychodach w pierwszej części fazy 3, spowodowane to będzie dobrowolnym zastosowaniem przez nie odstępstwa dozwolonego na podstawie art. 10c dyrektywy w sprawie ETS i dobrowolnego przydzielenia przez nie bezpłatnie stosunkowo dużej liczby uprawnień, które w przeciwnym wypadku mogłyby zostać sprzedane na aukcji. Jednak korzyści generowane przez opóźnienie sprzedaży również przypadną w udziale tym państwom członkowskim, choć w innej formie, a mianowicie jako wzrost wartości uprawnień przydzielonych ich przedsiębiorstwom energetycznym za darmo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000289/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: The costs of backloading

The Commission recently presented a proposal to postpone some of the free greenhouse gas emissions for 2013-2015 and to add the postponed amount to the allowances for 2015-2020. These measures, known as backloading, are intended to force the Member States to accelerate the adoption of green energy and speed up application of the principles of the Climate and Energy Package.

1. I would like to ask the Commission to provide a thorough SWOT analysis of the proposed changes as they would affect each Member State separately.

2. According to calculations made by analysts from Poland's National Centre for Emissions Balancing and Management, Poland will lose over EUR 1 billion as a result of such measures. Furthermore, the proposed changes clearly divide Europe into the 'new' countries, which lose out, and the countries of the 'old' Union, which gain. How does the Commission intend to offset the adverse effects of introducing changes which will be felt by the EU's 'new' Member States?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The effects have been thoroughly considered as part of the Commission's impact assessment ([1]) accompanying the draft Commission Regulation to review the timing of the auctions (commonly known as 'backloading') for the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). The draft Regulation is discussed with Member States in the comitology Climate Change Committee and the Commission has provided it also with an analysis of the expected fiscal impacts at Member State level.

The expected fiscal impacts will depend on the actual carbon price. The impact assessment gave information on a range of potential carbon price developments with and without backloading based on projections by market analysts. According to these, it is likely that the short-term fiscal impacts of backloading will generally be positive for Member States. Trying to estimate the long-term effects would be extremely speculative given the need to make critical but highly uncertain assumptions about what will happen by the end of 2020.

If a very limited number of member states would lose revenues in the first part of phase 3, it is because they have voluntarily chosen to apply a derogation allowed under Article 10c of the ETS directive and have done so by giving away for free a relatively large amount of allowances that could otherwise have been auctioned. Still, the benefits generated by backloading would also not be lost for these member states but they would arise in a different form, namely as increased value of the allocation given to their power companies for free.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets/cap/auctioning/docs/20121112_swd_en.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000290/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wycofanie się Japonii z zapisów protokołu z Kioto

W czasie ostatniego grudniowego szczytu klimatycznego do przedłużonego protokołu z Kioto nie przystąpiła Japonia. Jest to kolejne państwo po Rosji oraz Kanadzie, które zawiesiło realizację dalszych redukcji emisji. Co więcej, protokołu dalej nie podpisały Chiny (25 % światowej emisji gazów cieplarnianych według BP Statistical World Energy Review), Indie (5,1 %) oraz USA (18,5 %) – najwięksi światowi emitenci.

1. Czy wobec wycofania się kolejnych państw oraz braku akceptacji dla protokołu ze strony największych światowych emitentów Komisja planuje weryfikację swojej dotychczasowej polityki klimatycznej?

2. Na ile Komisja ocenia za realną obawę związaną z przeniesieniem produkcji w sektorach energochłonnych do krajów, które nie podpisały nowego porozumienia, np. Białorusi czy Rosji (tzw. carbone leakage)?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(15 lutego 2013 r.)

UE zgodziła się w Ad-Dausze na uczestnictwo w drugim okresie zobowiązań protokołu z Kioto w ramach większego pakietu, który obowiązuje w okresie przejściowym 2013-2020 przed wejściem w życie nowej umowy międzynarodowej mającej zastosowanie do wszystkich państw. W ramach tego pakietu, oprócz krajów dążących do realizacji celów z Kioto, 60 rozwiniętych i rozwijających się państw zobowiązało się do wzięcia udziału w działaniach łagodzących na mocy Ramowej konwencji Narodów Zjednoczonych w sprawie zmian klimatu w okresie do 2020 r. Zobowiązania te, obejmujące łącznie ponad 83 % światowych emisji, obejmują: redukcję emisji o 25 % (Japonia) i 15-25 % (Rosja) w stosunku do poziomu z 1990 r., redukcję emisji o 17 % (Stany Zjednoczone i Kanada), 40-45-procentowe ograniczenie intensywności emisji dwutlenku węgla (Chiny) oraz 20-25-procentową redukcję energochłonności (Indie) w porównaniu do 2005 r. Ponadto UE opowiada się za pilnym rozwiązaniem kwestii luki w działaniach łagodzących w okresie przed 2020 r. poprzez intensywne zaangażowanie się zarówno krajów rozwiniętych, jak i rozwijających się, oraz za aktywnym udziałem wszystkich zainteresowanych stron w negocjacjach w sprawie nowego i kompleksowego porozumienia. UE jest już w trakcie wdrażania tych środków, których podjęcie zostało uzgodnione w ramach drugiego okresu zobowiązań protokołu z Kioto, poprzez aktualny pakiet klimatyczno-energetyczny.

Potencjalne ryzyko ucieczki emisji w odniesieniu do przedsiębiorstw objętych systemem ETS UE jest ściśle monitorowane. Aby ograniczyć to ryzyko w odniesieniu do energochłonnych sektorów przemysłu, UE zdecydowała się na korzystanie z bezpłatnych uprawnień i dostępu do międzynarodowych jednostek emisji. Ponadto niektóre sektory przemysłowe kwalifikują się do pomocy państwa udzielanej przez państwa członkowskie. Ze względu na fakt, że sygnał cenowy dotyczący emisji dwutlenku węgla jest bardzo słaby, w opinii Komisji środki podjęte w celu ograniczenia ryzyka można uznać za co najmniej odpowiednie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000290/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Withdrawal of Japan from the Kyoto Protocol

At last December's climate summit Japan did not sign up to the extended Kyoto Protocol, becoming the next country after Russia and Canada to suspend implementation of further emissions reductions. Furthermore, the Protocol still has not been ratified by China (25 % of the world's greenhouse gas emissions according to the BP Statistical World Energy Review), India (5.1 %) and the US (18.5 %) — the world's biggest emitters.

1. In view of the withdrawal of more countries and the fact that the world's biggest emitters have not accepted the Protocol, is the Commission planning to review its current climate policy?

2. In the Commission's opinion, how real is the risk of carbon leakage — the movement of energy-intensive production to countries which have not signed the new agreement, such as Belarus and Russia?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The EU agreed to be included in a second Kyoto commitment period in Doha as part of a broader package that applies during the 2013-2020 transition towards a new international agreement applicable to all. As part of this package, 60 developed and developing countries have committed to pledges for pre-2020 mitigation action under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, in addition to the countries with Kyoto targets. These commitments, covering together more than 83% of global emissions, include: 25% (Japan) and 15-25% (Russia) emission reductions compared to 1990, 17% emission reductions (US and Canada), 40-45% reduction in carbon intensity (China) and 20-25% reduction in energy intensity (India) compared to 2005. In addition, the EU advocates the urgent need to address the mitigation gap pre-2020 through enhanced action by both developed and developing countries, as well as the need to actively engage in negotiations for a new and comprehensive agreement with all on board. The EU is already implementing what is agreed to undertake under a second commitment period, under the Kyoto Protocol through the existing Climate and Energy Package.

The potential risk of carbon leakage for companies covered by the EU ETS is carefully monitored. The EU has opted for the use of free allowances and access to international credits as measures to address the risk of carbon leakage for its energy intensive industry. In addition, some industrial sectors are eligible for state aid by Member States. In view of the very weak carbon price signal the Commission considers the measures in place to contain the risk as more than adequate.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000291/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zgodność polityki unijnej z traktatami o funkcjonowaniu UE

Czy dotychczasowa polityka antykryzysowa Unii polegającą na wspieraniu finansowym Grecji, Hiszpanii i Włoch jest zgodna z prawodawstwem unijnym, a w szczególności z art. 123 ust. 2 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu UE:

„Zakazane jest udzielanie przez Europejski Bank Centralny lub banki centralne Państw Członkowskich, zwane dalej »krajowymi bankami centralnymi«, pożyczek na pokrycie deficytu lub jakichkolwiek innych kredytów instytucjom, organom lub jednostkom organizacyjnym Unii, rządom centralnym, władzom regionalnym, lokalnym lub innym władzom publicznym, innym instytucjom lub przedsiębiorstwom publicznym Państw Członkowskich, jak również nabywanie bezpośrednio od nich przez Europejski Bank Centralny lub krajowe banki centralne ich papierów dłużnych.";

z art. 124 ust. 2 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu UE:

„Zakazany jest każdy środek nie oparty na względach o charakterze ostrożnościowym, ustanawiający uprzywilejowany dostęp instytucji, organów lub jednostek organizacyjnych Unii, rządów centralnych, władz regionalnych, lokalnych lub innych władz publicznych, innych instytucji lub przedsiębiorstw publicznych Państw Członkowskich do instytucji finansowych.";

oraz z art. 125 ust. 2 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu UE:

„Unia nie odpowiada za zobowiązania rządów centralnych, władz regionalnych, lokalnych lub innych władz publicznych, innych instytucji lub przedsiębiorstw publicznych Państwa Członkowskiego, ani ich nie przejmuje, z zastrzeżeniem wzajemnych gwarancji finansowych dla wspólnego wykonania określonego projektu. Państwo Członkowskie nie odpowiada za zobowiązania rządów centralnych, władz regionalnych, lokalnych lub innych władz publicznych, innych instytucji lub przedsiębiorstw publicznych innego Państwa Członkowskiego, ani ich nie przejmuje, z zastrzeżeniem wzajemnych gwarancji finansowych dla wspólnego wykonania określonego projektu."?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez przewodniczącego José Manuela Barroso w imieniu Komisji
(28 lutego 2013 r.)

Wsparcie finansowe dla państw członkowskich będących w trudnej sytuacji finansowej zostało przyznane za pośrednictwem różnych mechanizmów: łączonych pożyczek dwustronnych z innych państw członkowskich należących do strefy euro, pomocy finansowej UE (europejskiego mechanizmu stabilizacji finansowej) lub pomocy przyznanej przez organy międzyrządowe utworzone przez państwa należące do strefy euro (Europejski Instrument Stabilności Finansowej, Europejski Mechanizm Stabilności).

Mechanizmy te są zgodne z Traktatem UE. Stanowisko to zostało podtrzymane przez Trybunał Sprawiedliwości w wyroku z dnia 27 listopada 2012 r. w sprawie Porozumienia ustanawiającego Europejski Mechanizm Stabilności (sprawa C-370/12 Pringle).

Po pierwsze, art. 123 ust. 1 TFUE zawiera zakaz finansowania ze środków banku centralnego. W tym kontekście Trybunał Sprawiedliwości orzekł, że „art. 123 TFUE jest skierowany konkretnie do EBC i banków centralnych państw członkowskich. Udzielenie pomocy finansowej przez państwo lub państwa członkowskie innemu państwu członkowskiemu nie podlega więc temu zakazowi".

Po drugie, ponieważ pomoc finansowa udzielona państwu członkowskiemu nie ustanawia uprzywilejowanego dostępu do instytucji finansowych, nie jest ona niezgodna z art. 124 TFUE.

Wreszcie art. 125 TFUE zawiera klauzulę o nieprzejmowaniu zobowiązań, która oznacza, że Unia lub państwo członkowskie nie odpowiada za zobowiązania innego państwa członkowskiego. Zgodnie z wyrokiem Trybunału Sprawiedliwości, art. 125 „nie zakazuje Unii i państwom członkowskim wszelkich form pomocy finansowej dla innych państw członkowskich" ([1]). Ponadto zgodnie z przedmiotem i celem klauzuli o nieprzejmowaniu zobowiązań „art. 125 nie zakazuje udzielania pomocy finansowej przez państwo lub państwa członkowskie innemu państwu członkowskiemu, które nadal ponosi odpowiedzialność za swoje zobowiązania wobec wierzycieli, jeżeli warunki udzielenia owej pomocy skłaniają to państwo do prowadzenia zrównoważonej polityki budżetowej".

([1]) Ibid., § 130.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000291/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Conformity of EU policy with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

Is the EU's current anti-crisis policy of giving financial support to Greece, Spain and Italy in accordance with EU legislation, in particular, with the following provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union? Article 123(2):

'Overdraft facilities or any other type of credit facility with the European Central Bank or with the central banks of the Member States (hereinafter referred to as "national central banks") in favour of Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies, central governments, regional, local or other public authorities, other bodies governed by public law, or public undertakings of Member States shall be prohibited, as shall the purchase directly from them by the European Central Bank or national central banks of debt instruments.'

Article 124(2):

'Any measure, not based on prudential considerations, establishing privileged access by Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies, central governments, regional, local or other public authorities, other bodies governed by public law, or public undertakings of Member States to financial institutions, shall be prohibited.'

Article 125(2):

'The Union shall not be liable for or assume the commitments of central governments, regional, local or other public authorities, other bodies governed by public law, or public undertakings of any Member State, without prejudice to mutual financial guarantees for the joint execution of a specific project. A Member State shall not be liable for or assume the commitments of central governments, regional, local or other public authorities, other bodies governed by public law, or public undertakings of another Member State, without prejudice to mutual financial guarantees for the joint execution of a specific project.'

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

Financial assistance to Member States (MS) in financial difficulties has been granted through various mechanisms: pooled bilateral loans from other euro area MS, EU financial assistance (EFSM) and/or assistance granted by intergovernmental bodies set up by the euro area MS (EFSF, ESM).

These various mechanisms are compatible with the EU Treaty. This view has been upheld by the Court of Justice in its judgment of 27 November 2012 on the ESM Treaty (the 'Pringle' case, C-370/12).

First, Article 123(1) TFEU contains a prohibition of monetary financing. In this regards, the ECJ has ruled that 'Article 123 TFEU is addressed specifically to the ECB and the central banks of the Member States. The grant of financial assistance by one Member State or by a group of Member States to another Member State is therefore not covered by that prohibition'.

Second, since the financial assistance given to the MS does not establish privileged access for them to financial institutions, there is no inconsistency with Article 124 TFEU.

Finally, Article 125 TFEU contains the no-bail-out clause, meaning that the Union or a MS shall not be liable for or assume the commitments of another MS. As ruled by the Court of Justice, Article 125 'is not intended to prohibit either the Union or the Member States from granting any form of financial assistance whatever to another Member State'. ([1]) Moreover, in accordance with the object and purpose of the no-bail-out clause, 'Article 125 does not prohibit the granting of financial assistance by one or more Member States to a Member State which remains responsible for its commitments to its creditors provided that the conditions attached to such assistance are such as to prompt that Member State to implement a sound budgetary policy'.

([1]) Ibid, §130.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000292/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(11. januar 2013)

Om: Roundup og organophosfat

Roundup og organophosfat er begge bekæmpelsesmidler, som anvendes inden for EU's grænser. I den senere tid er der foretaget en række undersøgelser, som påviser, at brugen af disse bekæmpelsesmidler involverer flere problemer end tidligere antaget.

Som eksempel kan nævnes Roundup-undersøgelser af professor Andrés Carrasco ([1]), professor Gilles-Eric Séralini ([2]) og professor Monika Krüger ([3]), der alle påviser alvorlige sundhedsskadelige virkninger af Roundup.

Undersøgelser, herunder undersøgelsesprojektet CHAMACOS ([4]) i Californien, påviser endvidere, at brugen af organophosfat skader udviklingen af fostres hjerner.

Hvordan forholder Kommissionen sig til de nye undersøgelser om Roundup? Hvordan kan det være, at Kommissionen har udskudt en ny godkendelse af Roundup til 2015?

Hvordan forholder Kommissionen sig til ovenstående undersøgelse om organophosfat? Hvad er kommissionens holdning til, at organfosfat sælges på det europæiske marked, når det er blevet testet som værende farligt for fostre?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(15. februar 2013)

Hvad angår vurderingen af Dr. Carrascos forskningsresultater henviser Kommissionen det ærede medlem til sit svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-007874/2010 (punkt 1) og P-010522/2010 (afsnit 3 og 4) ([5]).

Den Europæiske Fødevaresikkerhedsautoritet (EFSA) fandt, at den undersøgelse, der er foretaget af Séralini et al., ikke er tilstrækkeligt udformet, analyseret og rapporteret, og at den videnskabelige kvalitet af denne ikke er tilstrækkelig til, at der kan foretages sikkerhedsvurderinger ([6]), hvilket medlemsstaterne overordnet er enige i. EFSA konkluderede, at den nuværende dokumentation ikke har nogen indvirkning på den igangværende reevaluering af glyphosat. Kommissionen finder derfor ikke, at undersøgelsen danner et solidt grundlag for at forbyde eller pålægge yderligere begrænsninger i brugen af glyphosat i EU.

I maj 2012 blev der indgivet en ansøgning om forlængelse af godkendelsen af glyphosat. Der foretages i øjeblikket en evaluering af dossieret, og der vil i den forbindelse blive taget nøje hensyn til al åben videnskabelig litteratur, der har været underkastet et peer review.

Med hensyn til forlængelsesproceduren for glyphosat henviser Kommissionen det ærede medlem til sit svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-000884/2011.

Hvad angår resultaterne af undersøgelsen CHAMACOS, og især den seneste offentliggjorte undersøgelse blandt dem, der henvises til ([7]), samt hvad angår beskyttelsen af sårbare befolkningsgrupper, herunder gravide kvinder, i den nuværende lovgivning ([8]) henviser Kommissionen det ærede medlem til sine svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-003770/2010 og E-005357/2011. Kommissionen gentager, at den vil følge sagen nøje og kan, om nødvendigt, træffe de nødvendige foranstaltninger på baggrund af videnskabelige resultater og under fuld overholdelse af de gældende retlige bestemmelser.

([1]) http://www.globalresearch.ca/study-shows-monsanto-roundup-herbicide-link-to-birth-defects/21251.
([2]) http://research.sustainablefoodtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Final-Paper.pdf
([3]) http://pubget.com/paper/23224412/The_Effect_of_Glyphosate_on_Potential_Pathogens_and_Beneficial_Members_of_Poultry_Microbiota_In_Vitro.
([4]) http://cerch.org/research-programs/chamacos/chamacos-cohort-study/findings-health-outcomes-chamacos/.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html
([6]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2986.htm
([7]) Bouchard MF et al., Prenatal exposure to organophosphate pesticides and IQ in 7-year-old children. Environ Health Perspect. Aug. 2011; 119(8): 1189-95.
([8]) Forordning (EF) nr. 1107/2009, EUT L 309 af 24.11.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000292/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Roundup and organophosphate

Roundup and organophosphate are both weedkillers that are in use in the EU. A number of studies have recently been carried out showing that the use of these weedkillers is more problematic than had been thought.

These include the studies on Roundup by Prof. Andrés Carrasco ([1]), Prof. Gilles-Eric Séralini ([2]) and Prof. Monika Krüger ([3]), which all point to Roundup causing serious health problems.

There are also studies, including the research project Chamacos ([4]) in California, showing that the use of organophosphate harms embryo brain development.

What is the Commission's view of the recent studies on Roundup? How can it be that the Commission has postponed the new approval procedure for Roundup until 2015?

What is the Commission's view of the abovementioned studies on organophosphate? What is the Commission's view of the fact that organophosphate is sold on the European market when tests have shown that it is harmful to unborn babies?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

Regarding the assessment of the research findings by Dr Carrasco, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-007874/2010 (point 1) and P-010522/2010 (paragraphs 3 and 4) ([5]).

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), in overall agreement with Member States, found the study by Séralini et al. to be inadequately designed, analysed and reported, and of insufficient scientific quality for safety assessments ([6]). EFSA concluded that the currently available evidence does not impact on the ongoing re-evaluation of glyphosate. Therefore, the Commission does not consider the study to be a solid basis to ban or impose additional restrictions on the use of glyphosate in the EU.

In May 2012, an application has been submitted to renew the approval of glyphosate. The evaluation of the dossier is currently ongoing and will take any peer reviewed open scientific literature carefully into account.

Regarding the renewal procedure for glyphosate, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000884/2011.

On the findings of the CHAMACOS study, and in particular the most recent among the referenced publications ([7]), as well as on the protection of vulnerable groups of the population, including pregnant women, in current legislation ([8]), the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-003770/2010 and E-005357/2011. The Commission reiterates that it will follow the matter closely and, where necessary, may take the necessary actions in light of the scientific outcomes and in full respect of the existing legal provisions.

([1]) http://www.globalresearch.ca/study-shows-monsanto-roundup-herbicide-link-to-birth-defects/21251.
([2]) http://research.sustainablefoodtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Final-Paper.pdf
([3]) http://pubget.com/paper/23224412/The_Effect_of_Glyphosate_on_Potential_Pathogens_and_Beneficial_Members_of_Poultry_Microbiota_In_Vitro.
([4]) http://cerch.org/research-programs/chamacos/chamacos-cohort-study/findings-health-outcomes-chamacos/.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([6]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2986.htm
([7]) Bouchard MF et al., Prenatal exposure to organophosphate pesticides and IQ in 7-year-old children. Environ Health Perspect. 2011 Aug;119(8):1189-95.
([8]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, OJ L 309, 24.11.2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000293/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Abschaffung der BSE-Tests — Tiermehl-Düngemittel

Entscheidend zur Ausbreitung von BSE hat der unverantwortliche Umgang mit Tiermehl beigetragen. Dieses wird in erster Linie aus Schlachtabfällen und toten Tieren hergestellt. Allein in Deutschland fällt anscheinend jährlich Tiermehl im Ausmaß von mehr als einer Million Tonnen an. Seit 2003 muss Tiermehl nach EU-Recht für Tiere ungenießbar gemacht und eingefärbt werden.

Berichten zufolge wird es indes immer wieder als Dünger in der Landwirtschaft eingesetzt (im Garten- und Ackerbau, vorzugsweise im „schadstoffarmen Anbau"), da es als Dünger ca. zehnmal weniger kostet als das vom Nährwert vergleichbare Futtersoja. Es kann allerdings nicht völlig ausgeschlossen werden, dass auf diesem Weg BSE-Prionen in das Futter von Rindvieh gelangen können. Experten sind der Ansicht, dass Rinderwahnerreger über Ausscheidungen oder Nachgeburten auf die Weideflächen gelangen und dort längere Zeit überdauern könnten. Nachgewiesen ist dies bereits für Erreger der BSE-ähnlichen Schafseuche Scrapie.

Dem Vernehmen nach wird auf EU-Ebene erneut darüber diskutiert, tierische Fette und Tiermehl als Düngemittel zuzulassen. Gleichzeitig sollen die verbindlichen BSE-Tests an Rindern, die für den Schlachter bestimmt sind, abgeschafft werden, wovon sich die EU jährliche Einsparungen in Höhe von 40 Mio. EUR für ihren Haushaltsplan verspricht.

1. Wie viel Tiermehl wird jährlich in der EU erzeugt?

2. Welche Kontrollmechanismen gibt es, um die ordnungsgemäße Entsorgung von Tiermehl zu überprüfen?

3. Gibt es Studien dazu, wie sich der BSE-Erreger bei der Verwendung als Düngemittel verhält?

4. Wird tatsächlich auf EU-Ebene über die Erlaubnis nachgedacht, tierische Fette und Tiermehl als Düngemittel zuzulassen, und zeitgleich die verbindlichen BSE-Tests wegfallen zu lassen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(28. Februar 2013)

1. Die Kommission verfügt über keine genauen Angaben zur Menge des jährlich in der EU hergestellten Fleisch- und Knochenmehls (Tiermehl).

2. Die Pflichten der zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten, die gewährleisten, dass tierische Nebenprodukte einschließlich Tiermehl eingesammelt, gekennzeichnet, transportiert, behandelt und verwendet oder beseitigt werden, sind in Artikel 4 Absatz 4 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1069/2009 ([1]) festgelegt. Die allgemeinen Vorschriften über amtliche Kontrollen der Futtermittel- und Lebensmittelkette sind in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 882/2004 ([2]) festgelegt. Das Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt der Generaldirektion Gesundheit und Verbraucher der Kommission führt Kontrollen in den Mitgliedstaaten aus, um zu überprüfen, ob die offiziellen Anforderungen an die Kontrollen eingehalten werden. Die Ergebnisse der Audits sind öffentlich zugänglich ([3]).

([1]) ABl. L 300 vom 14.11.2009, S. 9.
([2]) ABl. L 165 vom 30.4.2004, S. 1.
([3]) Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

3. Die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit hat ein wissenschaftliches Gutachten herausgegeben zu BSE-Erregern, die als Düngemittel auf den Boden ausgebracht werden ([4]). Die in Artikel 12 und 32 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1069/2009 festgelegten EU-Rechtsvorschriften über die Herstellung von organischen Düngemitteln oder Bodenverbesserungsmitteln tragen diesem wissenschaftlichen Gutachten gebührend Rechnung.

4. Es besteht kein Zusammenhang zwischen der Entwicklung der EU-Rechtsvorschriften über die BSE-Tests und der Verwendung von Tiermehl bei der Herstellung organischer Düngemittel oder Bodenverbesserungsmittel. Nur tierische Fette und Tiermehle, die kein BSE-Risiko darstellen und gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1069/2009 als Material der Kategorie 2 oder 3 gelten, können zu organischen Düngemitteln oder Bodenverbesserungsmitteln verarbeitet werden.

([4]) Gutachten des Wissenschaftlichen Gremiums für biologische Gefahren (BIOHAZ) über die Sicherheit vor biologischen Gefahren einschließlich TSE bei der Ausbringung von organischen Düngemitteln und Bodenverbesserern auf Weideland, EFSA-Q-2003-09; http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/40.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000293/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Abolition of BSE tests — bone-meal fertilisers

One of the most important contributing factors to the spread of BSE was the irresponsible handling of bone meal. This is primarily produced from offal and animal carcasses. In Germany alone it appears that more than one million tonnes of bone meal are produced each year. Since 2003, EC law requires that bone meal must be dyed and rendered unfit for animal consumption.

Reports suggest, however, that it is frequently used as an agricultural fertiliser (in horticulture and land cultivation, mainly in 'low emission production') because it costs about ten times less as a fertiliser than soya feed, which has a comparable nutritional value. However, it is impossible to completely exclude the possibility that BSE prions may enter into cattle feed in this way. Experts believe that BSE pathogens could reach pasturage through animal faeces or afterbirth and survive there for long periods. This has already been proven for pathogens of Scrapie, a disease in sheep similar to BSE.

According to reports, discussions are once again being held at EU level to allow animal fats and bone meal to be used as fertilisers. At the same time, mandatory BSE testing of cattle earmarked for slaughter is to be abolished, a move that is expected to achieve annual budgetary savings of EUR 40 million for the EU.

1. How much bone meal is produced in the EU each year?

2. What control mechanisms exist for checking the correct disposal of bone meal?

3. Do studies exist that indicate how BSE pathogens behave in relation to fertiliser use?

4. Is it true that the EU is considering allowing animal fats and bone meal to be used as fertilisers, while at the same time abolishing mandatory BSE testing?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

1. The Commission does not have precise data on the amount of meat-and-bone meal (MBM) produced in the EU each year.

2. The duties of the competent authorities of Member States to ensure that animal by-products including MBM are collected, identified, transported, treated and used or disposed of, are laid down in Article 4(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 ([1]). The general rules on official controls along the feed and food chain are laid down in Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([2]). The Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General carries out audits in Member States to verify compliance with the official controls requirements. The outcome of these audits are publicly available ([3]).

3. The European Food Safety Authority has issued a scientific opinion on BSE agents if they are spread on land as fertilisers ([4]). EU legislation on the production of organic fertilisers or soil improvers laid down in Articles 12 and 32 of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 takes this scientific opinion into due account.

4. There is no link between the evolution of the EU legislation on testing for BSE and the use of MBM in the production of organic fertilisers or soil improvers. Only fats and animal meal that do not pose a BSE risk, and that are categorised in Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 as Category c and 3 materials, may be processed into organic fertilisers or soil improvers.

([1]) OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 9.
([2]) OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([3]) Food and Veterinary Office: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm
([4]) Opinion of the Scientific Panel on biological hazards (BIOHAZ) on the safety vis-à-vis biological risk including TSEs of the application on pastureland of organic fertilisers and soil improvers, EFSA-Q-2003-09; http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/40.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000294/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Troika-Fehler im Zuge der griechischen Schuldenabwicklung

Experten kritisieren, dass die Troika, als Griechenlands Schuldenverwalter, bisher insofern einen miserablen Job gemacht, als der griechische Außenbeitrag im Verhältnis zum BIP massiv gestiegen ist und die minimale Verbesserung der Außenhandelsposition ausschließlich auf einem massiven Rückgang der Importe beruht. Athen ist ihrer Schlussfolgerung nach summa summarum weiter denn je davon entfernt, seine Auslandsschulden begleichen zu können. Anscheinend konnte nur der Unternehmenssektor den immensen von der Troika verordneten Spardruck für sich nutzen, indem eine Verringerung der Lohnsummen erpresst wurde, ohne dass zeitgleich seitens der Troika Druck in Richtung auf entsprechende Preissenkungen ausgeübt wurde. Daraus resultierte ein Anstieg der Verbraucherpreise seit 2007 um 14,5 %, während gleichzeitig die Unternehmen im Jahre 2012 mit weniger Investitionen und trotz steigenden Gewinnen ohne höhere Steuerzahlungen einen Nettofinanzierungsüberschuss in Höhe von 19,3 Milliarden erzielten.

Hellas selbst konnte unter der Troika-Vormundschaft seine Nettofinanzierungsposition nicht wesentlich verbessern. Der durch die Kombination von staatlichen Massenentlassungen, Kürzungen bei Mindestlohn, Arbeitslosengeldern, Renten und sonstigen Sozialleistungen erfolgte Einbruch des Verbrauchs seit 2007 hat mit einem um 68 % gesunkenen Bauvolumen, einer um 30 % geringeren Industrieproduktion, einem Einbruch beim Umsatz des Einzelhandels um 50 % etc. die schlimmsten Prognosen übertroffen.

Im Endeffekt hat also der von der Troika verordnete Sparzwang einerseits zu einer immensen Kapitalflucht geführt, während die Bürger unter gewaltigen sozialen Einsparungen zu leiden haben.

1. Inwiefern werden die negativen Effekte der Troika-Schuldenvormundschaft über Hellas auf EU-Ebene analysiert, um gegebenenfalls neue Konzepte für andere EU-Staaten zu entwickeln?

2. Welche Schlussfolgerungen wurden aus dem Beispiel Griechenlands gezogen?

3. Welche Pläne gibt es auf EU-Ebene, damit eine Troika-Schuldenabwicklung künftig nicht mehr zu einer derartigen Entwicklung hin zu einer verschleppten desaströsen Konkursabwicklung verkommen kann?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(25. Februar 2013)

Das wirtschaftliche Anpassungsprogramm soll Griechenland bei seinen Bemühungen unterstützen, die im Laufe des letzten Jahrzehnts entstandenen enormen Haushalts- und Zahlungsbilanzungleichgewichte anzugehen. An beiden Fronten sind bereits außerordentliche Fortschritte erzielt worden. Das griechische gesamtstaatliche Primärdefizit wurde von -10,5 % im Jahr 2009 auf die projizierten -1,5 % des BIP im Jahr 2012 gesenkt. Mit der Steigerung der internationalen Wettbewerbsfähigkeit sanken die nominalen Lohnstückkosten um -1,8 % im Jahr 2011 und um schätzungsweise -8,6 % im Jahr 2012. Aufgrund der Strukturreformen gehört Griechenland dem „Doing Business"-Report 2012 der Weltbank zufolge nun zu den zehn Volkswirtschaften, die sich am stärksten verbessert haben. Griechenlands Leistungsbilanzdefizit verringerte sich von -18 % im Jahr 2008 auf die projizierten -8,3 % im Jahr 2012.

Dennoch steht das Land vor beispiellosen Herausforderungen, und daher ist die Fortsetzung des Reformkurses unerlässlich, um der Wirtschaft wieder zu nachhaltigem Wachstum und Beschäftigung zu verhelfen. Die Situation in Griechenland wird — dies ist wichtig — laufend überwacht, um gegebenenfalls die politischen Parameter neu auszurichten.

Ein Beispiel: Da die ursprünglichen Programmprognosen im Einklang mit den makroökonomischen Entwicklungen nach unten korrigiert wurden, wurde das Zeitfenster für die Haushaltsanpassungsziele bis 2016 verlängert. Da die Schuldenquote Griechenlands durch die Intensität der Rezession untragbare Dimensionen erreichte, beschloss die Eurogruppe im November 2012 eine Reihe von schuldenreduzierenden Maßnahmen und machte im Dezember 2012 den Weg frei für die Bereitstellung erheblicher Mittel, mit denen dringend benötigte Liquidität in die griechische Wirtschaft gepumpt wurde. Durch all diese Entwicklungen ist das Vertrauen in das Land zurückgekehrt, was sinkende Zinsspreads sowie die Hochstufung der Bonitätsbewertung Griechenlands von „SD"- auf „B-/B"-Niveau belegen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000294/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Mistakes by the Troika when dealing with Greek debt

Experts make the criticism that the Troika, as Greece's debt managers, have so far done a terrible job, arguing that Greece's balance on goods and services has risen sharply in comparison with GDP and that the minimal improvement in the foreign trade position is due solely to a massive decline in imports. They conclude that, overall, the chances that Athens will be able to meet its external debt liabilities are more remote than ever. It appears that the enormous pressure from the Troika to make savings has only benefitted the corporate sector, enabling it to force a reduction in wages. However, the Troika failed to exert pressure aimed at corresponding price reductions at the same time. This has resulted in a 14.5 % increase in consumer prices since 2007. At the same time, the corporate sector managed to achieve a net financial surplus of EUR 19.3 billion in 2012, with lower investment levels and no increase in tax payments, despite higher profits.

Greece itself has been unable to achieve any significant improvement in its net funding position under the stewardship of the Troika. As a result of the combination of mass state lay-offs, cuts in the minimum wage, unemployment benefit, pensions and other social-security benefits, the collapse in consumer spending since 2007 has exceeded the most pessimistic predictions, with a 68 % decline in building activity, a 30 % drop in industrial production, a 50 % collapse in turnover in the retail sector, etc.

Thus, the overall effect of the austerity imposed by the Troika has been an enormous outflow of capital from the country, while Greek citizens suffer the consequences of huge social spending cuts.

1. To what extent are the negative effects of the Troika's stewardship of Greek debt analysed at EU level, so that new concepts can be drawn up for other EU Member States if necessary?

2. What conclusions have been drawn from the Greek experience?

3. What plans exist at EU level to ensure that the management of debt by the Troika will not have such protracted and disastrous consequences for the economy in the future?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The Economic Adjustment Programme aims to support Greece in its efforts to tackle the enormous fiscal and external imbalances accumulated during the 2000s. On both of these fronts exceptional progress has been already made. The Greek general government primary deficit has been reduced from -10.5% in 2009 to the projected -1.5% of GDP in 2012. Raising international competitiveness, nominal unit labour costs fell by -1.8% in 2011 and by an estimated -8.6% in 2012. Structural reforms made Greece one of the top ten improvers in the annual 2012 World Bank 'Doing Business' report. The Greek current account deficit has shrunk from -18% in 2008 to the projected -8.3% in 2012.

Nevertheless, the nature of the challenges facing Greece is unprecedented and therefore the continued course of reform is imperative to bring the economy back on a path of sustainable growth and employment. Importantly, the situation in Greece is monitored on continuous basis in order to, where appropriate, re-adjust policy parameters going forward.

For example, given that the original programme forecasts have been revised downwards in line with macroeconomic developments, the fiscal adjustment targets have been stretched out until 2016. As the depth of the contraction moved the Greek debt-to-GDP ratio into unsustainable territory, the Eurogroup in November 2012 decided on a set of debt-reducing measures and in December 2012 released a significant disbursement injecting much-needed liquidity to of the Greek economy. All these developments have returned confidence in the country, witnessed by falling interest rate spreads as well as an upgrade of Greece's debt rating from 'SD' to 'B-/B'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000296/13
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE) e Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(11 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Gara d'appalto per il tele-pedaggio in Slovacchia

Nel marzo 2008 è stata realizzata una gara d'appalto per la realizzazione di un servizio di riscossione del tele-pedaggio in Slovacchia. L'offerta presentata da un'azienda è stata esclusa dalla commissione aggiudicatrice in ragione del carattere «anormalmente basso» della componente economica, sebbene fosse stata considerata la migliore in sede di valutazione comparativa.

L'azienda esclusa ha quindi intrapreso iniziative di tutela sia in Slovacchia sia a livello europeo, tramite la Commissione europea, in ragione di una manifesta violazione della legislazione europea in materia di appalti pubblici. La Direzione generale del Mercato interno ha quindi formalmente avviato una procedura di infrazione, culminata nel settembre 2010 in un parere motivato che classifica l'esclusione dalla gara come infondata e discriminatoria. La Commissione conclude infatti: «*[t]he tender was not abnormally low, as the proposed enforcement coverage was adequately priced*». In seguito, tuttavia, tale procedura di infrazione è entrata in una fase di stallo, in quanto la Commissione ha deciso di attendere l'esito del giudizio nazionale. La Corte Suprema slovacca, dopo aver fatto ricorso alla Corte di giustizia UE, ai sensi dell'art. 267 TFUE, per ottenere dei chiarimenti di natura procedurale e dopo aver ottenuto conferma, da parte di quest'ultima, dell'obbligo delle autorità nazionali di applicare in modo trasparente e non discriminatorio le procedure in materia di appalti, ha confermato comunque l'esclusione dell'azienda in questione.

Considerando che la Corte Suprema slovacca si è focalizzata su aspetti di natura strettamente procedurale, senza analizzare nel merito se l'offerta esclusa sia o meno anormalmente bassa; a seguito della sentenza della Corte Suprema slovacca non vi sono altre vie di tutela in sede nazionale.

Si chiede se la Commissione non ritenga opportuno proseguire l'iter giuridico attualmente in stallo, tramite un ricorso dinanzi alla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea a norma dell'art. 258 TFUE, in modo da consentire di affermare le ragioni del diritto a tutela di un progetto di investimento — di grande rilevanza economica e tecnologica — che è stato ingiustamente discriminato, in violazione delle norme europee in materia di appalti?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(11 marzo 2013)

Come affermano correttamente gli onorevoli parlamentari, la Commissione ha emesso un parere motivato in merito all'aggiudicazione del servizio di riscossione del pedaggio da parte delle autorità slovacche nel 2010. Uno degli aspetti del parere motivato in esame è relativo al modo in cui una delle offerte è stata esclusa in quanto anormalmente bassa. La Commissione ha sospeso il procedimento nel momento in cui la Corte suprema slovacca ha sollevato una questione pregiudiziale sul merito affrontato anche nel parere motivato. Sulla base della questione pregiudiziale la Corte suprema slovacca ha pronunciato la sua ultima sentenza nell'ottobre 2012 che solo recentemente è stata comunicata ai servizi della Commissione.

I servizi della Commissione stanno attualmente analizzando le sentenze della Corte suprema slovacca per stabilire che influenza esse hanno sulla procedura di infrazione attualmente sospesa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000296/13
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE) and Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Call for tenders for electronic toll collection system in Slovakia

In March 2008, a call for tenders was issued for setting up an electronic toll collection system in Slovakia. The tender submitted by one company was excluded by the adjudicating committee due to the 'abnormally low' pricing component, even though it was considered to be the best in the comparative assessment.

The company that was excluded consequently took legal action, both in Slovakia and at European level, via the European Commission, owing to a clear breach of EU legislation relating to public contracts. The Internal Market and Services Directorate General then formally launched infringement proceedings, which culminated in September 2010 with a reasoned opinion which declared the rejection of the tender as unfounded and discriminatory. The Commission in fact concluded that '[t]he tender was not abnormally low, as the proposed enforcement coverage was adequately priced'. Subsequently, however, the infringement proceedings were put on hold as the Commission decided to await the outcome of the trial in Slovakia. The Slovakian Supreme Court, having consulted the European Court of Justice (ECJ), pursuant to Article 267 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), to seek further information on procedural matters and after having received confirmation from the ECJ regarding the duty of national authorities to apply procedures in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner in relation to contracts, nonetheless confirmed the exclusion of the company in question.

Given that the Slovakian Supreme Court focused on strictly procedural aspects, without assessing whether the excluded tender was abnormally low or not; and following the ruling by the Slovakian Supreme Court that there are no further legal steps possible at national level;

Does the Commission not believe that it would be worthwhile to continue the legal process that is currently on hold, by lodging an appeal before the Court of Justice of the European Union under Article 258 of the TFEU, in order to confirm the legal basis governing an investment project of huge economic and technological importance, which was unfairly dealt with, in breach of EC laws on public contracts?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

As the Honourable Members rightly state, the Commission issued a Reasoned Opinion concerning the award of the toll collection services by the Slovak authorities in 2010. One of the aspects of the Reasoned Opinion concerned the manner in which one of the tenders had been excluded as abnormally low. However, the Commission stayed proceedings when the Slovak Supreme Court asked for a preliminary ruling on questions also addressed in the Reasoned Opinion. On the basis of the preliminary ruling, the Slovak Supreme Court delivered its last judgment in October 2012 which has only been recently communicated to the Commission services.

The Commission services are currently analysing the judgments of the Slovak Supreme Court and decide which influence they have on the infringement proceedings currently on hold.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000298/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Detenciones de opositores políticos de la Marcha Patriótica en Colombia

El pasado 22 de noviembre Lessner Jafer Almenarez Gómez, miembro del Partido Comunista de Colombia e integrante del movimiento Marcha Patriótica, fue detenido junto a Johan David Ruiz, Andrés Felipe Álvarez Dávila y otros ciudadanos colombianos que mantienen una posición política muy crítica con el Gobierno.

Todos los ciudadanos detenidos han sido acusados del delito de rebelión, basándose una vez más en declaraciones de paramilitares supuestamente desmovilizados, y de delitos supuestamente ocurridos en 2006 que salen hoy a la luz en clara coincidencia con la toma de fuerza del movimiento político y social Marcha Patriótica, que está aglutinando a las fuerzas opositoras al Gobierno de Santos por la sistemática violación de los derechos humanos. Es intolerable este proceso de persecución política y judicial contra toda oposición política pacífica que trate de sostener firmemente la posibilidad de un verdadero proceso de paz y cambios estructurales en el país con mayor desigualdad del mundo.

Así, desde la sociedad civil colombiana denuncian que el Gobierno está llevando a cabo un proceso de persecución de movimientos políticos y sociales críticos a favor de la paz que pone en duda la supuesta voluntad de respetar y garantizar los derechos humanos y muestra la enorme dificultad a la que se enfrentan las personas que deciden involucrarse en política oponiéndose y criticando las líneas implementadas por el actual Gobierno de Santos.

Al igual que durante los tiempos de la Unión Patriótica, cuando más de 3 000 miembros de ese partido político fueron asesinados, el movimiento político y social Marcha Patriótica está siendo criminalizado y varios de sus miembros han sido asesinados. Teniendo en cuenta que en una situación como la actual resulta fundamental la existencia de diferentes actores políticos que busquen la paz pero que el Gobierno de Santos continúa con la persecución de toda oposición crítica:

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que el actual Gobierno de Colombia garantiza los derechos humanos aun cuando se persigue y obstaculiza la labor de cualquier movimiento crítico? ¿Dispone de información sobre el número de opositores políticos que están siendo juzgados con declaraciones provenientes de paramilitares supuestamente desmovilizados? ¿Exigirá la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que el Gobierno colombiano respete y garantice juicios justos para los citados detenidos? ¿Está considerando la posibilidad de congelar el proceso de ratificación del Acuerdo Comercial Multipartes UE-Colombia y Perú si continúan la persecución política y el Gobierno sigue sin dar garantías para la participación política pacífica a los movimientos y actores más críticos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de febrero de 2013)

Remito a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a su pregunta nº E-011278/2012 ([1]). De acuerdo con la Constitución colombiana, el Gobierno no desempeña ningún papel en procedimientos judiciales como los que nos ocupan, que son competencia exclusiva de las autoridades judiciales (Ministerio Público y tribunales), que actúan con total independencia. No corresponde a la UE interferir en un procedimiento judicial. Sin embargo, Su Señoría puede estar segura de que la UE se mantendrá atenta a que se respeten las garantías procesales.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000298/13
to the Commission(Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Political opponents from the Patriotic March arrested in Colombia

On 22 November 2012, Lessner Jafer Almenarez Gómez, a member of the Colombian Communist Party and the Patriotic March movement, was arrested along with Johan David Ruiz, Andrés Felipe Álvarez Dávila and other Colombians who are outspoken critics of the Government.

All those arrested have been charged with the crime of rebellion, once again based on evidence from supposedly demobilised paramilitaries, and crimes allegedly committed in 2006 which are conveniently coming to light as the Patriotic March political and social movement gathers strength. This movement is bringing together anti-government forces that oppose the Santos Government due to systematic human rights violations. We cannot tolerate the political and legal persecution of any peaceful political opposition that firmly supports the possibility of a real peace process and structural changes in the most unequal country in the world.

Colombian civil society organisations denounce the fact that the Government is persecuting political and social movements that criticise it and stand for peace. This persecution calls into question the government's supposed willingness to respect and guarantee human rights. It also demonstrates the enormous difficulty facing those who choose to engage in politics to oppose and criticise the measures taken by the current Santos Government.

In the same way that more than 3 000 members of the former Patriotic Union political party were killed, the Patriotic March movement is being criminalised, and several of its members have been killed. In a situation like this, it is essential that there be different political actors working towards peace, yet the Santos Government continues to persecute all opponents who criticise it.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that the current Colombian Government guarantees human rights, even though it persecutes and obstructs the work of any movement that criticises it? Does she have any information on the number of political opponents being tried on the basis of evidence from supposedly demobilised paramilitaries? Will she demand that the Colombian Government respects and guarantees fair trials for all those arrested? Is she considering the possibility of suspending the EU-Colombia-Peru Multiparty Trade Agreement ratification process if the Government continues with this political persecution and fails to provide assurances that the most critical movements and actors can engage in peaceful political participation?

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

Reference is made to the reply given to the Honourable Member's Question E-011278/2012 ([1]). Under Colombia's constitution, the government has no role in judicial procedures such as the present ones, which are the exclusive domain of the judicial authorities (Public Prosecutor's office and courts), which operate in full independence. It is not for the EU to interfere in judicial proceedings. However, the Honourable Member can rest assured that EU will remain vigilant that due process is afforded.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000299/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Criminalización de la protesta campesina en Honduras

La Plataforma Agraria es una coalición integrada por más de una treintena de organizaciones campesinas, indígenas, de derechos humanos, etc., vinculadas con la problemática agraria en Honduras. Dicha plataforma denunció el pasado 10 de diciembre, *Día Internacional de los Derechos Humanos, el proceso de criminalización de la lucha campesina por el acceso a la tierra que se está llevando a cabo en el país*.

Un estudio reciente realizado por la Plataforma demuestra que entre 2010 y 2012 fueron procesados 3 051 campesinos procedentes de 15 de los 18 departamentos del país, procesos que han conllevado una sola condena firme, la de José Isabel Morales, condenado a 20 años, dato que demuestra la clara motivación política para *la criminalización de la protesta campesina*.

Además, es tristemente común que los casos, aun siendo absueltos los condenados, no sean sobreseídos definitivamente, lo que constituye un claro mecanismo para desmovilizar*, pues otra detención en una protesta supone así un agravante nuevo a tener en cuenta. Además de esta persecución por la vía judicial del actual gobierno, los campesinos hondureños están siendo víctimas reiteradas de la violencia criminal, con cerca de un centenar de activistas campesinos asesinados en la total impunidad*.

La lucha de estos campesinos está en buena parte recogida en el artículo 345 de la Constitución de Honduras, donde figura que la reforma agraria constituye una parte esencial de la estrategia global del desarrollo de *la nación, por lo que la criminalización y persecución jurídica del actual gobierno ilegítimo entra en colisión con el espíritu de la propia Carta Magna*.

Desde el pasado golpe de estado contra Manuel Zelaya, el mandato del nuevo *Presidente Porfirio Lobo se ha caracterizado por el elevado número de asesinatos, que ha llegado a la escandalosa tasa de 82,1 por cada 100 000 habitantes. ¿Ha expresado la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante su preocupación por los procesamientos masivos de estos y otros muchos defensores de los derechos humanos en Honduras? ¿Ha exigido la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que el Gobierno hondureño garantice el respeto a los derechos humanos poniendo fin a la persecución de los campesinos? ¿Considera que se debe suspender el proceso de ratificación del Acuerdo de Asociación con la región Centroamericana, que incluye Honduras, hasta que dicho Gobierno pueda garantizar el eficaz respeto de los derechos humanos y de los derechos recogidos en su propia Constitución?*

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de marzo de 2013)

La UE está preocupada por la situación de los derechos humanos en Honduras, especialmente en la región de Bajo Aguán, donde un conflicto histórico, en el cual se entremezclan la reforma agraria, violaciones de los derechos humanos e intereses económicos, determina una situación complicada y difícil.

El fomento de la justicia y el pleno respeto de los derechos humanos constituyen la base de la cooperación y el diálogo político con Honduras. La UE ha llevado a cabo continuas gestiones a nivel local a través de un diálogo con las organizaciones de derechos humanos, reuniones con los defensores de los derechos humanos en situación de riesgo, visitas y declaraciones locales en casos concretos. La UE condenó públicamente el asesinato de Trejo, un abogado que defendía los derechos de los campesinos sobre la tierra, e instó a las autoridades a investigar el asunto y a salvaguardar la integridad física de los defensores de los derechos humanos en situación de riesgo. Además, la delegación de la UE en Honduras ha visitado dos veces Bajo Aguán, donde habló con todas las partes interesadas.

La UE está respaldando la puesta en práctica de la política nacional de derechos humanos, aprobada recientemente, mediante el Programa de Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos, señalando que los derechos de los campesinos son una de sus principales prioridades en el marco de las acciones que han de llevarse a cabo para garantizar el derecho a la alimentación. Los temas relacionados con la propiedad de la tierra, la reforma agraria y la investigación eficaz de los asesinatos de campesinos se cuentan entre las acciones previstas.

Además, la UE sigue apoyando a la sociedad civil hondureña y a los defensores de los derechos humanos a través del IEDDH ([1]). Esta iniciativa incluye, entre otras cosas, la posibilidad de facilitar apoyo jurídico a los campesinos.

([1]) IEDDH: Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos.

Uno de los objetivos del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-América Central es profundizar en el diálogo sobre los valores fundamentales de la UE. El Acuerdo prevé la aplicación de medidas apropiadas, incluida su suspensión, en caso de que alguna de las Partes vulnere un elemento esencial como el respeto de los derechos humanos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000299/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Criminalisation of the peasant farmer protest in Honduras

Plataforma Agraria is a coalition of more than 30 peasant farmer, indigenous and human rights organisations, among others, united by the agricultural problems in Honduras. On 10 December 2012, International Human Rights Day, this group denounced the process of criminalisation of the peasant farmers' struggle for access to land that is being carried out in the country.

A recent study by Plataforma Agraria shows that between 2010 and 2012, legal action was brought against 3 051 peasant farmers from 15 of the 18 provinces of Honduras. These proceedings have resulted in only one firm conviction, that of José Isabel Morales, sentenced to 20 years — a fact that shows the clear political motivation behind the criminalisation of the peasant farmer struggle.

Furthermore, even when those charged are acquitted, it is sadly common that the cases are not definitively dismissed. This is a clear mechanism for demobilising the farmers, since it means that another arrest at a protest becomes a fresh aggravating circumstance to be taken into account. In addition to this persecution through legal channels by the current government, Honduran peasant farmers are repeatedly falling victim to criminal violence, with close to 100 activists assassinated with total impunity.

These peasant farmers' struggle is largely enshrined in Article 345 of the Honduras Constitution, which states that agrarian reform is a vital part of the country's global development strategy. Consequently, the criminalisation and judicial persecution being carried out by the current illegitimate government directly contradicts the spirit of the Magna Carta itself.

Since the last coup d'état against Manuel Zelaya, the reign of the new president, Porfirio Lobo, has been marked by large numbers of assassinations, reaching the scandalous rate of 82.1 for every 100 000 inhabitants. Has the Vice-President/High Representative expressed her concern over the huge numbers of prosecutions brought against these and many other defenders of human rights in Honduras? Has she demanded a guarantee from the Honduran Government that it will respect human rights and put an end to the persecution of the peasant farmers? Does she believe that the ratification of the Association Agreement with the Central American region, which includes Honduras, should be suspended until the Honduran Government can guarantee effective respect for human rights and the rights enshrined in its own Constitution?

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

The EU is concerned with the human rights (HR) situation in Honduras, particularly in the Bajo Aguán region where a historical conflict combining HR violations, land reform and economic interests make for a complex and difficult situation.

The promotion of justice and full respect of HR are at the core of political dialogue and cooperation with Honduras. EU continuous local actions have been implemented through a dialogue with HR organisations, meetings with HR defenders at risk, visits, and local statements issued in specific cases. The EU publicly condemned the murder of Trejo, a lawyer who defended the land rights of peasants, calling on the authorities to investigate and safeguard the physical integrity of HR defenders at risk. In addition, the EU Delegation in Honduras has twice visited Bajo Aguán where it spoke to all stakeholders involved.

The EU is supporting the implementation of the recently approved National Human Rights Policy through the Programa de Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos pointing to the rights of peasants as one of its main priorities in the framework of the actions to be implemented in achieving the Right to Food. Land tenure issues, agrarian reform and effective investigations in the cases of peasants assassinations are amongst the foreseen actions.

In addition, the EU continues to support Honduran civil society and HR defenders through the EIDHR ([1]). This initiative includes, amongst other things, the possibility for peasants to receive legal support.

([1]) EIDHR = European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

One of the EU-Central America Association Agreement's objectives is to deepen dialogue on EU fundamental values. The Agreement foresees the recourse to appropriate measures including its suspension in case of violation of one essential element such as respect of HR by any of the Parties.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000300/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: No adaptación del Código Penal español al Derecho europeo en materia de software

El Código Penal español no se adapta a la normativa europea en materia de protección jurídica de programas de ordenador ya que las autoridades españolas modificaron el mentado Código en 1995 sin adaptarlo a la normativa europea vigente *y tampoco lo adaptaron posteriormente*.

Así, la reforma del Código Penal español de 1995 no adaptó la legislación europea en este tema, en concreto la Directiva 91/250/CEE del Consejo, de 14 de mayo de 1991, sobre la protección jurídica de los programas de ordenador conllevando un claro beneficio para determinadas empresas de la industria del software privativo. Además, el legislador español tampoco ha hecho la necesaria traslación a la normativa española de la Directiva 2001/29/CE del Parlamento Europeo y **del** Consejo, de 22 de mayo de 2001, sobre derechos de autor y derechos afines en la sociedad de la información.

Recientemente han comenzado a aparecer sentencias del Tribunal de la Unión Europea que apoyan esta exposición, como la sentencia en el asunto C-406/10 que niega los derechos de autor a la funcionalidad de un programa o de su lenguaje de programación o la sentencia en el asunto C-128/11 donde el programador no puede oponerse a la reventa de licencias «segunda mano» que permiten la utilización de programas descargados de Internet. Estas dos sentencias revelan como la no adaptación al Derecho comunitario ha sido en favor de las grandes compañías de software que podían actuar como monopolistas en el mercado.

Estas sentencias son solo parte del problema en un sector tristemente caracterizado por prácticas cercanas al oligopolio cuando no al monopolio y que ha llevado a sanciones históricas y sentencias sobre el asunto como la 088-20227 del Tribunal de Casación Francés que sostiene que «*los ordenadores y sus sistemas operativos han de venderse separadamente*».

Teniendo en cuenta que la diferente aplicación del Derecho europeo, que el legislador español sostiene, genera inseguridad jurídica, cuando no delitos inexistentes en otros Estados miembros, y perturba una aplicación correcta de lo dictaminado en este asunto por el Derecho comunitario:

¿Considera la Comisión necesaria y justificada la modificación del Código Penal *español para adaptarlo al Derecho europeo? ¿Piensa exigir la urgente adaptación a las autoridades españolas? ¿Qué herramientas piensa utilizar la Comisión para forzar al Gobierno español a aplicar la normativa europea? ¿Piensa la Comisión garantizar que se cumpla el derecho a reclamar los daños y perjuicios de los ciudadanos afectados? ¿Piensa la Comisión actuar y sancionar a las grandes empresas de software que han sostenido esta situación de monopolio en España?*

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de marzo de 2013)

De conformidad con el artículo 10 de la Directiva 91/250/CEE ([1]) ([2]), el artículo 13 de la Directiva 2001/29/CE ([3]) y el artículo 20 de la Directiva 2004/48/CE ([4]), los Estados miembros debían haber puesto en vigor las disposiciones legales, reglamentarias y administrativas necesarias para dar cumplimiento a lo dispuesto en esas Directivas a más tardar el 1 de enero de 1993, el 22 de diciembre de 2002 y el 29 de abril de 2006, respectivamente.

También están obligados a notificar a la Comisión el texto de las disposiciones de Derecho interno que adopten en el ámbito regulado por las Directivas. De conformidad con el artículo 288 del TFUE ([5]), los Estados miembros están vinculados por los objetivos de las Directivas. Si la Comisión considera que un Estado miembro no ha incorporado una Directiva al ordenamiento jurídico nacional, puede incoar un procedimiento por inacción.

([1]) Directiva 91/250/CEE del Consejo, de 14 de mayo de 1991, sobre la protección jurídica de programas de ordenador (DO L 122 de 17.5.1991, pp. 42-46).
([2]) Sustituida por su versión codificada en la Directiva 2009/24/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de abril de 2009, sobre la protección jurídica de programas de ordenador (DO L 111 de 5.5.2009, pp. 16-22).
([3]) Directiva 2001/29/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 22 de mayo de 2001, relativa a la armonización de determinados aspectos de los derechos de autor y derechos afines a los derechos de autor en la sociedad de la información (DO L 167 de 22.6.2001, pp. 10-19).
([4]) Directiva 2004/48/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 29 de abril de 2004, relativa al respeto de los derechos de propiedad intelectual (DO L 157 de 30.4.2004, pp. 45-86).
([5]) Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea.

La pregunta no contiene suficiente información sobre qué disposiciones de esas Directivas no se han incorporado en absoluto o se han incorporado incorrectamente al Código Penal español o sobre qué disposiciones del Código deberían modificarse. La Comisión está dispuesta a investigar el asunto si recibe información detallada sobre la manera en que España ha omitido su deber de transponer las Directivas. Si la Comisión considerara que España ha incumplido las obligaciones que le incumben en virtud de los Tratados, la Comisión incoaría el procedimiento establecido en el artículo 258 del TFUE.

Si se produce un incumplimiento de una Directiva, los Estados miembros pueden ser considerados responsables por los daños causados a un particular por no haber aplicado una Directiva ([6]). Los recursos por daños y perjuicios contra el Estado deben interponerse ante los tribunales nacionales.

En materia de competencia, la Comisión procede a un seguimiento de la evolución en este ámbito en todo el EEE para cerciorarse de que los mercados siguen siendo competitivos y reportan ventajas a los consumidores desde el punto de vista de unas mayores posibilidades de elección, precios más bajos y más innovación.

([6]) Véanse los asuntos C-6/90 y C-9/90, Francovich y Bonifaci/Italia, Rec. 1991, p. I-5357.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000300/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: EU legislation on software is not being transposed into Spanish law

EU legislation on the legal protection of computer programs is not being transposed into Spanish law. The Spanish authorities amended the Penal Code in 1995; however, they failed to transpose the EU legislation into force, and have yet to do so.

EU legislation in this area, in particular Council Directive 91/250/EEC of 14 May 1991 on the legal protection of computer programs, was not transposed into the amended 1995 Penal Code. This is creating a clear advantage for certain companies in the proprietary software industry. Furthermore, the Spanish legislature has failed to make the necessary transposition into Spanish law of Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society.

Recent judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union support this statement. For example; the judgment in Case C-406/10 rules that the functionality of a program or programming language cannot be protected by copyright. The judgement in Case C-128/11 provides that the author of software cannot oppose the resale of his 'used' licences allowing the use of his programs downloaded from the internet. These two judgments demonstrate how the failure to transpose EU law has favoured large software companies, enabling them to monopolise the market.

These judgments are only part of the problem in an industry which is sadly characterised by practices that border on oligopoly, if not monopoly, leading to historic sanctions and judgments on the matter. For example, Case 088-20227 of the French Court of Cassation ruled that computers and their operating systems must be sold separately.

Given that the Spanish legislature continues to uphold a different application of EU law, creating legal uncertainty and, potentially, crimes that do not exist in other Member States, thus preventing the provisions of EU law on the matter from being duly applied:

Does the Commission believe that it is necessary and justified to amend the Spanish Penal Code to comply with EU legislation? Will it demand that the Spanish authorities make these amendments immediately? What instruments will the Commission use to force the Spanish Government to apply EU legislation? Will it ensure that affected citizens will be able to exercise their right to claim damages? Will it take action and punish the large software companies that continue to monopolise this industry in Spain?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

Pursuant to Article 10 of Directive 91/250/EEC ([1]) ([2]), to Article 13 of Directive 2001/29/EC ([3]), and to Article 20 of Directive 2004/48/EC ([4]), Member States should have brought into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with these Directives before 1 January 1993, 22 December 2002 and 29 April 2006 respectively.

They are required to communicate to the Commission the provisions of national law which they adopt in the field governed by the directives. According to Article 288 of the TFEU ([5]), Member States are bound by the result to be achieved by a directive. When the Commission considers that a Member State has failed to implement a directive into national law, it can launch a procedure for failure to act.

The question does not contain enough information regarding which provisions of these directives have not been implemented at all or not rightly implemented into the Spanish Penal Code, or about which provisions of the Code would need to be amended. The Commission is willing to investigate the matter should it be provided with detailed information on how Spain has failed to transpose the directives. Should the Commission consider that Spain has failed to fulfil its obligation under the Treaties, it would launch the procedure laid down in Article 258 TFEU.

([1]) Council Directive 91/250/EEC of 14 May 1991 on the legal protection of computer programs, OJ L 122, 17.5.1991, p. 42-46.
([2]) Replaced by its codified version in Directive 2009/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the legal protection of computer programs, OJ L 111, 5.5.2009, p. 16-22.
([3]) Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society, OJ L 167, 22.6.2001, p. 10-19.
([4]) Directive 2004/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the enforcement of intellectual property rights, OJ L 157, 30.4.2004, p. 45-86.
([5]) Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

If there is a failure to implement a directive, Member States can be liable to an individual in damages for loss caused by this failure to implement a directive ([6]). Such actions for damages against the State need to be introduced in a national court.

In terms of competition, the Commission monitors developments in this area across the whole EEA to ensure that markets remain competitive and deliver benefits to consumers in terms of greater choice, lower prices and more innovation.

([6]) See Cases C-6/90 and C-9/90, *Francovich and Bonifaci* v *Italy* [1991] ECR I-5357.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000301/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Importación de residuos italianos sin clasificar en España

El importante problema que la gestión de residuos supone en Italia lleva tiempo siendo un foco de atención para las autoridades del país y para las europeas. Pero continúa completamente fuera de control y produce problemas para otros países europeos como España.

El problema de los residuos en diferentes zonas del país, principalmente la Campania y el Lazio se debe al total abandono del problema por las autoridades estatales y regionales. Se trata de un sector gestionado mayoritariamente por los municipios, que en muchas ocasiones resuelven pocos problemas o forman parte de los mismos. Ante una importante falta de recursos económicos y de voluntad política firme, la importante presencia de redes de delincuencia organizada obligan a muchas de estas autoridades locales a permitir la gestión ilegal e indiferenciada de los residuos. De esta completa falta de control se benefician tanto las ya citadas redes de la delincuencia organizada como los grandes productores de residuos, especialmente los altamente contaminantes, que pueden verterlos sin necesidad de ningún tipo de control.

Muchos de los vertederos ilegales detectados en Italia contienen residuos peligrosos que pueden suponer un importante riesgo para la salud pública. La falta de control sobre el tema en Italia está permitiendo a las redes *delictivas llevar el problema fuera de sus fronteras con el flete ilegal de barcos cargados con residuos que se exportan a diferentes partes del mundo sin ningún tipo de control sobre el riesgo que dichos residuos pueden representar. Existe constancia de que algunos de estos fletes ilegales de residuos sin ningún tipo de control han llegado a vertederos situados en España y Grecia, exponiendo a las poblaciones cercanas a potenciales riesgos para la salud debido a materiales tóxicos o radioactivos y convirtiendo el grave problema de los residuos en Italia en un problema internacional de enorme riesgo para la salud pública.*

¿Está la Comisión informada sobre los fletes ilegales de barcos cargados de residuos no controlados en los puertos italianos? *¿Cuántos estima que se han producido?*

¿Está la Comisión controlando el destino de dichos fletes, *así como la procedencia de los residuos en los vertederos españoles y griegos? ¿Cuántas descargas de residuos de Italia estima la Comisión que se han producido en España? ¿En qué lugares del país?*

Ante el riesgo potencial de los residuos italianos, *¿está considerando la Comisión la posibilidad de detener e impedir la salida de este tipo de barcos, así como la recepción de dichos residuos por otros Estados miembros?*

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de marzo de 2013)

La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de que se realicen transportes ilegales de residuos en barco desde puertos italianos a vertederos españoles y griegos y no puede por tanto facilitar información precisa sobre este asunto.

Corresponde a los Estados miembros velar por la prevención y detección de cualquier traslado ilegal ([1]), particularmente inspeccionando establecimientos y empresas y sujetando a controles sobre el terreno los traslados de residuos. La Comisión está estudiando actualmente la posibilidad de adoptar medidas legislativas para reforzar los requisitos aplicables a la inspección de esos traslados.

En caso de que reciba información documentada sobre traslados ilegales que se estén realizando o que se proyecte realizar en un Estado miembro, la Comisión procederá a investigar la situación con las autoridades nacionales de ese país y, si detectare alguna infracción, adoptará las medidas que se impongan de conformidad con los Tratados.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1013/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 14 de junio de 2006, relativo a los traslados de residuos (DO L 190 de 12.7.2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000301/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Unsorted Italian waste imported into Spain

Italy's major waste-management problem has long been a focus of attention for the Italian and EU authorities. However, it is still completely out of control and is causing problems for other European countries such as Spain.

The waste problem in different parts of the country, mainly Campania and Lazio, is caused by the state and regional authorities' total neglect of the problem. This sector is mainly managed by the municipal authorities, which often resolve few problems or form part of them. Due to a serious lack of economic resources and strong political will, the significant presence of organised crime networks forces many of these local authorities to allow illegal and indiscriminate waste management. This complete lack of control benefits both these organised crime networks and large producers of waste, particularly highly polluting waste, who can dump it as they please.

Many of Italy's illegal landfill sites contain hazardous waste that may pose a significant public health risk. Italy's lack of control in this area is allowing criminal networks to take the problem further afield, by illegally transporting waste in ships and exporting it to different parts of the world, with no type of control on the risks that it may pose. There is evidence that some of this illegal and unregulated waste has ended up in landfill sites in Spain and Greece, exposing local populations to potential health risks due to toxic and radioactive materials, and turning Italy's serious waste problem into an international problem with huge public health implications.

Is the Commission aware of the illegal transportation of unregulated waste in ships sailing from Italian ports? How much waste does it estimate has been transported?

Is the Commission monitoring the destination of this waste, as well as the source of the waste in Spanish and Greek landfill sites? How many loads of Italian waste does it estimate to have been dumped in Spain? Where in Spain has this dumping occurred?

Given the potential risk of Italian waste, is the Commission considering the possibility of detaining these kinds of ships and preventing them from leaving port, as well as preventing other Member States from receiving this waste?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

The Commission is not aware of illegal transportation of waste by ships from Italian ports to Spanish and Greek landfills. It is therefore unable to provide detailed information about it.

It falls to Member States to ensure the prevention and detection of illegal shipments ([1]), notably by providing for inspections of establishments and undertakings and for spot checks on shipments of waste. The Commission is currently considering possible legislative measures to reinforce requirements on waste shipment inspections.

If the Commission receives documented information regarding an illegal shipment, or plans thereof, taking place in a Member State, it will take the step to verify the situation with the respective national authorities. In case of violation, the Commission will take appropriate action in accordance with Treaties.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste, OJ L 190, 12.7.2006.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000302/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άρση αντισυνταγματικών διατάξεων στην Ελλάδα

Ανώτατο δικαστήριο της Ελλάδας (Ελεγκτικό Συνέδριο) έκρινε ως αντισυνταγματικές διατάξεις του ν. 4093/2012 και αφορούν σε θέματα συνταξιοδότησης. Οι δικαστές θεώρησαν ότι οι εν λόγω διατάξεις προσκρούουν στην συνταγματική υποχρέωση σεβασμού και προστασίας της αξίας του ανθρώπου, στις αρχές της ισότητας και της αναλογικότητας και στην προστασία της εργασίας.

Συγκεκριμένα η Ολομέλεια του Δικαστηρίου έκρινε σχεδόν ομόφωνα:

— Αντισυνταγματική την αύξηση των ορίων ηλικίας συνταξιοδότησης, από τα 65 στα 67 χρόνια, καθώς κρίνεται «αντίθετη με την αρχή της προστατευόμενης εμπιστοσύνης».

— Αντισυνταγματικές τις ρυθμίσεις, «με τις οποίες μειώνονται, ήδη για Πέμπτη φορά από το έτος 2010, οι συντάξεις του Δημοσίου», από 5-15%.

— Αντισυνταγματική την ολοσχερή κατάργηση «των επιδομάτων εορτών Χριστουγέννων και Πάσχα, καθώς και του επιδόματος αδείας αδιακρίτως, χωρίς να λαμβάνεται μέριμνα για τους χαμηλοσυνταξιούχους τους Δημοσίου».

— Αντισυνταγματική την αύξηση των ορίων ηλικίας όσων δικαιούνται το επίδομα Κοινωνικής Αλληλεγγύης (ΕΚΑΣ), από τα 60 στα 65 χρόνια.

Με δεδομένο ότι οι ανωτέρω ρυθμίσεις, που κρίθηκαν αντισυνταγματικές, είχαν συμφωνηθεί με την Τρόικα στο πλαίσιο του μεσοπρόθεσμου προγράμματος, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει την ανωτέρω Απόφαση του Ελεγκτικού Συνεδρίου; Η άρση των αντισυνταγματικών ρυθμίσεων θα εύρισκε σύμφωνη την Επιτροπή;

2. Αν ναι, προτίθεται να συζητήσει με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση την άρση των αντισυνταγματικών ρυθμίσεων προκειμένου να μην προσβάλλεται η συνταγματική τάξη κράτους μέλους;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει υπόψη της τη συγκεκριμένη απόφαση που έχει εκδοθεί από ελληνικό Ανώτατο Διοικητικό Δικαστήριο (το Ελεγκτικό Συνέδριο), στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου. Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση έχει την υποχρέωση να διασφαλίζει τη συμμόρφωση του εθνικού δικαίου με το Ελληνικό Σύνταγμα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000302/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Suspending unconstitutional provisions in Greece

Greece's Supreme Administrative Court (the Chamber of Accounts), has ruled unconstitutional some provisions of Law 4093/2012 concerning pensions. The judges took the view that these provisions conflicted with the constitutional obligation to respect and protect human dignity, the principles of equality and proportionality and the protection of labour.

Specifically, the Court, meeting in plenary sitting, ruled virtually unanimously that it was unconstitutional:

— to raise the retirement age from 65 to 67 years, as it was 'contrary to the principle of a legitimate trust;'

— to introduce measures 'which reduced state pensions — for the fifth time since 2010' — by 5-15%;

— completely to cut 'Christmas and Easter allowances, as well as leave bonuses indiscriminately, without taking in consideration those on small state pensions'; and

— to raise the age limit of those entitled to the Social Solidarity Allowance (EKAS) from 60 to 65 years.

Given that the above arrangements, which have been ruled unconstitutional, were agreed with the Troika in the medium-term programme, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of the above ruling by the Greek Supreme Administrative Court? Would it be in favour of suspending the unconstitutional provisions?

2. If so, will it discuss with the Greek Government the suspension of the unconstitutional arrangements so as not to jeopardise the constitutional order of a Member State?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the particular decision by the Greek Supreme Administrative Court (the Chamber of Accounts) that the Honourable Member refers to. The Greek Government has the obligation to ensure compliance of national law with the Greek Constitution.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000303/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(11 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τάση επιστροφών παράνομων μεταναστών

Κάθε χρόνο περίπου 500 000 παράνομοι μετανάστες συλλαμβάνονται από τις εθνικές αρχές των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ. Ο κύριος όγκος παρατηρείται, όπως είναι επόμενο, στα κράτη μέλη των οποίων τα σύνορα αποτελούν και εξωτερικά σύνορα της ΕΕ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Από τον συνολικό αριθμό παράνομων μεταναστών που συλλαμβάνεται στην ΕΕ, είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το ποσοστό των παράνομων μεταναστών που τελικώς επιστρέφει στην χώρα του;

2. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για τις κύριες εθνικότητες των ατόμων που επιστρέφονται στις χώρες τους;

3. Ποιο είναι το ποσοστό των δαπανών που αξιοποιήθηκε από το ευρωπαϊκό ταμείο επιστροφών το 2012; Παρατηρείται αυξητική τάση στην απορρόφηση των πόρων και καλύτερη υλοποίηση της συγκεκριμένης πολιτικής δράσης από τα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Μαρτίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τα πλέον πρόσφατα στοιχεία της Eurostat, το 2011 εντοπίστηκαν να διαμένουν παράνομα στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ 468 600 υπήκοοι τρίτων χωρών (505 140 το 2010). Μεταξύ αυτών, οι πρώτες πέντε χώρες ιθαγένειας (σε φθίνουσα σειρά, το 2011) ήταν: το Αφγανιστάν, το Πακιστάν, το Μαρόκο, η Τυνησία και η Αλγερία.

163 035 υπήκοοι τρίτων χωρών επέστρεψαν σε μια τρίτη χώρα, κατόπιν διαταγής εγκατάλειψης της χώρας το 2011 (197 865 το 2010). Μεταξύ αυτών, οι πρώτες πέντε χώρες ιθαγένειας (σε φθίνουσα σειρά, το 2011) ήταν: το Μαρόκο, η Σερβία, η Ινδία, η Ουκρανία, η Αλβανία.

Το κλείσιμο των πρώτων ετήσιων προγραμμάτων του 2008 στο πλαίσιο του Ταμείου Επιστροφών δείχνει ότι το ποσοστό απορρόφησης ήταν περίπου 70 τοις εκατό. Το κλείσιμο των ετήσιων προγραμμάτων 2009 είναι υπό εξέλιξη και η απορρόφηση αναμένεται να είναι υψηλότερη, δεδομένης της μεγαλύτερης πείρας που απέκτησαν με το πέρασμα του χρόνου οι σχετικές αρχές εφαρμογής των Ταμείων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000303/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Return rate of illegal migrants

Each year around 500 000 illegal migrants are arrested by the national authorities of the EU Member States. Naturally enough, most of them are located in Member States situated on EU external borders.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission indicate the percentage of illegal migrants intercepted in the EU finally returning home?

2. Can it indicate the main nationalities of the returnees?

3. What was the take-up of European Return Fund appropriations in 2012? Are there any signs of increased take-up and more effective policy implementation in this area by the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

According to the most recent Eurostat data, 468 600 third-country nationals were found to be illegally present in EU Member States in 2011 (505 140 in 2010). Amongst those, the top five countries of citizenship (in descending order, in 2011) were: Afghanistan, Pakistan, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria.

163 035 third-country nationals returned to a third country, following an order to leave in 2011 (197 865 in 2010). Amongst those, the top five countries of citizenship (in descending order, in 2011) were: Morocco, Serbia, India, Ukraine, Albania.

The closures of the first 2008 annual programmes under the Return Fund indicate that the absorption rate is approximately 70%. The closure of the 2009 annual programmes is currently ongoing and the absorption is expected to be higher given the greater experience gained over time by the relevant authorities implementing the Funds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000304/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Adoption of net neutrality principles across the European Union

Can the Commission outline its position on the adoption of net neutrality principles into law across the European Union?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The Commission is committed to maintaining the open and neutral character of the Internet. Some EU Member States have begun to adopt different approaches regarding net neutrality, ranging from non-binding instruments to specific legislation. This implies a risk of fragmentation of the Digital Single Market which should be avoided. The Commission is convinced that a common EU approach on net neutrality issues is necessary to provide regulatory certainty for citizens, operators and all other stakeholders. The traffic management investigation undertaken by BEREC (the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications) and the Commission's public consultation 'on specific aspects of transparency, traffic management and switching in an Open Internet' have provided evidence to define and address the issues at stake. NRA's have all the necessary powers of implementation under the existing legislation on electronic communication services. The Commission is currently working on recommendations which will foster a common European approach to net neutrality. It will aim at empowering end-users to make informed choices and will include guidance on transparency, switching and the responsible use of traffic management tools.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000305/13
à la Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE)
(11 janvier 2013)

Objet: Fonctionnement du système d'information Schengen — contrôle des mineurs

À partir du 1er janvier 2013, mon État membre d'élection, la République française, va supprimer les autorisations de sortie du territoire national pour les mineurs. Ce document était délivré par les mairies à la demande des parents et avait pour objet de combattre le rapt des mineurs vers l'étranger ou les fugues. La suppression de ces mesures de sécurité, qui n'a pas été décidée par tous les États membres de l'Union européenne, n'a de sens que si le système d'information Schengen fonctionne normalement. En effet, depuis 2010, les interdictions de sortie du territoire national prononcées par voie judiciaire sont systématiquement inscrites tant au fichier national français des personnes recherchées qu'au système d'information Schengen, ce qui facilite les contrôles au sein de l'espace de l'Union européenne et permet de faire barrage, a priori, par exemple, aux enlèvements parentaux et aux fugues. De plus et à la demande des forces de l'ordre françaises, le mineur qui se serait soustrait à l'autorité parentale pourra figurer sur ces fichiers.

Les citoyens européens sont donc fondés à accepter la suppression de mesures de sécurité au plan national sous réserve que des dispositifs de sécurité comparables fonctionnent de manière satisfaisante à l'échelle européenne. Or, selon certaines appréciations d'avocats spécialisés dans les enlèvements ou les fugues (voir article du journal Le Figaro du 31 décembre 2012) «les frontières Schengen devraient être mieux contrôlées pour les mineurs; ce qui n'est pas le cas aujourd'hui». Or, un mineur, une fois hors du territoire de l'Union européenne, pourra difficilement être récupéré par un parent.

C'est dans ce contexte que le député européen soussigné a l'honneur de demander à la Commission son opinion sur la qualité de la surveillance des frontières Schengen tout particulièrement en ce qui concerne les mineurs. Dans l'hypothèse où la Commission considère que la surveillance des frontières Schengen doit être améliorée, peut-elle indiquer au parlementaire soussigné les mesures qu'elle envisage de prendre ou de proposer en relation avec les États membres et selon quel calendrier?

Réponse donnée par Mme Malmström au nom de la Commission
(4 mars 2013)

L'article 7 du règlement (CE) nº 562/2006 établissant un code communautaire relatif au régime de franchissement des frontières par les personnes (code frontières Schengen) dispose que toutes les personnes franchissant les frontières extérieures de l'espace Schengen, y compris les mineurs, font l'objet d'une vérification appropriée à l'entrée et à la sortie.

En plus de ces vérifications, les garde-frontières doivent accorder une attention particulière aux mineurs, que ceux-ci voyagent accompagnés ou non.

Dans le cas de mineurs accompagnés, le code frontières Schengen précise qu'il est obligatoire de vérifier «l'existence de l'autorité parentale» des accompagnateurs à l'égard des enfants, notamment lorsque l'enfant n'est accompagné que par un seul adulte, ou lorsque les garde-frontières suspectent que l'enfant a été illicitement soustrait à la garde de son tuteur légal. Dans le cas de mineurs qui voyagent non accompagnés, les garde-frontières doivent s'assurer par tous les moyens à leur disposition que les mineurs ne quittent pas le territoire contre la volonté de la ou des personne(s) investie(s) de l'autorité parentale à leur égard.

Le règlement (CE) nº 444/2009 (règlement relatif aux passeports) a introduit le principe «une personne, un passeport» en ce qui concerne les passeports délivrés par les États membres et a mené à la suppression des passeports familiaux, qui étaient encore en circulation jusqu'au 26 juin 2012 dans certains États membres. Par conséquent, l'identité des enfants titulaires d'un passeport délivré par un État membre peut désormais être vérifiée avec plus de fiabilité.

Sur la base de l'article 1er dudit règlement, la Commission prévoit de présenter, au cours de cette année, un rapport sur les exigences applicables aux mineurs voyageant seuls ou accompagnés au passage des frontières extérieures des États membres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000305/13
to the Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Schengen Information System: border checks on minors

As of 1 January 2013, France has scrapped child travel consent forms. The form, which had to be obtained from local authorities by parents, was intended to make it more difficult for minors to be abducted and taken abroad or to leave the country without parental consent. Doing away with these security measures (a move which was not agreed at EU level) makes sense only if the Schengen Information System works properly. Since 2010, details of court orders banning people from leaving France have routinely been entered into both the French missing persons database and the Schengen Information System, which makes EU border checks easier to carry out and helps prevent parental child abductions and catch runaways. Furthermore, at the request of the French law enforcement authorities details of runaways can also be entered into these databases.

People in Europe should thus have no qualms about national security measures being phased as long as comparable and effective measures are in place at EU level. However, according to lawyers who specialise in cases of child abduction and children running away from home, 'although more stringent checks should be carried out on minors crossing Schengen borders, that is not the case at present' (see article of 31 December 2012 in *Le Figaro*). What is more, once minors have left the EU it is very difficult for parents to get them back.

Are the Schengen border checks satisfactory, particularly on minors? If the Commission believes that the Schengen border controls should be tightened, what measures will it take, or suggest that the Member States take, and when?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) provides that all persons crossing the external borders of the Schengen area, including minors, are subject to the appropriate border checks at entry and exit.

In addition to such checks, border guards are required to pay particular attention to minors, whether travelling accompanied or not.

With regard to accompanied minors, the Schengen Borders Code specifies that it is necessary to check whether the persons accompanying the children 'have parental custody over them'. This should, in particular, be done when the child is accompanied by only one adult, or where the border guards suspect that the child may have been unlawfully removed from the custody of the legal guardian. In the case of unaccompanied minors, borders guards should ensure by all means available that the minors do not leave the territory against the will of the persons having legal custody on them.

Regulation (EC) No 444/2009 ('Passport Regulation') introduced the principle of 'one person-one passport' with regard to passports issued by Member States and lead to the abolishment of family passports which were still in circulation until 26 June 2012 in some Member States. As a consequence, the identity of the children holding a passport issued by a Member State can now be checked in a more reliable manner.

Based on Article 1 of this regulation, the Commission plans to present, later this year, a report on the requirements for children crossing the external borders of the Member States, travelling alone or accompanied.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000306/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(11 januari 2013)

Betreft: Legalisering vrouwenbesnijdenis (vervolgvraag)

Op 10 januari 2013 heeft mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-010476/2012.

In voornoemde vraag betrof het het volgende:

Mohamed Kandeel, lid van de Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research, pleit voor het juridisch legaliseren van vrouwenbesnijdenis. Hij noemt het huidige verbod op vrouwenbesnijdenis „seksistisch", omdat mannenbesnijdenis wél is toegestaan. Opvallend is dat de Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research nauwe banden heeft met de World Health Organization, die voor haar werkzaamheden en onderzoeken gelden van de EU ontvangt. ([1])

Op één van de gestelde subvragen heeft mevrouw Reding echter nog geen antwoord gegeven. Hierbij het vriendelijke verzoek dat alsnog te doen:

Hoe ervaart de Commissie het dat Mohamed Kandeel — lid van de Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research, nauw verbonden met de mede door de EU gefinancierde World Health Organization — pleit voor de legalisatie van vrouwenbesnijdenis? Verwerpt de Commissie dit? Zo neen, waarom niet? Zo ja, is de Commissie bereid hier gevolg aan te geven — óf door ervoor te zorgen dat de World Health Organization per direct haar banden met de Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research verbreekt, óf door ervoor te zorgen dat de financiering van de World Health Organization door de EU per direct wordt stopgezet? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(19 februari 2013)

Er is een brede consensus binnen de EU dat vrouwelijke genitale verminking (VGM) een schending van de mensenrechten en van de rechten van het kind is. Voor zover de Commissie bekend is, staat de heer Kandeel alleen in zijn opvattingen, die niet in overeenstemming zijn met het standpunt van de Wereldgezondheidsorganisatie.

([1]) http://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article111030661/Mediziner-will-Vaginal-Beschneidung-legalisieren.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000306/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Legalisation of female circumcision (follow-up question)

On 10 January 2013, Ms Reding answered Written Question E-010476/2012 on behalf of the Commission.

The subject of that question was as follows:

Mohamed Kandeel, a member of the Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research, advocates legalising female circumcision. He calls the current ban on female circumcision 'sexist', because male circumcision is permitted. It is worth noting that the Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research has close links with the World Health Organisation, which receives funding from the EU for its research and other work.

However, Ms Reding has not yet replied to one part of the question. I should appreciate it if that part could also now be answered:

What view does the Commission take of the fact that Mohamed Kandeel — a member of the Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research, closely associated with the World Health Organisation, which receives part of its funding from the EU — advocates legalising female circumcision? Does the Commission reject this? If not, why not? If so, will the Commission act on its opinion, by ensuring either that the World Health Organisation immediately severs its ties with the Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research or that the EU's funding of the World Health Organisation is immediately halted? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

There is a broad agreement in the EU on defining female genital mutilation (FGM) as a human rights' violation and a violation of the rights of the child. As far as the Commission is aware, Mr Kandeel holds isolated opinions, which do not reflect the position of the World Health Organisation.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000307/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(11 januari 2013)

Betreft: Testmethodes auto's

Op 11 januari 2013 berichtte de Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (NOS) dat auto's ruim 35 % meer brandstof verbruiken dan fabrikanten beweren, zoals blijkt uit een onderzoek van TNO en Travelcard. Hoe zuiniger een auto op papier, hoe groter het verschil tussen theoretisch verbruik en werkelijk verbruik. Daardoor stoten auto's ook veel meer CO_2 uit dan op papier beweerd wordt.

Deze discrepantie tussen theoretisch en werkelijk verbruik is het gevolg van flexibiliteit in de meetmethodes die fabrikanten hanteren bij het vaststellen van het normverbruik. Het normverbruik wordt gemeten via een meetmethode die op Europees niveau vastgelegd is in een typegoedkeuringssysteem dat een permanente controle uitoefent op de overeenstemming van de productie in Europa. Daarbij ontvangt de fabrikant een certificaat waaruit blijkt dat de auto overeenstemt met het goedgekeurde type en voldoet aan bepaalde voorwaarden, bijvoorbeeld inzake brandstofverbruik. De resultaten van deze testmethodes blijken dus niet overeen te stemmen met de werkelijkheid.

1. Erkent de Commissie dat de testmethode volgens het typegoedkeuringssysteem een resultaat weergeeft dat afwijkt van de werkelijkheid?

2. Wanneer zal de Commissie een voorstel doen voor een nieuwe testmethode voor voertuigen?

3. Zal de Commissie erop dat toezien dat bij het vastleggen van nieuwe regels rond testmethodes van voertuigen het resultaat aangaande energieverbruik overeenkomt met het werkelijke verbruik?

4. Houdt de Commissie bij het voorstellen van nieuwe regelgeving, zoals het vaststellen van nieuwe CO_2 waarden voor auto's, rekening met een vaste marge van afwijking in de testmethode?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(20 februari 2013)

Typegoedkeuringstests zijn erop gericht om herhaalbaar, betrouwbaar, reproduceerbaar en onderling vergelijkbaar te zijn. Ze komen niet strikt overeen met het brandstofverbruik in werkelijke rijomstandigheden, aangezien dat afhangt van verschillende factoren zoals het rijgedrag van de bestuurder en de energievraag van bijkomende apparatuur. De huidige testcyclus bestaat al meer dan 20 jaar en omdat de technologie en de rijpatronen in die periode gewijzigd zijn, is de Commissie betrokken bij de ontwikkeling van een nieuwe „World Light Duty Test"-procedure (WLTP). Daarin zal het rijgedrag beter tot uiting komen aangezien de testcyclus meer gevarieerd is (bv. hogere maximumsnelheid en hogere accelaraties) en daarnaast zullen de fabrikanten minder flexibel te werk kunnen gaan bij het meten van het brandstofverbruik (zoals blijkt uit een studie van de Commissie ([1])).

Het is de bedoeling van de Commissie dat de WLTP als EU-wetgeving zal worden vastgesteld als ze klaar is, wat vermoedelijk in 2014 zal zijn. Er moet echter worden overeengekomen vanaf welke datum het gebruik van de WLTP verplicht zou zijn.

Er wordt verwacht dat de tenuitvoerlegging van de WLTP de kloof tussen het aangegeven en het werkelijke brandstofverbruik zal kunnen verminderen zodat er meer betrouwbare informatie aan de consumenten en de wetgevers kan worden gegeven.

([1]) "Supporting Analysis regarding Test Procedure Flexibilities and Technology Deployment for Review of the Light Duty Vehicle CO_2 Regulations": http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/vehicles/cars/docs/report_2012_en.pdf

De Commissie heeft onlangs voorstellen gedaan voor verordeningen om de CO_2-doelstellingen voor 2020 voor personenauto's en lichte bedrijfsvoertuigen vast te stellen. In die voorstellen werden geen voorzieningen getroffen voor de toenemende discrepantie tussen de testcyclus en de werkelijke emissies. Bij het bepalen van de in de analyse gebruikte kostencurves werd echter wel rekening gehouden met de onverklaarde vermindering van CO_2-emissies in de testcycli. De lopende werkzaamheden met betrekking tot de testprocedure zijn er eerder op gericht om de resultaten dichter bij de werkelijke rijomstandigheden te brengen dan een „afwijkingslimiet" vast te stellen tussen de testresultaten en het door bestuurders gerapporteerde brandstofverbruik.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000307/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Test methods for cars

On 11 January 2013, the Netherlands Broadcasting Foundation (NOS) reported that cars use over 35% more fuel than manufacturers claim, a fact demonstrated by research by TNO and Travelcard. The more economical a car is to run, on paper, the greater the discrepancy between its theoretical and actual fuel consumption. As a result, cars also emit far more CO_2 than is claimed.

This discrepancy between theoretical and actual consumption is due to flexibility in the measuring methods used by manufacturers to establish standard consumption. Standard consumption is measured using a method which is stipulated at European level in a type approval system which constantly monitors whether production in Europe is compliant. The manufacturer is issued with a certificate indicating that the car accords with the approved type and complies with certain conditions, for example regarding fuel consumption. In fact, the results of these test methods do not accord with reality.

1. Does the Commission recognise that the test method used in the type approval system produces a result which deviates from reality?

2. When will the Commission submit a proposal for a new test method for vehicles?

3. Will the Commission ensure that, when new rules are laid down on test methods for vehicles, the result that emerges from them regarding energy consumption accords with actual consumption?

4. In proposing new regulation, for example to set new CO_2 values for cars, will the Commission provide for a fixed margin of deviation in the test method?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

Type approval tests aim to be repeatable, reliable, reproducible and comparable. They do not strictly represent real world driving fuel consumption as this depends on many factors including driver behaviour and auxiliary device energy demand. The current test cycle is over 20 years old and in view of changes in technology and driving patterns in that time the Commission is involved with developing a new World Light Duty Test Procedure (WLTP). This will better reflect driver behaviour since the test cycle is more diverse (e.g. increased top speed and higher accelerations) and reduce flexibilities which could have been used by manufacturers when measuring fuel consumption (as demonstrated in a Commission study ([1])).

The Commission's intention is that the WLTP be adopted in EC law when ready and this is believed to take place in 2014. However, it needs to be agreed from which dates the use of WLTP would be mandatory.

It is expected that implementation of the WLTP will enable the gap between declared and actual fuel consumption to be reduced thus providing more reliable information to the consumers and legislators.

The Commission has recently made proposals for Regulations to establish 2020 CO_2 targets for cars and light commercial vehicles. In those proposals it did not make allowance for the increasing divergence between test cycle and real world emissions. However, the unexplained reductions in test cycle CO_2 emisisons were taken into account in determining the cost curves used in the analysis. The current work on the test procedure aims to bring the results closer to real life driving rather than setting a 'divergence limit' between the test results and fuel consumption reported by drivers.

([1]) 'Supporting Analysis regarding Test Procedure Flexibilities and Technology Deployment for Review of the Light Duty Vehicle CO_2 Regulations' http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/vehicles/cars/docs/report_2012_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000308/13
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: EC law on airline baggage fees

I understand that the Hungarian airline Wizzair has recently announced that it will begin charging customers a fee for hand luggage over a certain size.

At the same time, the Malaga Prosecution Office is considering legal action against airlines that charge baggage fees, on the basis that Spanish air navigation law states that airlines must carry a passenger's baggage as part of the price of their flight ticket.

Can the Commission confirm:

1. whether charges for hand luggage of any size are permissible under EC law;

2. whether charging passengers separately for checked luggage is permissible under EC law;

3. that Spanish navigation law on baggage charges applies to all airlines operating in the country, regardless of where they are based?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

Questions 1-2:

The Air Services Regulation (EC) 1008/2008 ([1]) stipulates the pricing freedom of air carriers, clarifies that 'air fares' mean the prices expressed in euro or in local currency to be paid to air carriers for the carriage and sets the conditions under which those prices shall be applied when offered or published in any form.

In this respect, the regulation — in its Art. 23(1) — specifies that '(a) air fare or air rate; (b) taxes; (c) airport charges; and (d) other charges, surcharges or fees, such as those related to security or fuel' shall always be indicated and included in the final price and *optional price supplements — such as fee for baggage –,"*shall be communicated in a clear, transparent and unambiguous way at the start of any booking process and their acceptance by the customer shall be on an 'opt-in' basis."

Under these circumstances, the Commission services are of the opinion that charging for hand luggage of any size is permissible given that the above price transparency provisions are applied.

Questions 3:

The Commission is aware of the situation in Spain depicted and its services are currently investigating it. Besides, a recent request for a preliminary ruling sent by the Court of Ourense to the Court of Justice of the EU on 23/10/2012 on the same subject — currently being processed by the Court of Justice (Case C-487/12).

([1]) OJ L 293, 31.10.2008.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000309/13
an die Kommission
Doris Pack (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE) und Anni Podimata (S&D)
(11. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Ausführung von Posten 16 04 02 01 in Einzelplan III des Haushaltsplans der EU für 2013

In Posten 16 04 02 01 („Schriftliche Veröffentlichungen, Online-Veröffentlichungen und Kommunikationsmittel") in Einzelplan III des Haushaltsplans der Europäischen Union 2013 sind unter anderem die Herstellung und der Vertrieb des Europa-Schülerkalenders 2013/2014 vorgesehen.

1. Wie beabsichtigt die Kommission, diese Aufgabe in die Tat umzusetzen?

2. Wie wird sie angesichts der Kürze der Zeit sicherstellen, dass die Europa-Schülerkalender rechtzeitig hergestellt und verteilt werden?

3. Wird die Kommission — was den Inhalt und die Zusammenarbeit mit der zuständigen NRO betrifft — auf den früheren Ausgaben des Europa-Schülerkalenders, die bis einschließlich des Schuljahres 2011/2012 mit großem Erfolg verteilt wurden, aufbauen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(28. Februar 2013)

Nach einer unabhängigen Evaluierung im Jahr 2011 beschloss die Kommission den Inhalt des Europa-Schülerkalenders ab September 2012 in einem nutzerfreundlichen Online-Format zu veröffentlichen. Damit steht der Kalender allen interessierten Schulen zur Verfügung, die Aktualisierung ist einfacher und Lehrkräfte können sich ausgewählte Seiten je nach Bedarf für den Unterricht ausdrucken.

Auch die 2012 unter Lehrkräften durchgeführte Fokusgruppenbefragung hat eine Nachfrage nach Online-Lehrmaterialien und einer interaktiven Community-Website ergeben, auf der sich Lehrkräfte über praxiserprobte Vorgangsweisen austauschen können.

Die Papierversion mit Kalenderblättern wurde eingestellt, da die Evaluierung 2011 mangelnde Kosteneffizienz ergeben hatte. Die Kommission hat die Schulen, die bis dahin den Kalender in der Papierversion erhalten haben, über diese Änderung informiert; die Schulen haben diese Verschiebung zu Online-Maßnahmen allgemein akzeptiert oder sogar begrüßt.

Im Arbeitsprogramm für 2013 ist vorgesehen, den Inhalt der Online-Version des Europa-Schülerkalenders zu aktualisieren.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000309/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Doris Pack (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE) και Anni Podimata (S&D)
(11 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή της θέσης 16 04 02 01 στο τμήμα III του προϋπολογισμού της ΕΕ για το 2013

Η θέση 16 04 02 01 («Διαδικτυακές και γραπτές πληροφορίες και εργαλεία επικοινωνίας») στο τμήμα III του προϋπολογισμού της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για το 2013, προβλέπει, μεταξύ άλλων, «την παραγωγή και διανομή του ημερολόγιο Europa για τους μαθητές 2013/2014».

1. Πώς προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να εφαρμόσει αυτό το έργο;

2. Με δεδομένη την πίεση του χρόνου, πώς θα εξασφαλιστεί ότι το ημερολόγιο Europa μπορεί να παραχθεί και να διανεμηθεί έγκαιρα;

3. Όσον αφορά το περιεχόμενο και τη συνεργασία με τις σχετικές ΜΚΟ, σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να βασιστεί στις προηγούμενες εκδόσεις του ημερολόγιο Europa, που διανεμήθηκαν με μεγάλη επιτυχία μέχρι και το σχολικό έτος 2011/2012;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Ύστερα από μια ανεξάρτητη αξιολόγηση το 2011, η Επιτροπή αποφάσισε να δημοσιεύσει από τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2012, το περιεχόμενο του ημερολογίου Europa σε μια εύχρηστη ηλεκτρονική μορφή. Κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο, το ημερολόγιο καθίσταται διαθέσιμο σε όλα τα ενδιαφερόμενα σχολεία, επικαιροποιείται πιο εύκολα και επιτρέπει στους εκπαιδευτικούς να τυπώσουν τις επιλεγμένες σελίδες για τα μαθήματα, εφόσον απαιτείται.

Η έρευνα μιας ομάδας εστίασης μεταξύ των εκπαιδευτικών το 2012, υπογράμμισε περαιτέρω την ανάγκη ύπαρξης διδακτικού υλικού στο διαδίκτυο, καθώς και ενός διαδραστικού κοινοτικού ιστοτόπου, με σκοπό να διευκολυνθεί η ανταλλαγή ορθών πρακτικών μεταξύ των εκπαιδευτικών.

Η έντυπη μορφή με τις σελίδες του ημερολογίου καταργήθηκε, διότι η εκτίμηση του 2011 έδειξε ότι δεν ήταν αποδοτική. Η Επιτροπή ενημέρωσε τα σχολεία, τα οποία είχαν λάβει προηγουμένως τα ημερολόγια σε έντυπη μορφή για αυτές τις αλλαγές και τα οποία γενικά αποδέστηκαν ή χαιρέτησαν τη μετάβαση σε ενέργειες στο διαδίκτυο.

Το πρόγραμμα εργασίας για το 2013 προβλέπει επικαιροποίηση της διαδικτυακής εκδοχής του περιεχομένου του ημερολογίου Europa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000309/13
to the Commission
Doris Pack (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE) and Anni Podimata (S&D)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Implementation of item 16 04 02 01 in section III of the EU budget for 2013

Item 16 04 02 01 ('*Online and written information and communication tools*') in section III of the European Union budget for 2013 provides for, among other things, 'the production and distribution of the 2013/2014 Europa Diary for school pupils'.

1. How does the Commission intend to implement this task?

2. Given the time pressure, how will it make sure that the Europa Diary can be produced and distributed in time?

3. As regards content and cooperation with the relevant NGO, will the Commission build on previous editions of the Europa Diary, which were distributed with great success up to and including the 2011/2012 school year?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

Following an independent evaluation in 2011, the Commission decided to publish the Europa Diary content in a user-friendly online format as of September 2012. This makes it available to all interested schools, easier to update and allows teachers to print selected pages for lessons as necessary.

Focus group research amongst teachers in 2012 has further underlined the demand for online teaching materials and an interactive community website to facilitate exchange of best practice between teachers.

The print version with calendar pages was discontinued because the 2011evaluation showed it was not cost-effective. The Commission has informed the schools that formerly received the print diaries of these changes, and they have generally accepted or welcomed the shift to online actions.

The work programme for 2013 foresees an update of the online version of the Europa Diary content.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000311/13
do Komisji
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wdrożenie jednolitej europejskiej przestrzeni powietrznej

Od lat 90. ubiegłego wieku obserwujemy zdecydowany wzrost ruchu lotniczego nad Europą. W czasie ostatnich dwóch dekad uległ on podwojeniu – każdego dnia nad Wspólnotą realizowanych jest około 26 tysięcy lotów pasażerskich. Według wyliczeń ekspertów do roku 2030 liczba ta ulegnie kolejnemu podwojeniu.

Niestety rozwój nowoczesnych systemów zarządzania ruchem powietrznym nie ma bezpośredniego przełożenia na jego efektywność. Przyczyna jest znana: fragmentaryzacja obszaru powietrznego nad Unią Europejską. Rok 2013 miał być ważnym punktem w historii zarządzania europejskim lotnictwem. Projekt jednolitej europejskiej przestrzeni powietrznej zakłada potrojenie przepustowości przestrzeni powietrznej, dziesięciokrotną poprawę poziomu bezpieczeństwa, ograniczenie o 10 % negatywnego wpływu lotnictwa na środowisko naturalne oraz zmniejszenie o 50 % kosztów zarządzania ruchem lotniczym.

Do 4 grudnia ubiegłego roku miało powstać w Europie dziewięć funkcjonalnych bloków przestrzeni powietrznej. Niestety państwa członkowskie w przypadku większości FAB-ów nie były zdolne do zapewnienia ich pełnej operacyjności i poszczególne komponenty SES nie zostały uruchomione.

Odnosząc się do opisanej wyżej sytuacji:

1. Co według Komisji, na podstawie informacji przekazanych przez państwa członkowskie, stało się główną przyczyną opóźnień we wdrażaniu nowych wytycznych dotyczących zarządzania ruchem lotniczym w UE?

2. Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja względem państw członkowskich, które nie utworzyły funkcjonalnych bloków przestrzeni powietrznej w przewidzianym terminie?

3. Czy Komisja rozważa wyznaczenie nowego terminu dla państw członkowskich do utworzenia i uruchomienia funkcjonalnych bloków przestrzeni powietrznej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącego Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(21 lutego 2013 r.)

1. Zdaniem Komisji główną przyczyną opóźnień we wdrażaniu funkcjonalnych bloków przestrzeni powietrznej (FAB) jest ich oddolna struktura, w ramach której państwa członkowskie decydowały, które bloki wdrożyć do dnia 4 grudnia 2012 r. i w jaki sposób. Taka sytuacja skutkuje uprzywilejowaniem interesów krajowych, w tym interesów krajowych instytucji zapewniających służby żeglugi powietrznej, ze szkodą dla celów w zakresie jednolitej europejskiej przestrzeni powietrznej.

2. Obecnie Komisja rozważa uruchomienie pierwszego etapu postępowania w sprawie uchybienia zobowiązaniom państwa członkowskiego przeciwko państwom członkowskim, które nie spełniły wszystkich wymogów regulacyjnych dotyczących FAB.

3. Wszystkie wymogi regulacyjne dotyczące FAB pozostają w mocy od dnia 4 grudnia 2012 r. zgodnie z art. 9a rozporządzenia (WE) nr 550/2004, pomimo że państwa członkowskie nie spełniły ich w pełni w danym terminie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000311/13
to the Commission
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the Single European Sky

Since the 1990s, we have seen significant growth in air traffic over Europe. It has doubled over the past two decades, and now there are around 26 000 passenger flights over the European Union every day. Experts believe that this figure will double again by 2030.

Unfortunately, the development of modern systems for managing air traffic has not led to a direct increase in its efficiency. It is well known that this is due to the fragmented nature of the EU's airspace. The intention was for 2013 to be an important year in the history of managing European aviation. The plan for a Single European Sky involves tripling airspace capacity, improving safety by a factor of ten, reducing the impact of aviation on the environment by 10 % and reducing the costs of air traffic management by 50 %.

A deadline of 4 December 2012 had been set for the implementation of nine Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) in Europe. Unfortunately, the Member States were not able to ensure the full operational capability of most FABs, and certain components of the Single European Sky have not been implemented.

1. In the Commission's opinion and on the basis of information provided by the Member States, what was the main cause of the delays in implementing the new guidelines on air traffic management in the EU?

2. What steps does it intend to take with respect to Member States which did not establish FABs by the deadline?

3. Is it considering setting a new deadline by which Member States must establish and implement operational FABs?

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

1. The Commission believes that the main reason for the delays in implementing the Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) is their current bottom-up design, whereby Member States chose which FABs to implement by 4 December 2012 and how to implement them. This has tended to favour national interests, including those of national air navigation service providers, to the detriment of Single European Sky objectives.

2. The Commission is currently considering launching the first stage of infringement procedures against those Member States which have not met all regulatory requirements on FABs.

3. All regulatory requirements regarding FABs remain in force from 4 December 2012 as enshrined in Article 9a of Regulation (EC) No 550/2004, despite Member States' failure to meet them in full by that deadline.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000312/13
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(11 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Pomoc finansowa dla Pakistanu

Do obowiązków każdego rządu należy umożliwienie wszystkim chłopcom i dziewczynkom korzystania z bezpłatnej edukacji. Wszystkie rządy powinny publicznie potępiać przemoc i znęcanie się. W dniu 26 października 2012 r. Parlament przyjął rezolucję w sprawie dyskryminacji dziewcząt w Pakistanie, w szczególności sprawy Malali Yousafazai, pakistańskiej aktywistki, która odniosła poważne rany i była maltretowana. Talibowie nadal grożą śmiercią jej koleżankom szkolnym i działaczkom w Pakistanie.

Sprawa tej młodej dziewczyny po raz kolejny podkreśliła, jak ważne jest, aby zapewnić dzieciom, zwłaszcza dziewczynkom, dostęp do edukacji. Unia Europejska przyznała Pakistanowi fundusze i zobowiązała się do niesienia temu państwu pomocy w kilku dziedzinach, między innymi w dziedzinie szkolnictwa i zwalczania maltretowania, jak podkreślono w dokumencie strategicznym na lata 2007-2013 dotyczącym Pakistanu.

1. Jakie kroki zamierza poczynić Komisja, aby uzyskać od Pakistanu wyjaśnienia, jak wykorzystał fundusze otrzymane od UE w celu objęcia bezpłatną edukacją wszystkich chłopców i wszystkie dziewczynki?

2. Czy Komisja może również wyjaśnić, jak zamierza zadbać o to, aby pieniądze europejskich podatników nie poszły na marne?

3. Czy Komisja zaproponowała rządowi Pakistanu spotkanie, na którym podkreśliłaby prawo wszystkich pakistańskich chłopców i dziewczynek do korzystania z bezpłatnej i równej edukacji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(20 lutego 2013 r.)

W sprawie pytań 1 i 2 Komisja odsyła Szanownego Pana Posła do swojej odpowiedzi na pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie E-10714/2012 ([1]).

We wszystkich działaniach prowadzonych w Pakistanie Komisja zwraca szczególną uwagę na dostęp do edukacji; jest to w istocie główny komponent pomocy rozwojowej udzielanej Pakistanowi przez UE. Kwestia prawa do bezpłatnego i równego dostępu do edukacji dla wszystkich pakistańskich dziewcząt i chłopców stanowi już teraz element regularnego i stałego dialogu politycznego prowadzonego pomiędzy UE a Pakistanem, a także dialogu politycznego na temat edukacji. Obecnie rząd opracowuje podstawę prawną do wprowadzenia bezpłatnego szkolnictwa. Art. 25-A 18. poprawki do konstytucji przewiduje konieczność zapewnienia bezpłatnego i obowiązkowego kształcenia dla dzieci w wieku 5-16 lat. Obydwie prowincje otrzymujące z UE wsparcie dla sektora edukacji przygotowują się do transpozycji tego wymogu do ich ustawodawstwa. Władze prowincji Sindh zakończyły prace nad projektem ustawy prowincji Sindh z 2013 r. w sprawie przysługującego dzieciom prawa do bezpłatnego i obowiązkowego kształcenia. Projekt ten zostanie przedłożony lokalnemu zgromadzeniu. Podobny projekt został już przedstawiony zgromadzeniu prowincji Chajber Pachtunchwa, które poprosiło o przedstawienie obliczeń w zakresie wiążących się z nim skutków finansowych. Za kilka tygodni projekt ustawy ma zostać ponownie poddany pod obrady zgromadzenia.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pl/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000312/13
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(11 January 2013)

Subject: Financial aid for Pakistan

It is the responsibility of all governments to provide free access to education for all boys and girls. All governments should publicly condemn violence and abuse. Parliament adopted a resolution on 26 October 2012 on the case of Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani activist who received horrific injuries and has been subjected to abuse; the Taliban are continuing to make death threats to her female schoolmates and campaigners in her home country.

The case of this young girl has once again highlighted how essential it is to ensure access to education for children, especially girls. The EU has allocated funds and committed itself to aiding Pakistan in several areas, one of which is education and the fight against abuse, as outlined in the Country Strategy Paper for 2007-2013.

1. What steps has the Commission taken to hold Pakistan accountable for the EU funds it has received for the purpose of extending free education to all boys and girls?

2. Can the Commission also explain how it intends to ensure that EU taxpayers' money is not spent in vain?

3. Is the Commission proposing to meet with the Pakistani Government to insist on the right to free and equal education for all Pakistani girls and boys?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

Concerning questions 1 and 2, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answer to Written Question E-10714/2012 ([1]).

In all its work in Pakistan the Commission pays particular attention to access to education; indeed it is a major component of the EU's development assistance to Pakistan. The issue of the right to free and equal education for all Pakistani girls and boys is already part of the regular and ongoing EU-Pakistan political dialogue and education policy dialogue. The legal basis for free education is currently being prepared by the Government. Article 25-A of the 18th Constitutional Amendment requires the provision of free and compulsory education for children from 5-16 years of age. Both provinces that the EU supports in the education sector are preparing the legal transposition of this requirement into their legislation. The Sindh Government has finalised the draft Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Sindh Bill 2013, which will be tabled in the Sindh Assembly. A similar bill has been presented to the provincial assembly in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, which has requested a calculation of the financial implications. The bill is expected to be tabled again in a few weeks.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-000313/13
à Comissão
Elisa Ferreira (S&D)
(14 de janeiro de 2013)

Assunto: Participação do Estado português na operação de recapitalização do BANIF — Banco Internacional do Funchal, S.A.

Considerando:

— o «Memorando de Entendimento sobre as condicionalidades de política económica», que descreve as condições gerais da politica económica tal como contidas na Decisão do Conselho sobre a concessão de assistência financeira da União Europeia a Portugal, nos termos do qual (ponto 2.4 do referido Memorando)

«Na eventualidade de os bancos não conseguirem atingir atempadamente os novos requisitos de capital, a necessidade de assegurar níveis de capital mais elevados poderá temporariamente requerer a utilização de fundos públicos no aumento dos níveis de capital dos bancos privados. Para este efeito, as autoridades reforçarão o mecanismo de apoio à solvabilidade bancária, de acordo com as regras dos auxílios de Estado da UE, com recursos até ao montante de 12 mil milhões de euros disponibilizados ao abrigo do programa; (…)» e

— o comunicado do Ministério das Finanças português de 31 de dezembro de 2012, em que é apresentado o plano de recapitalização do BANIF — Banco Internacional do Funchal, S.A., com os seguintes pontos principais:

«(…) A injeção de fundos públicos no Banif ascende a 1,1 mil milhões de euros e será realizada através do recurso à linha de recapitalização disponível ao abrigo do Programa de Assistência Económica e Financeira a Portugal. Após esta injeção de capital, um total de 5,6 mil milhões de euros terá sido injetado no sistema bancário privado português (…)»:

— Terá a Comissão, na qualidade de instituição responsável pela monitorização da implementação das «condicionalidades de política económica» constantes do referido Memorando de Entendimento ao longo dos três anos de duração do programa, analisado os potenciais custos e benefícios da supra descrita participação do Estado português na operação de recapitalização do BANIF — Banco Internacional do Funchal, S.A.?

— Sabendo que a utilização destes fundos implica o aumento das responsabilidades do Estado português, avaliou os possíveis riscos para os contribuintes e os custos de oportunidade deste investimento, atendendo especialmente às políticas de consolidação orçamental que têm imposto onerosos esforços aos mais diversos agentes mas principalmente aos contribuintes?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(6 de fevereiro de 2013)

A Comissão, o Banco Central Europeu e o Fundo Monetário Internacional, juntamente com o Governo português e o Banco de Portugal, analisaram os riscos e os benefícios para a República Portuguesa antes da participação na recapitalização do Banif.

À semelhança das recapitalizações de outros grandes bancos portugueses, a Comissão, em colaboração com os seus parceiros e contrapartes supramencionados, avaliou cuidadosamente os potenciais riscos e benefícios para a República Portuguesa e para os seus contribuintes. Dado o instrumento de apoio à solvência dos bancos não poder ser utilizado para outros fins para além da recapitalização dos bancos, não existem quaisquer custos de oportunidade por a verba afetada de 12 mil milhões de euros não poder ser utilizada para qualquer outro efeito. Além disso, as dívidas do Estado português aumentam apenas no mínimo estritamente necessário para preservar a estabilidade financeira.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000313/13
to the Commission
Elisa Ferreira (S&D)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Portuguese state participation in recapitalising Banif — Banco Internacional do Funchal S.A.

Point 2.4 of the 'Memorandum of understanding on specific economic policy conditionality', which details the general economic policy conditions as set out in the Council decision on granting Union financial assistance to Portugal, reads as follows:

'In the event that banks cannot reach the new capital requirements on time, ensuring higher capital standards might temporarily require public provision of equity for the private banks. To that effect, the authorities will augment the bank solvency support facility, in line with EU state aid rules, with resources of up to EUR 12 billion provided under the programme. (…)'

The statement presenting the recapitalisation plan for Banif — Banco Internacional do Funchal, issued by the Portuguese Finance Ministry on 31 December 2012, contained the following main points:

'(…) The injection of public funds into Banif amounts to EUR 1.1 billion and will be carried out using the recapitalisation line available under the Economic and Financial Assistance Programme for Portugal. Following this injection of capital, a total of EUR 5.6 billion will have been injected into the Portuguese private banking system (…).'

As the institution responsible for monitoring the implementation of the 'economic policy conditions' set out in the memorandum of understanding in the course of the programme's three-year duration, has the Commission analysed the potential costs and benefits of the above participation by the Portuguese state in recapitalising Banif — Banco Internacional do Funchal S.A.?

Given that using these funds entails an increase in Portuguese state liabilities, has it assessed the possible risks for taxpayers and the opportunity costs of this investment, taking particular account of budget consolidation policies that have required huge efforts from a wide range of individuals and sectors, but chiefly from taxpayers?

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

The Commission, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, together with the Portuguese Government and the Portuguese Central Bank scrutinised the risks and benefits to the Portuguese Republic before participating in recapitalising Banif.

Similarly to the recapitalisations of other larger Portuguese banks, the Commission, together with its aforementioned partners and counterparts, carefully assessed potential risks and benefits for the Portuguese Republic and its taxpayers. As the Bank Solvency Support Facility cannot be used for other purposes than recapitalising banks, there are no opportunity costs as the earmarked EUR 12 billion cannot be spent on anything else. Furthermore, the Portuguese state's liabilities increase only by the strict minimum needed to preserve financial stability.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-000320/13
a Bizottság számára
Bánki Erik (PPE)
(2013. január 14.)

Tárgy: A „Biztonságosabb internet" program jövője

A Bizottság „Biztonságosabb internet plusz" programjának részeként Magyarország 2009 áprilisában konzorcium formájában létrehozta a Biztonságosabb Internet Központot.

A konzorcium célja a gyermekek és fiatalok védelmét szolgáló átfogó megközelítés alkalmazása a bűnözők távoltartásával, a káros tartalmak eltávolításával, valamint egy biztonságosabb online környezet kialakításának támogatásával. Mindazonáltal a jelenleg folyamatban lévő, az Unió társfinanszírozásában megvalósuló 24 hónapos projekt 2014. március 31-én lejár, azonban még sok a tennivaló, különösképpen a gyermekek elleni számítástechnikai bűnözés területén.

Tekintettel az ilyen nemzeti projektek pozitív vívmányainak és gyakorlatainak széles körű elismertségére tervezi-e a Bizottság hasonló programok támogatását a jelenleg létező vagy jövőbeni uniós finanszírozási rendszerek keretében?

Neelie Kroes válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. február 26.)

A Bizottság javaslatot terjesztett elő, hogy a jelenlegi „Biztonságosabb internet" programon alapuló kezdeményezések – amelyek a gyermekek, a szülők és a tanárok tudatos és hatékony internethasználatát szolgálják – továbbra is támogatáshoz jussanak. Amennyiben az Európai Hálózatfinanszírozási Eszköz (CEF) létrehozásáról szóló rendelet ([1]) elfogadásra kerül, és a megfelelő források is rendelkezésre állnak a rendelet távközlésre vonatkozó részének megvalósításához, előreláthatólag 2014-től megkezdődik – a Biztonságosabb Internet Központok támogatása érdekében – egy interoperábilis, az EU egészére kiterjedő szolgáltató infrastruktúra létrehozása, amelyen keresztül az online biztonsággal kapcsolatos információk és tudatosságnövelő eszközök válnak elérhetővé. Az internetes szolgáltatások biztonságosabbá tételére irányuló javaslat szerint a jelenlegi intézkedések megerősítésére, valamint újabb eszközök alkalmazására van szükség Ehhez egy olyan alapvető platform fog rendelkezésre állni, amely közös adatbázisai és szoftvereszközei révén segíti a tagállamokban működő Biztonságosabb Internet Központok tevékenységét, valamint információt és erőforrásokat nyújt minden érdekelt számára. A CEF-ről szóló javaslat azt is meghatározza, milyen általános szolgáltatásokat kell ellátniuk a Biztonságosabb Internet Központoknak, többek között ide tartozik például a forrónalak és segélyvonalak működtetése is.

([1]) COM(2011) 665 végleges http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/documents/com2011_0665_hu.pdf és COM(2011) 657 végleges http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/documents/com2011_0657_hu.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000320/13
to the Commission
Erik Bánki (PPE)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: The future of the Safer Internet Programme

As part of the Commission's Safer Internet Plus (SIP) programme, Hungary established a Safer Internet Centre in April 2009 in the form of a consortium.

The consortium's aims are to take a holistic approach to protecting children and young people by deterring offenders, removing abusive content and helping to shape a safer online environment. However, the currently running, and EU co-financed, 24-month project will expire on 31 March 2014, but there is still a lot of work to be done, especially in the field of cybercrime against children.

Given the widely acknowledged positive achievements and practices of these kinds of national projects, is the Commission planning to continue to fund such programmes under existing or future EU funding schemes?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The Commission has put forward a proposal for continued funding of actions building on current Safer Internet structures aimed at empowering children, their parents, and teachers to make the best use of the Internet. From 2014, the creation of an EU-wide interoperable service infrastructure to support the Safer Internet Centres, which provide online safety information and public awareness tools, is foreseen subject to the adoption of the regulation establishing the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) ([1]) and sufficient budget for the telecom part. The proposal for the safer Internet services recognises the need to scale up current activities and to deploy new ones and will be supported through a core platform with common databases and software tools to the Safer Internet Centres in the Member States, as well as providing information and resources to all stakeholders. The CEF proposal also provides for generic services to be deployed through the Safer Internet Centres, including actions such as the hotlines and helplines.

([1]) COM(2011) 665 final, http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/documents/com2011_0665_en.pdf and COM(2011) 657 final, http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/documents/com2011_0657_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000321/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(14 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Attuazione del divieto di utilizzare sistemi di stabulazione individuali per le scrofe, in vigore dal 1° gennaio 2013 a norma della direttiva 2008/120/CE sulla protezione dei suini

Dal 1° gennaio 2013 in tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE è vietato allevare le scrofe in gabbie individuali, ad eccezione delle prime quattro settimane di gravidanza e della settimana prima del parto. Le gabbie di gestazione, vietate in Svezia dal 1994, nel Regno Unito dal 1999 ed ora finalmente anche in tutta l'Unione, sono strutture estremamente anguste che fungono da vere e proprie prigioni per le scrofe che vi sono rinchiuse, limitandone i movimenti al punto tale che gli animali non riescono nemmeno a girarsi. I soli movimenti che la scrofa può fare sono alcuni passi avanti e indietro. Per un animale che la ricerca scientifica considera estremamente attivo, essere confinato per tutta la vita in una gabbia è profondamente limitante di tutti gli istinti naturali, come quelli di grufolare ed esplorare liberamente, di rotolarsi per rinfrescarsi, oppure di stringersi attorno ad altri suini o di usare la lettiera per riscaldarsi ([1]). L'impossibilità di svolgere tali attività genera malessere ([2]) e spesso le scrofe, prive di qualsiasi stimolo, finiscono per mordere le sbarre della gabbia per frustrazione, noia o fame. Il divieto di allevamento in gabbia per le scrofe, anche se parziale, è vitale per il benessere di questi animali, tanto più che dopo la gestazione esse sono trasferite nelle altrettanto anguste gabbie da allattamento, dove sono impossibilitate ad esprimere il loro fondamentale istinto naturale di prepararsi il giaciglio per il parto ([3]) e dove sono separate dai propri cuccioli tramite sbarre.

L'ONG *Compassion in World Farming*, molto attiva nel campo del benessere degli animali da reddito, sta conducendo la campagna *Project Pig — No stalling on 2013 ban*, proprio per far sì che tutti gli Stati membri rispettino in modo puntuale e senza alcun ritardo la direttiva 2008/120/CE sulla protezione dei suini. Infatti pare che, nonostante sia ora entrato in vigore il divieto di utilizzare le gabbie individuali per le scrofe, numerosi paesi dell'UE non vi si attengano.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione riferire:

1. quali siano i paesi UE ottemperanti alla normativa alla scadenza del 1° gennaio 2013;

2. come intenda garantire la piena e concreta applicazione della direttiva, con particolare riferimento al divieto di utilizzare gabbie individuali per le scrofe fra la quinta settimana di gravidanza e la penultima settimana prima del parto;

3. se siano previsti dei controlli a campione nei vari Stati membri a tale riguardo e quando;

4. quali azioni saranno intraprese nei confronti dei paesi UE in cui la citata direttiva e il citato divieto dovessero risultare trasgrediti, o non adeguatamente applicati?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2013)

Undici Stati membri (Austria, Bulgaria, Repubblica ceca, Estonia, Lettonia, Lituania, Lussemburgo, Romania, Slovacchia, Svezia e Regno Unito) hanno confermato di essere pienamente conformi al disposto dell'articolo 3, paragrafi 4 e 9, della direttiva 2008/120/CE del Consiglio ([4]) alla data del 1° gennaio 2013. Tra breve ci si attende che altri Stati membri si metteranno in conformità.

Ben prima dell'entrata in vigore del divieto di stabulazione individuale per le scrofe la Commissione ha intrattenuto un intenso dialogo con gli Stati membri e gli stakeholder per assicurare l'ottemperanza alle regole entro il 1° gennaio 2013. Essa intende ora avviare procedure di infrazione contro gli Stati membri che non applicano la direttiva. L'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario della Direzione generale Salute e Consumatori della Commissione realizzerà, ove necessario, controlli in loco per valutare la situazione.

([1]) Cfr. http://www.ciwf.org.uk/what_we_do/pigs/default.aspx, http://www.ciwf.org.uk/it/news/1_gennaio_2013.aspx e http://www.ciwf.org.uk/it/cosa_facciamo/campagne_suini/gabbie_di_gestazione_cosa_sono.aspx
([2]) Un fatto intuitivo, descritto anche in un parere dell'EFSA: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/efsajournal/pub/572.htm
([3]) http://www.unhappyanimal.org/diritti_animali_violati/allevamenti_intensivi/allevamenti_intensivi10.html
([4]) GU L 47 del 18.02.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000321/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Implementation of ban on individual sow stalls, in force since 1 January 2013 in accordance with Directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs

Since 1 January 2013, in all EU Member States it has been prohibited to breed sows in individual stalls, with the exception of the first four weeks of pregnancy and the week before giving birth. Sow stalls, which were banned in Sweden in 1994, in the UK in 1999 and now, at last, throughout the Union, are extremely narrow cages that act like prisons for the sows kept in them, limiting their movement to the extent that they cannot even turn around. Their movements are restricted to just a few basic steps forward or backwards. For an animal that scientific research shows to be highly active, being confined to a life in a stall is severely limiting, curtailing such natural behaviours as rooting, foraging and exploring, rolling over to cool down, huddling together with other pigs or using bedding to keep warm ([1]). The impossibility of moving around in this way causes discomfort ([2]) and often, the sows, with nothing to do, end up biting the bars of the cage out of frustration, boredom or hunger. The ban on sow stalls, even if partial, is vital for the welfare of these animals, especially since, after their pregnancies, they are moved into equally cramped farrowing crates, where they are unable to express their fundamental natural instinct to build a nest for giving birth ([3]) and where they are separated from their piglets by bars.

The NGO 'Compassion in World Farming', which is very active in the field of animal welfare for factory farm animals, is leading the campaign 'Project Pig — No stalling on 2013 ban', precisely to ensure that all Member States comply with Directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs in a timely manner and without delay. Indeed, it would appear that despite the fact that the ban on using individual sow stalls has now entered into force, many EU countries are not complying with it.

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. which EU countries have complied with the legislation that entered into force on 1 January 2013;

2. how it intends to ensure that the directive is enforced in full, with particular reference to the ban on using individual sow stalls for sows between the fifth week of pregnancy and the penultimate week before birth;

3. whether it has planned any spot checks in the Member States and when they will take place;

4. what action will be taken against those EU countries in which this directive and the prohibition in question are not being implemented, or are being inadequately implemented?

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

Eleven Member States (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) confirmed that they were fully compliant with Article 3(4) and (9) of Council Directive 2008/120/EC Article 3(4) and (9) of Council Directive 2008/120/EC ([4]) on 1 January 2013. More Member States are expected to become compliant shortly.

Well before the entry into force of the ban on individual sow stalls the Commission entered into intensive dialogue with Member States and stakeholders to ensure compliance by 1 January 2013. It intends to launch infringement proceedings against Member States that do not enforce the directive. The Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General will carry out on the spot checks as necessary to assess the situation.

([1]) http://www.ciwf.org.uk/what_we_do/pigs/default.aspx
http://www.ciwf.org.uk/it/news/1_gennaio_2013.aspx and
http://www.ciwf.org.uk/it/cosa_facciamo/campagne_suini/gabbie_di_gestazione_cosa_sono.aspx
([2]) A fact which is obvious, and is also described in an opinion by the EFSA: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/efsajournal/pub/572.htm
([3]) http://www.unhappyanimal.org/diritti_animali_violati/allevamenti_intensivi/allevamenti_intensivi10.html
([4]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000322/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(14 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Destinazione di viveri agli indigenti

Nei giorni scorsi ad Arezzo, in Toscana, si sono avute diverse segnalazioni da parte di cittadini che hanno trovato, sia all'interno di cassonetti per l'immondizia che nelle immediate vicinanze, numerose confezioni di viveri marchiate UE e destinate dalla stessa Unione europea per il sostegno alimentare alle persone indigenti; bisogna aggiungere che si trattava di merce ancora valida e perfettamente commestibile.

All'Italia viene assegnata una cospicua quota dei fondi di questo programma europeo, che risale al 1987: per l'anno 2013 saranno infatti destinati al nostro Paese circa cento milioni di euro su un totale di cinquecento, ovvero ben un quinto dell'intero ammontare.

Tuttavia è perfettamente inutile elargire questo sostegno, necessario per molte persone, se non viene accuratamente controllata l'effettiva destinazione di tali risorse.

In passato si sono avuti altri scandali in questo settore, con pacchi UE rivenduti sul mercato da persone senza scrupoli, ma quanto avvenuto ad Arezzo è peggio, trattandosi anche di un colossale spreco alimentare, senza alcuna possibilità di fruizione del cibo.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questa vicenda o di altri episodi analoghi?

Quali strumenti saranno previsti all'interno del nuovo Fondo di aiuto europeo per gli indigenti, presentato lo scorso ottobre, per evitare il ripetersi di episodi analoghi?

In Italia, nel 2012, hanno beneficiato del programma oltre tre milioni e mezzo di persone, e nell'intera Unione circa diciotto milioni di individui hanno ricevuto tale sostegno: non ritiene quindi la Commissione indispensabile fare un'immediata chiarezza e tutelare al meglio coloro che hanno realmente bisogno di questi aiuti?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(1º marzo 2013)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza dei fatti riferiti dall'onorevole parlamentare riguardanti il programma di distribuzione di derrate alimentari agli indigenti (programma MDP) in Italia.

La Commissione conviene con l'onorevole parlamentare che la distribuzione di prodotti alimentari dev'essere effettuata nel miglior modo possibile, nell'interesse dei più bisognosi. A questo proposito, in base al principio di sussidiarietà, gli Stati membri sono tenuti a garantire che gli alimenti messi a disposizione attraverso il programma di aiuto agli indigenti siano destinati all'uso e ai fini previsti dalla legislazione UE ([1]). Pertanto, spetta altresì agli Stati membri effettuare le verifiche e i controlli opportuni e sanzionare le irregolarità.

([1]) Articolo 27 del regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007 del Consiglio e regolamento (CE) n. 807/2010 della Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000322/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Destination of food supplies for the most deprived

Members of the public in Arezzo, Tuscany, have recently reported finding lots of boxes of food with EU markings either in or around rubbish bins. These boxes had come from the EU as food aid for the most deprived. It should be added that this food was still in a good condition and entirely fit to eat.

The EU food aid programme dates back to 1987 and Italy receives a substantial share of its funds. In 2013 Italy will receive around EUR 100 million out of the EUR 500 million available in total, a fifth of the total fund.

However there is no point at all in bestowing this aid, which many people rely on, if there are no proper checks on where it actually ends up.

These have been other scandals in this sector in the past, with unscrupulous people reselling EU food parcels on the market. However what has happened in Arezzo is worse, as in this case there was also a colossal waste of food which no one could benefit from.

Has the Commission heard about this and other similar incidents?

What tools will the new Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, unveiled last October, be equipped with to stop incidents of this kind re-occurring?

In 2012, over three million people in Italy benefited from the food programme and approximately 18 million people benefited across the entire EU. Would the Commission not agree therefore that the truth of this matter must be brought to light at once and the best possible protection given to those who have a real need of this aid?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the incident reported by the Honourable Member as regards the food distribution plan for the Most Deprived People (MDP) in Italy.

The Commission shares the opinion of the Honourable Member that food distribution has to be carried out in the best possible way, in the interest of the most deprived people. In this regard, according to the principle of subsidiarity, Member States have to ensure that the food products made available through the MDP are put to the use and serve the purposes laid down in the EU legislation ([1]). Member States are therefore also responsible for carrying out the appropriate checks and controls, and for penalising irregularities.

([1]) Art 27 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 and Commission Regulation No 807/2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000323/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Armonizzazione accise nel settore enologico

Il settore enologico svolge un ruolo fondamentale nell'economia e nella cultura dell'Italia, paese che si è rivelato il primo produttore di vino al mondo con poco meno di cinquanta milioni di ettolitri. Infatti, tra gli altri tipici prodotti enogastronomici, è evidente come sia il vino a far da traino all'affermazione e al potere del made in Italy all'estero. Alla luce di tali dati emerge il forte effetto negativo che le accise hanno sui prodotti vitivinicoli. Considerando che l'innovativo e-commerce ha dato nuova linfa vitale al mercato, si ritiene necessario evidenziare come l'eccessiva burocratizzazione dell'iter della vendita telematica possa limitare la crescita del commercio di tali prodotti. La medesima valutazione va fatta in tema di accise sul vino; difatti queste impongono condizioni molto restrittive, bloccando l'evoluzione dell'e-commerce in una stretta fiscale connessa alla vendita on-line di bevande alcoliche provenienti da altri paesi dell'Unione che attanaglia soprattutto il vino. In una situazione come questa non si giungerebbe di certo a implementare il mercato. Tra l'altro, nella situazione attuale si comprende l'importanza di una semplificazione del procedimento di vendita a distanza previsto dalla direttiva 2009/11/CE, cercando altresì di armonizzare la disciplina delle accise in seno all'Unione. Infatti, con questo sistema pachidermico, anziché ampliare la commercializzazione intrastatale, si rischia di immobilizzare rovinosamente una compravendita che potrebbe avere risvolti positivi atti a fronteggiare la crisi economica nella quale versiamo.

Alla luce di tutto quanto fin qui esposto, si porgono alla Commissione i seguenti quesiti:

1. Vorrebbe la Commissione analizzare il procedimento in vigore in tema di e-commerce, cercando di renderlo maggiormente fruibile per gli attori, affinché la compravendita telematica tra Stati possa erigersi a caposaldo della ripresa economica internazionale?

2. Ritiene la Commissione che sia possibile o auspicabile un'armonizzazione in tema di accise, nonché una chiarificazione in ordine alla nomenclatura combinata affinché il commercio tra Stati sia maggiormente appetibile, al fine di giungere a un'Unione europea concretamente priva di barriere od ostacoli che si frappongono a una reale libera circolazione dei beni?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(8 marzo 2013)

1. La direttiva sul commercio elettronico ([1]) ha già rimosso una serie di ostacoli ai servizi on-line transfrontalieri. L'11 gennaio 2012 la Commissione ha adottato una comunicazione dal titolo «*Un quadro coerente per rafforzare la fiducia nel mercato unico digitale del commercio elettronico e dei servizi on-line*» ([2]) che contiene un elenco esaustivo di azioni volte a promuovere ulteriormente il commercio elettronico, riguardanti questioni quali servizi di pagamento e di consegna affidabili per gli acquisti on-line che sono estremamente pertinenti per la vendita on-line di prodotti vitivinicoli.

La Commissione ha inoltre proposto di creare un gruppo di lavoro composto dai suoi servizi e da rappresentanti degli Stati membri, incaricato di riflettere su come armonizzare e semplificare le attuali disposizioni sulla conformità fiscale del quadro legislativo vigente, in particolare le disposizioni della direttiva 2008/118/CE sulle vendite a distanza dei prodotti sottoposti ad accisa.

2. La Commissione ritiene auspicabile un'ulteriore armonizzazione delle aliquote di accisa, che ridurrebbe le distorsioni nel mercato unico e faciliterebbe l'accettazione di procedure di conformità fiscale meno complesse. Qualsiasi proposta di ulteriore armonizzazione, tuttavia, deve essere approvata all'unanimità dagli Stati membri in sede di Consiglio.

La Commissione lavora costantemente con i rappresentanti degli Stati membri per risolvere i problemi posti dalle diverse interpretazioni della nomenclatura combinata in relazione alle bevande alcoliche, compreso il vino, che possono ostacolare gli scambi commerciali e dar luogo a trattamenti fiscali diversi.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/31/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'8 giugno 2000, relativa a taluni aspetti giuridici dei servizi della società dell'informazione, in particolare il commercio elettronico, nel mercato interno (GU L 178 del 17.7.2000, pag. 1).
([2]) COM(2011)942 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000323/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Harmonisation of excise duties in the wine industry

The wine industry has an essential role to play in the economy and culture of Italy, which has become the world's leading wine producer, generating just under 50 million hectolitres. Out of all the country's food and wine products, it is clear that wine has been the driving force behind the power and success of Italian products overseas. Despite this, it is becoming clear that excise duties have a markedly negative effect on wine products. Ground-breaking e-commerce has given the market a new lifeline but the excessively bureaucratic process of selling online may limit the growth of trade in these products. The same assessment can be made regarding excise duties on wine. These duties impose very restrictive conditions which impede the development of e-commerce due to a fiscal squeeze connected with the online sale of alcoholic beverages from other European Union countries which primarily affects wine. This situation makes it impossible for the market to thrive. In the current situation, it is clearly important to simplify the distance selling procedure laid down by Directive 2009/11/EC, while also seeking to harmonise rules on excise duties within Europe. In fact, with this cumbersome system, rather than increasing sales between Member States, there is a risk of paralysing trade that could have a positive effect on tackling our current economic difficulties.

1. Could the Commission assess the current e-commerce procedure, to make it more user-friendly for stakeholders, so that online transactions between Member States can become a cornerstone of international economic recovery?

2. Does it believe that the harmonisation of excise duties is possible or desirable, and could it provide clarification regarding the combined nomenclature so that trade between Member States is much more attractive and we can achieve a European Union that is completely free from barriers or obstacles standing in the way of a genuine free movement of goods?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2013)

1. The directive on E-Commerce ([1]) removed already a series of obstacles to cross-border online services. On 11 January 2012 the Commission adopted a communication on 'a coherent framework to build trust in the Digital single market for e-commerce and online services' ([2]). This document contains a comprehensive list of actions to boost e-commerce further, dealing with issues such as reliable payment and delivery services for online purchases, which are both very pertinent for the online sale of wine products.

Furthermore, the Commission has proposed the establishment of a Working Group consisting of the Commission Services and representatives of the Member States to investigate how current arrangements for fiscal compliance could be harmonised and simplified within the current legislative framework, particularly the provisions for distance selling of excise goods in Directive 2008/118/EC.

2. The Commission believes that further harmonisation of excise duty rates is desirable since it would reduce distortions in the Single Market and facilitate the acceptance of less burdensome fiscal compliance procedures. However, any proposal for further harmonisation would require the unanimous agreement of the Member States in Council.

The Commission works continually with representatives of the Member States to resolve differing interpretations of the Combined Nomenclature in its application to alcoholic beverages, including wine, which may create barriers to trade and differing fiscal treatment.

([1]) Directive 2000/31/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 8 June 2000 on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular e-commerce, OJ L 178/1, 17.7.2000.
([2]) COM(2011) 942 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000324/13
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(14 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: La politica di «austerity» in Europa alla luce dei dati sull'economia degli Stati Uniti e dei paesi BRICS

Fin dallo scoppio della crisi economica europea, l'Unione europea ha giocato un ruolo chiave nel dare un indirizzo politico ai vari governi europei su come gestire la crisi e su quali misure economiche adottare.

Dopo anni di misure di «austerity», le economie degli Stati membri arrancano tutt'ora nella ripresa e nel superamento della recessione e stagnazione economica, mentre gli Stati Uniti e gli altri paesi del gruppo c.d. BRICS (Brasile, Russia, India, Cina, Sud Africa), hanno superato il momento di maggiore difficoltà e hanno ripreso a crescere, a creare posti di lavoro e a diminuire il tasso di disoccupazione.

Voci sempre più autorevoli e studi provenienti dai paesi citati (si veda sopratutto il recente studio del Fondo Monetario Internazionale), dimostrano che una politica economica di «austerity» non solo non provoca crescita economica, ma addirittura aggrava la crisi, influendo pesantemente sui consumi e sull'occupazione.

L'Unione europea, e la Commissione in primis, non possono non assumersi la responsabilità di aver agito quale guida politica nella gestione della crisi degli ultimi anni.

Alla luce di questi recenti studi e degli esempi forniti da quanto accaduto nelle economie statunitense e dei paesi Brics, si interroga la Commissione per sapere come giudica questi fatti e quale posizione intende assumere a riguardo.

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(26 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione segue attentamente gli sviluppi economici nei paesi extra-UE e partecipa attivamente alla fitta rete di dibattiti sulle politiche relative ai problemi e alla *governance* economici a livello mondiale nel quadro del G20, dell'FMI e dell'OCSE, oltre a collaborare a livello bilaterale con tutti i principali protagonisti dell'economia mondiale.

La Commissione è consapevole degli effetti negativi a breve termine che il risanamento di bilancio esercita sulla crescita del PIL e sull'occupazione, effetti che nell'assetto attuale rischiano di essere ancora più accentuati. Essa è tuttavia del parere che in alcuni Stati membri in cui si registra una perdita di fiducia dei mercati, un accesso ridotto al mercato e premi di rischio elevati, non vi sia una valida alternativa al risanamento di bilancio e che in assenza di risanamento le conseguenze negative risulterebbero ancora più marcate. La solidità e la sostenibilità delle finanze pubbliche sono una *conditio sine qua non* della stabilità macroeconomica e di conseguenza della crescita. Quindi invece di invertire la rotta occorrerà proseguire sulla via del risanamento di bilancio seguendo una strategia differenziata che tenga conto dei diversi livelli di debito e delle sfide a lungo termine per le finanze pubbliche. Tuttavia al fine di arginare gli effetti negativi a medio termine sull'occupazione e sulla crescita, il risanamento di bilancio dovrebbe essere realizzato favorendo il più possibile la crescita e dovrebbe essere accompagnato da riforme strutturali che mirano ad accrescere la competitività, a promuovere la crescita e a migliorare il funzionamento del mercato del lavoro.

La Commissione condivide le preoccupazioni espresse dall'onorevole parlamentare in merito all'elevato livello di disoccupazione nell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000324/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Austerity policy in Europe in the light of data on the BRICS and US economies

Ever since the onset of the financial crisis in Europe, the European Union has played a key role in providing political direction to different European governments on how to manage the crisis and on the economic measures to adopt.

Following years of austerity measures, the economies of the Member States are still limping towards recovery and coming out of recession and economic stagnation, while the United States and other countries of the so-called BRICS group (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have left the worst behind and have started to grow, create jobs and reduce unemployment again.

Increasingly influential sources and studies from the countries mentioned (see, in particular, the recent study by the International Monetary Fund) demonstrate that the economic policy of austerity not only fails to stimulate economic growth but makes the crisis even worse by weighing heavily on consumption and jobs.

The European Union and the Commission in particular cannot fail to take responsibility for having acted as a political guide to managing the crisis of recent years.

In the light of these recent studies and the examples provided by the economies of the US and the BRICS countries, can the Commission give its view on these points and state the position it intends to take on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The Commission is following closely economic developments in non-EU economies, and is engaged in an intense network of policy discussions on global economic issues and governance within the G20, the IMF and OECD, and bilaterally with all major players in the world economy.

The Commission acknowledges that fiscal consolidations entail short-term negative effects on GDP growth and employment that can even be more pronounced in the current setting. Nevertheless, it believes that in some Member States that face loss of market confidence, reduced market access and high risk premia there is no viable alternative to fiscal consolidation, as its absence could lead to even more negative consequences. Sound and sustainable public finances are an essential prerequisite for macroeconomic stability and hence for growth. Accordingly, fiscal consolidation has to continue along the path of a differentiated consolidation strategy in view of debt levels and long-term challenges to public finances and should not be reversed. However, in order to assuage its negative effects on employment and growth in the short term, fiscal consolidation should be conducted in as growth-friendly a manner as possible, also accompanied by structural reforms aimed at enhancing competitiveness, growth and a better functioning of the labour market.

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's worries about the high level of unemployment in the EU.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000325/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(14 januari 2013)

Betreft: Subsidieverlening aan Egypte

Zondag 13 januari jl. werd door de heer Van Rompuy aan de Egyptische president Morsi bekendgemaakt dat de EU voornemens is 5 miljard euro ter beschikking te stellen aan Egypte in het kader van „het democratiseringsproces". In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven uit welke begrotingslijnen deze subsidie aan Egypte komt?

2. Op welke wijze wordt door de Commissie controle uitgeoefend op de juiste besteding van de subsidiebedragen? Wordt er getoetst op effectiviteit? Door wie?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke lidstaten met deze beslissing c.q. aankondiging van de heer Van Rompuy akkoord zijn gegaan en welke niet?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven waarom hij de regering Morsi subsidiewaardig vindt inzake „democratisering", terwijl minderheden in Egypte na de „revolutie" steen en been klagen over de achteruitgang van de democratische grondwaarden in Egypte?

5. Is de Commissie van mening dat subsidieverlening aan Egypte verstandig is terwijl de sharia de basis zal gaan vormen van de nieuwe Egyptische wetgeving?

6. Is de Commissie bekend met het feit dat volgens de sharia afvalligheid van de islam wordt bestraft met de dood? Is de Commissie nog steeds van mening dat een land dat een dergelijke grondslag heeft, subsidiewaardig is en de „Europese geest" vertegenwoordigt?

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

De EU volgt de ontwikkelingen in Egypte op de voet. De nationale politieke en economische situatie in Egypte blijft onrustwekkend door de diepe politieke polarisatie tussen de regering en de oppositie, die gepaard gaat met een verslechterende economische situatie. De EU staat voortdurend in contact met alle politieke hoofdrolspelers en dringt daarbij aan op verzoening en dialoog.

De bijstand van 5 miljard euro die op 14 november 2012 in het kader van de taskforce EU-Egypte is toegezegd en waar voorzitter Van Rompuy naar heeft verwezen, bestaat uit gezamenlijke verbintenissen voor 2012-2013 uit ENPI ([1]) -middelen van de EU voor bilaterale samenwerking, tot 500 miljoen euro macrofinanciële bijstand van de EU — waarvoor een overeenkomst tussen Egypte en het IMF ([2]) een eerste voorwaarde is — en tot jaarlijks 1 miljard euro aan eventuele toewijzigingen van respectievelijk de EIB ([3]) en de EBWO ([4]). Tot dusver is slechts een klein deel van de totale verbintenis (met betrekking tot de EU-programma's voor 2012 voor een bedrag van 183 miljoen euro) voorbereid. De lidstaten zijn geraadpleegd volgens de normale comitéprocedures. Ze zullen eveneens voor de andere programma's die de EU financiert, worden geraadpleegd. Projecten die door de EIB en de EBWO worden gefinancierd, moeten volgens de procedures van deze instellingen verlopen.

Sinds de opstand is de weg naar democratie van Egypte zwaar en complex geweest. Toch is er reeds een belangrijke vooruitgang geboekt, zoals transparante en geloofwaardige verkiezingen, de overgang naar burgerlijk bestuur, de vorming van politieke partijen en van een politieke oppositie. Als buur en partner heeft Europa ervoor gekozen om de overgang in Egypte te ondersteunen en tegelijkertijd het belang van de rechtsstaat en van de naleving van internationaal overeengekomen mensenrechtenprincipes te benadrukken.

([1]) Europees nabuurschaps- en partnerschapsinstrument.
([2]) Internationaal Monetair Fonds.
([3]) Europese Investeringsbank.
([4]) Europese Bank voor wederopbouw en ontwikkeling.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000325/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Subsidies to Egypt

On Sunday 13 January 2013, Mr Van Rompuy announced to Egyptian President Morsi that the EU intends to provide EUR 5 billion to Egypt in the context of 'the democratisation process'. I would therefore like to ask the following questions:

1. Can the Commission indicate which budget lines cover this subsidy to Egypt?

2. How does the Commission monitor the correct spending of the subsidies? Are there effectiveness tests? Who conducts them?

3. Can it indicate which Member States have agreed with this decision or announcement by Mr Van Rompuy and which have not?

4. Can it explain why it believes that Morsi's Government deserves to be subsidised in connection with 'democratisation', while minorities in Egypt have been bitterly complaining about the decline of fundamental democratic values in Egypt after the 'revolution'?

5. Does it believe that it is wise to provide subsidies to Egypt while Sharia law is going to form the basis of the new Egyptian legislation?

6. Does it know that, according to Sharia law, apostasy from Islam is punishable by death? Does it still believe that a country with such principles deserves to be subsidised and that it represents the 'European spirit'?

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

The EU is following closely the developments in Egypt. The domestic political and economic picture in Egypt is worrying with a deep political polarisation between the government and the opposition coupled with a deteriorating economic situation. The EU is in constant touch with all political protagonists insisting on the need for conciliation and dialogue.

Regarding the EUR 5 billion package announced in the framework of the EU-Egypt Task Force on 14 November 2012, and referred to by President Van Rompuy, it consists of the combined commitments for 2012-2013 from the EU bilateral ENPI ([1]) funding, EU Macro-Financial Assistance of up to EUR 500 million — for which an Egypt-IMF ([2]) arrangement is a precondition — and the possible allocations of up to EUR 1 billion annually by the EIB ([3]) and the EBRD ([4]) respectively. Until now, only a fraction of the overall commitment (relating to EU programmes for 2012 amounting to EUR 183 million) has been prepared; Member States have been consulted under the normal comitology procedures; they will also be consulted for the other EU-financed programmes. Projects financed by the EIB and EBRD will have to follow the procedures of these institutions.

Since the uprising, Egypt's road to democracy has been difficult and complex; nonetheless there have been key developments such as transparent and credible elections, hand-over to civilian governance, the formation of political parties and the establishment of a political opposition. Europe as a neighbour and a partner has chosen to engage and support Egypt's transition while strongly emphasising the importance of the rule of law and the compliance with internationally-agreed human rights principles.

([1]) European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument.
([2]) International Monetary Fund.
([3]) European Investment Bank.
([4]) European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000326/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI) en Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(14 januari 2013)

Betreft: Problemen en overlast van arbeidersstromen

De overheid moet beter nadenken over arbeidsmigratie, schrijft de Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR) van Nederland in een onlangs gepubliceerd rapport. Het aantrekken van arbeidskrachten uit andere landen wordt vaak voorgesteld als een middel om het toekomstige gebrek aan arbeidskrachten te bestrijden. Maar volgens de WRR moet beter worden nagedacht of arbeidsmigranten wel nodig zijn, en zo ja welke. De strekking van het WRR-artikel is dat de EU veel meer oog moet hebben voor de problemen en overlast van arbeidersstromen. Daar hoort ook een ander integratiebeleid bij, aldus de WRR.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „WRR: Beter nadenken over komst arbeidsmigranten" ([1])?

2. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat zij veel meer oog moet hebben voor de problemen en overlast die arbeidsmigratie en arbeidsstromen met zich meebrengen, en deze erkennen in plaats van enkel glorieuze succesverhalen naar voren te brengen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de problemen en overlast van arbeidsmigratie en arbeidersstromen niet opwegen tegen de vermeende voordelen ervan? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening van de PVV dat de bevinding van de WRR indruist tegen het statement van commissaris Malmström eind 2011 ([2]) dat de EU meer migranten nodig zou hebben?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(28 februari 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van het rapport van de Nederlandse Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid met de titel „In betere banen. De toekomst van arbeidsmigratie in de Europese Unie", dat verschillende aspecten van arbeidsmigratie binnen de EU en op wereldvlak analyseert.

Het rapport bericht over het positieve effect van arbeidsmigratie op de economie, gezien het tekort aan arbeidskrachten op bepaalde terreinen van de economie, toekomstige demografische veranderingen en de noodzaak van flankerend integratiebeleid.

Het rapport is niet in tegenspraak met het statement dat de EU migranten moet aantrekken, in het bijzonder mensen met schaarse of uitzonderlijke vaardigheden, of vaardigheden die de bestaande beroepsbevolking aanvullen. Het ondersteunt het streven van de Commissie naar een samenhangend en evenwichtig EU-migratiebeleid, dat rekening houdt met de realiteit van de arbeidsmarkt van de EU en dat zowel dynamisch is, zodat het kan inspelen op behoeften op de korte termijn, als strategisch, doordat het een visie biedt voor de langere termijn.

Als onderdeel van haar immigratiebeleid heeft de EU maatregelen naar voren gebracht om onregelmatige migratie terug te dringen en misbruik te bestrijden, bijvoorbeeld door de richtlijn betreffende sancties tegen werkgevers (Richtlijn 2009/52/EG), die minimumnormen vaststelt voor sancties en maatregelen tegen werkgevers van illegaal verblijvende onderdanen van derde landen in de EU.

De Commissie ziet een efficiënt immigratiebeleid als een aanvulling op andere maatregelen waarmee de gevolgen van een verouderende beroepsbevolking en tekorten op de arbeidsmarkt kunnen worden verlicht, zoals verhoging van de pensioenleeftijd, activering van sommige groepen op de arbeidsmarkt en omscholing van werklozen.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/3362214/2012/12/12/WRR-Beter-nadenken-over-komst-arbeidsmigranten.dhtml.
([2]) http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4496/Buitenland/article/detail/3041205/2011/11/18/Malmstrom-EU-heeft-meer-migranten-nodig.dhtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000326/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI) and Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Problems and troubles caused by labour influx

The government should think more carefully about labour migration, according to a recent report by the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR). Attracting migrant workers from other countries is often proposed as a way of combating future labour shortages. However, according to the WRR, more careful thought should be given to whether or not migrant workers are needed at all, and if so which ones. The point of the WRR article is that the EU should pay much more attention to the problems and troubles caused by labour influx. This also demands a different integration policy, according to the WRR.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'WRR: Thinking more carefully about the influx of migrant workers' ([1])?

2. Does it agree with the Party for Freedom (PVV) that it should pay more attention to the problems and troubles caused by labour migration and labour influx and recognise them instead of only publicising glorious success stories? If not, why not?

3. Does it agree that the problems and troubles caused by labour migration and labour influx are not offset by the perceived benefits thereof? If not, why not?

4. Does it agree with the PVV that the WRR's observations contradict Commissioner Malmström's statement made in late 2011 ([2]) that the EU would need more migrants?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the report by the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) entitled 'In betere banen: De toekomst van arbeidsmigratie in de Europese Unie', analysing various aspects of intra-EU and global labour migration.

The report's findings cover the positive impact of labour migration on the economy, given labour shortages in certain economic areas and future population change, and the need for an accompanying integration policy.

The report does not contradict the statement that the EU would need to attract migrants, in particular those with scarce or exceptional skills, or skills which are complementary to the existing workforce. It supports the Commission's aim of a coherent, balanced EU migration policy, which takes into account the realities of the EU labour market and which is both dynamic, to respond to short-term needs, and strategic, providing a longer-term vision.

As part of its immigration policy, the EU introduced measures to reduce irregular migration and fight abuses, for example though the Employer Sanctions Directive (Directive 2009/52/EC) establishing minimum standards across the EU on sanctions and measures against employers of irregularly-staying third-country nationals.

The Commission sees an effective immigration policy as complementary to other measures which would alleviate the effects of an ageing workforce and shortages on the labour market, such as increasing the retirement age, activation of certain groups and re-skilling of unemployed workers.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/3362214/2012/12/12/WRR-Beter-nadenken-over-komst-arbeidsmigranten.dhtml.
([2]) http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4496/Buitenland/article/detail/3041205/2011/11/18/Malmstrom-EU-heeft-meer-migranten-nodig.dhtml.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000327/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI) en Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(14 januari 2013)

Betreft: Verstoringen arbeidsmarkt

De overheid moet beter nadenken over arbeidsmigratie. Dat schrijft de Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR) van Nederland in een afgelopen week gepubliceerd rapport. Het aantrekken van arbeidsmigranten wordt vaak voorgesteld als een middel om het toekomstige gebrek aan arbeidskrachten te bestrijden. Maar volgens de WRR moet er beter worden nagedacht of arbeidsmigranten wel nodig zijn, en zo ja welke. De strekking van het WRR-artikel is dat de nationale overheid beleidsmaatregelen moet treffen op het terrein van de arbeidsmigratie.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „WRR: Beter nadenken over komst arbeidsmigranten" ([1])?

2. Erkent de Commissie de geschetste problemen? Zo nee, hoe interpreteert de Commissie het rapport en de genoemde misstanden dan?

3. Is de Commissie bekend met de procedures en tijdpaden rondom de toetreding van lidstaten tot de EU en de bijbehorende openstelling van de arbeidsmarkt voor arbeiders uit nieuwe lidstaten?

4. Is het juist dat bij toetreding van nieuwe lidstaten een gewenningsperiode van 7 jaar bestaat waarin de EU-arbeidsmarkt nog niet openstaat voor werknemers uit de nieuwe lidstaat en dat daarna individuele lidstaten kunnen opteren voor een additionele 2 jaar, dit alles met het oog op het creëren van een tijdsperiode waarin de nieuwe lidstaat zijn arbeidsvoorwaardensystemen en stelsels van sociale voorzieningen op een niveau van het EU-gemiddelde kan brengen zodat er geen ongewenste verstoringen van de EU-arbeidsmarkt optreden?

5. Is het juist dat er geen enkel mechanisme bestaat dat nieuwe lidstaten ertoe dwingt om ervoor te zorgen dat, na die gewenningsperiode van 7 jaar, hun arbeidsmarkt plus stelsel(s) van sociale voorzieningen inderdaad op het EU-gemiddelde functioneren?

6. Is het dus juist te constateren dat het niet leveren van inspanningen om het genoemde EU-gemiddelde te bereiken, geen enkele consequentie heeft voor de nieuwe lidstaat? Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat de andere — met name rijkere — lidstaten moeten opdraaien voor verstoring van de EU-arbeidsmarkt na falen van de nieuwe lidstaat om aan de niveauvereisten te voldoen?

7. Is de Commissie het, mede gezien de conclusies over de misstanden en ontbrekende prikkels om die preventief aan te pakken, met de PVV eens dat lidstaten zelf zouden moeten kunnen uitmaken of zij hun arbeidsmarkt willen openstellen voor arbeiders uit nieuwe lidstaten? Zo nee, waarom niet?

8. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het gelijk van de PVV — dat arbeidsmigratie en de openstelling van de arbeidsmarkt een nationale aangelegenheid is — wordt bevestigd? Zo neen, waarom niet?

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/3362214/2012/12/12/WRR-Beter-nadenken-over-komst-arbeidsmigranten.dhtml.

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(6 maart 2013)

1 en 2. De Commissie is op de hoogte van het rapport *In betere banen: De toekomst van arbeidsmigratie in de Europese Unie* ([2]), waar de geachte Parlementsleden naar lijken te verwijzen en van de diepgaande discussie die daarin voorkomt met betrekking tot de verschillende aspecten van arbeidsmigratie in de Europese Unie en de wereld. Het rapport bericht over het positieve effect van arbeidsmigratie op de economie, gezien de arbeidstekorten en demografische veranderingen, en de behoefte aan een flankerend integratiebeleid.

3. Ja.

4, 5 en 6. De beperkingen voor het vrije verkeer van werknemers krachtens de overgangsregelingen in de Toetredingsverdragen 2003 en 2005 dienen in principe vijf jaar na toetreding te worden beëindigd, maar kunnen met twee jaar verlengd worden in geval van ernstige verstoringen van de arbeidsmarkt. Deze beperkingen kunnen niet worden verlengd na de beëindiging van de zevenjarige overgangsperiode. Zoals de Commissie aangaf in haar antwoord op vraag 6000/2012, hebben de overgangsregelingen niet tot doel de recent toegetreden lidstaten te verplichten om aanpassingen door te voeren ter voorkoming van verstoringen van de arbeidsmarkt in andere lidstaten.

7 en 8. De Commissie verwijst de geachte Parlementsleden naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag P-2731/2012 (punt 2).

([2]) Jan Willem Holtslag, Monique Kremer en Erik Schrijvers, Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (december 2012): http://www.wrr.nl/fileadmin/nl/publicaties/PDF-overige_uitgaven/In_betere_banen.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000327/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI) and Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Labour market disturbance

The government should think more carefully about labour migration. This advice is given in a report by the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), published last week. Attracting migrant workers is often proposed as a way of combating future labour shortages. However, according to the WRR, more careful thought should be given to whether or not migrant workers are needed at all, and if so which ones. The point of the WRR article is that the national government must adopt policies in the field of labour migration.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'WRR: Thinking more carefully about the influx of migrant workers' ([1])?

2. Does it recognise the problems outlined? If not, how does it then interpret the report and the abuses described in it?

3. Is it aware of the procedures and timelines around the accession to the EU of Member States and the associated opening of the labour market to workers from those new Member States?

4. Is it true that the accession of new Member States is followed by a seven-year adjustment period, during which the EU labour market remains closed to workers from the new Member State, and that after that individual Member States may opt for an additional two years? This is aimed at creating a period of time during which the new Member State can bring its working conditions and social security systems into line with the EU average to prevent unwanted disturbances of the EU labour market.

5. Is it true that there is not a single mechanism which would force new Member States to ensure that, after the seven-year adjustment period, their labour market and social security system(s) would indeed operate in line with the EU average?

6. Is it right that the failure to make efforts to come into line with the EU average has no consequences at all for new Member States? Does the Commission agree with the Party for Freedom (PVV) that the other — especially richer — Member States must pay for the disturbance of the EU labour market resulting from the failure of the new Member State to satisfy the requirements for attaining the necessary level?

7. Does it agree with the PVV that, given the conclusions about the abuses and the lack of incentives for preventative measures, Member States should be able to decide for themselves whether or not they want to open their labour market to workers from new Member States? If not, why not?

8. Does it agree that this proves that the PVV is right about labour migration and the opening of the labour market being a matter of national policy? If not, why not?

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

1 and 2. The Commission is aware of the report 'In betere banen: De toekomst van arbeidsmigratie in de Europese Unie' ([2]) to which the Honourable Members appear to refer, and of the thorough discussion it contains of various aspects of intra-EU and global labour migration. The report's findings cover the positive impact of labour migration on the economy, given labour shortages and population change, and the need for an accompanying integration policy.

3. Yes.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/3362214/2012/12/12/WRR-Beter-nadenken-over-komst-arbeidsmigranten.dhtml.

([2]) Jan Willem Holtslag, Monique Kremer and Erik Schrijvers, Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (December 2012), at: http://www.wrr.nl/fileadmin/nl/publicaties/PDF-overige_uitgaven/In_betere_banen.pdf

4, 5 and 6. The restrictions on free movement of workers pursuant to the transitional arrangements in the 2003 and 2005 Accession Treaties should in principle end five years after accession, but may be extended for two more years in the event of serious labour market disturbances. Those restrictions cannot be extended after the overall end of the seven-year transitional period. As the Commission pointed out in its answer to question 6000/2012, the purpose of the transitional arrangements is not to compel recently acceding Member States to make adjustments to prevent employment market disruptions in other Member States.

7 and 8. The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its answer to Question E-2731/2012 (point 2).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000330/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja w bydgoskim przedsiębiorstwie ZACHEM

W ostatnich tygodniach doszło do sprzedaży bydgoskiego przedsiębiorstwa ZACHEM niemieckiemu koncernowi chemicznemu BASF. Po transakcji Niemcy poinformowali o wygaszeniu produkcji oraz zwolnieniu ponad 600 osób załogi.

Czy wobec tak znacznych zwolnień grupowych Komisja zamierza objąć pracowników firmy ZACHEM środkami pomocowymi w ramach Europejskiego Funduszu Dostosowania do Globalizacji?

W jaki sposób Komisja planuje pomóc sektorowi chemicznemu w Unii Europejskiej, szczególnie zakładom znacznie dotkniętym poprzez wprowadzenie pakietu energetyczno-klimatycznego?

Czy Komisja posiada dane dotyczące ewentualnego przeniesienia produkcji przez firmy chemiczne z państw członkowskich do krajów nieobjętych rygorem zmniejszenia emisji np. na Białoruś?

Jakie działania podejmuje Komisja, aby zwiększyć konkurencyjność unijnego przemysłu względem tych państw oraz zatrzymać ucieczkę przemysłu poza UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(27 lutego 2013 r.)

Komisja nie posiada wiedzy o żadnych wnioskach dotyczących środków z Europejskiego Funduszu Dostosowania do Globalizacji (EFG) przygotowywanych przez Polskę, które dotyczyłyby zwolnień wzmiankowanych przez Szanownego Pana Posła.

Szanowny Pan Poseł może uzyskać informacje, czy planowane jest złożenie wniosku w tej kwestii, u osoby wyznaczonej do kontaktów w zakresie EFG dla Polski. Potrzebne dane znajdują się na stronie internetowej EFG: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=pl.

Komisja wdrożyła środki ochronne mające na celu zabezpieczenie konkurencyjności energochłonnych sektorów przemysłu UE. Przemysł chemiczny, podobnie jak inne energochłonne sektory przemysłu UE, jest, w ramach środków mających na celu zapobieganie ucieczce emisji gazów cieplarnianych, uprawniony do korzystania z bezpłatnych uprawnień do emisji i dostępu do międzynarodowych jednostek emisji. Sektor produkcji chemicznej uznaje się za narażony na znaczące ryzyko ucieczki emisji, a co za tym idzie podmioty gospodarcze korzystają z bezpłatnych uprawnień na poziomie 100 % odpowiednich wartości odniesienia ([1]). Sektor chemiczny kwalifikuje się ponadto do pomocy państwa w zakresie kosztów energii elektrycznej w ramach unijnego systemu handlu uprawnieniami do emisji ([2]).

Komisja nie posiada żadnych danych dotyczących jakiegokolwiek ewentualnego przeniesienia produkcji przez firmy chemiczne z państw członkowskich na Białoruś. Zasadniczo, jeżeli produkcja miałaby zostać przeniesiona poza UE, trudno byłoby ustalić rolę polityki przeciwdziałania zmianie klimatu w tym zakresie, jeśli weźmiemy pod uwagę powyżej wzmiankowane środki ochronne, które zostały wprowadzone.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:140:0063:0087:pl:PDF (s. 63)
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:154:SOM:PL:HTML (s. 4)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000330/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Situation in the Bydgoszcz-based ZACHEM firm

The Bydgoszcz-based ZACHEM firm was recently sold to the German chemical company BASF. After the sale had been concluded, the Germans revealed that production would cease and that over 600 workers would lose their jobs.

Given the massive scale of the job losses, does the Commission intend to provide aid to the ZACHEM workers under the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund?

How does the Commission plan on providing assistance to the chemical industry in the EU, particularly to those plants that are significantly affected by the introduction of the climate and energy package?

Does the Commission have data on any potential transfer of chemical companies' production from Member States to countries that are not subject to rules on reducing emissions, such as Belarus?

What steps is the Commission taking to increase the competitiveness of EU industry vis-à-vis such countries and to prevent industry from fleeing abroad?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

The Commission is not aware of any application for funding from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) being prepared by Poland related to the redundancies referred to by the Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member may wish to communicate with the EGF Contact Person for Poland should he wish to know whether an application is being planned. The relevant details can be found on the EGF website: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=pl

The Commission has put in place measures to safeguard competitiveness of the EU energy intensive industries. The chemical industry, as all the other EU energy intensive industries, is eligible for the use of free allowances and access to international credits as measures to address the risk of carbon leakage. Chemical production is deemed to be exposed to a significant risk of carbon leakage and the operators therefore benefit from free allocation at 100% of the relevant benchmark ([1]). In addition, the chemical sector is eligible for state aid for industry's electricity costs in the context of the EU Emission Trading System ([2]).

The Commission has no data on any potential transfer of chemical companies' production from the Member States to Belarus. In general, if production was to leave the EU, it would be difficult to see the role of the climate policy in this, given the safeguards put in place, as outlined above.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:140:0063:0087:en:PDF (page 63).
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:154:SOM:EN:HTML (page 4).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000331/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Środki własne UE w nowej perspektywie finansowej

Komisja Europejska w swojej propozycji budżetowej zaproponowała wzmocnienie środków własnych Unii Europejskiej. Jedna z propozycji obejmowała uzupełnienie budżetu o nowo wprowadzany podatek od transakcji finansowych lub podatek od emisji CO_2.

Proszę o odrębne przedstawienie kosztów dla poszczególnych państw członkowskich wprowadzenia podatku od transakcji finansowych oraz podatku od emisji.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janusza Lewandowskiego w imieniu Komisji
(1 marca 2013 r.)

W 2011 r. Komisja zaproponowała szeroko zakrojoną reformę systemu zasobów własnych, która objęła zmianę zasobów opartych na VAT i nowego rodzaju zasoby własne oparte na podatku od transakcji finansowych. Wniosek Komisji nie objął podatku od emisji CO_2.

Po uruchomieniu wzmocnionej współpracy na rzecz utworzenia globalnego podatku od transakcji finansowych (PTF) między uczestniczącymi państwami członkowskimi, Komisja przyjęła w dniu 14 lutego 2013 r. wniosek dotyczący dyrektywy Rady w sprawie wdrożenia wzmocnionej współpracy w dziedzinie podatku od transakcji finansowych (COM(2013) 71 final) wraz z dodatkową oceną skutków, stanowiącą jego uzupełnienie; Komisja wykorzystała przy tym ocenę skutków towarzyszącą pierwotnemu wnioskowi Komisji z 2011 r. (COM(2011) 594) ([1]). Wspomniane oceny skutków obejmują dalsze opracowanie skutków makroekonomicznych oraz szacunki przychodów i kosztów, z uwzględnieniem wszelkich niezbędnych zastrzeżeń metodologicznych.

Rada Europejska na posiedzeniu w dniach 7 i 8 lutego 2013 r. zwróciła się także do uczestniczących państw członkowskich o zbadanie, czy PTF mógłby stanowić podstawę dla nowych zasobów własnych w budżecie UE. Należy podkreślić, że wszelkie nowe zasoby własne, takie jak zasoby oparte na podatku od transakcji finansowych, nie mają na celu zwiększenia budżetu UE, lecz raczej zmniejszenie istniejących źródeł dochodów, takich jak rezydualne składki krajowe oparte na DNB państw członkowskich.

([1]) Zob.: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/other_taxes/financial_sector/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000331/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: The EU's own resources in the new financial framework

In its budget proposal, the Commission has suggested strengthening the European Union's own resources. One of the proposals includes supplementing the budget by introducing a new tax on financial transactions or one on CO_2 emissions.

I would like to ask for separate statements of the costs to each Member State of introducing a financial transaction tax and an emissions tax.

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission proposed in 2011 a wide-ranging reform of the own resource system which included a redesigned VAT resource and a new own resource based on the financial transaction tax. The Commission's proposal did not include a tax on CO_2 emissions.

Following the launch of an enhanced cooperation for the creation of the FTT between participating Member States, the Commission has adopted on 14 February 2013 its proposal for a Council Directive implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax (COM(2013) 71 final), together with an additional impact assessment complementing and drawing on the one accompanying the initial Commission proposal of 2011 (COM(2011) 594) ([1]). These impact assessments include further elaboration on macroeconomic effects, revenue and cost estimations — with all the necessary methodological caveats.

The European Council of 7/8 February 2013 also invited the participating Member States to examine if the FTT could become the base for a new own resource for the EU Budget. It should be underlined that any new own resource, such as one based on FTT, is not intended to increase the EU budget but rather to reduce existing revenue sources, such as Member States' residual GNI-based national contributions.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/other_taxes/financial_sector/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000332/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Sytuacja chrześcijan w Syrii

30 grudnia oddziały Wolnej Armii Syryjskiej działające w okolicach miasta Hama poinformowały o zabiciu około 100 chrześcijan w wiosce Zagbat, wcześniej używając ich jako żywe tarcze (o takich przypadkach alarmował również portal Christian Today). Wolna Armia Syryjska jest strukturalnie podporządkowana Syryjskiej Radzie Narodowej, od której przyjmuje środki na funkcjonowanie oraz rozkazy, tej samej, która uzyskała poparcie UE.

1. Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel wie o mordzie w wiosce Zagbat?

2. Czy temat sytuacji chrześcijan w Syrii, w szczególności brutalnych działań rebeliantów w rejonach Homs, gdzie wypędzono setki chrześcijan oraz zniszczono cenne kościoły z II wieku n.e., zostanie poruszony na najbliższym spotkaniu UE z przedstawicielami Syryjskiej Rady Narodowej? Proszę również o przedstawienie dotychczasowego stanu rozmów prowadzonych z SRN w sprawie sytuacji chrześcijan.

3. Jakie środki finansowe i materialne zostały przeznaczone przez UE w ramach wsparcia Syryjskiej Rady Nagrodowej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(14 marca 2013 r.)

1. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest poinformowana o tym incydencie i nieustannie wyraża ubolewanie nad tym oraz innymi aktami przemocy na tle religijnym, do których dochodzi podczas konfliktu w Syrii.

2. UE utrzymuje regularny kontakt z Narodową Koalicją Syryjskich Sił Rewolucyjnych i Opozycyjnych (Koalicja). Jej lider, Moaz al-Chadib, złożył wizytę w Radzie Spraw Zagranicznych w grudniu 2012 r. oraz dokonał wymiany poglądów z Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą i ministrami. Wnioski Rady Spraw Zagranicznych jednoznacznie wzywają Koalicję do „podtrzymania zobowiązania do przestrzegania zasad praw człowieka, reprezentatywności, demokracji oraz do współpracy ze wszystkimi ugrupowaniami opozycyjnymi oraz wszystkimi grupami syryjskiego społeczeństwa obywatelskiego".

3. UE podejmuje starania, by odpowiedzieć na wezwanie Rady Europejskiej do „rozważenia wszystkich możliwości wsparcia i pomocy dla opozycji" zawarte we wnioskach z dnia 14 grudnia. ESDZ zaoferowała dodatkowe wsparcie, by tworzyć zdolność do działania Koalicji oraz pomóc jej w zwiększaniu pomocy dla ludności Syrii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000332/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The situation of Christians in Syria

On 30 December, units of the Free Syrian Army operating in the vicinity of the town of Hama reported the deaths of about 100 Christians in the village of Zaghbat after they had used them as human shields. The Christianity Today website has also raised the alarm about such incidents. The Free Syrian Army is structurally subordinated to the Syrian National Council, from which it receives the means to operate and from which it also receives orders — the same Syrian National Council which has gained the support of the EU.

1. Does the High Representative know about the murders in Zaghbat?

2. Will the situation of Christians in Syria be raised at the next meeting of the EU with representatives of the Syrian National Council? I am thinking in particular of the brutal actions of rebels in various districts of Homs, where hundreds of Christians have been driven out and valuable second-century churches destroyed. I would also like to request information about the current state of talks being conducted with the Syrian National Council on the question of the situation of Christians.

3. What financial and material resources have been allocated by the EU as part of its support for the Syrian National Council?

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

1. The HR/VP knows of this incident and has consistently deplored this and other acts of sectarian violence that have unfolded during the conflict in Syria.

2. The EU is in regular contacs with the National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces (the Coalition). Its leader, Mr Moaz al-Khatib visited the Foreign Affairs Council in December 2012 and had an exchange with HRVP and the ministers. The FAC conclusions unambigously call on the Coalition 'to remain committed to the respect of the principles of human rights, inclusivity, democracy and engaging with all opposition groups and all sections of Syrian civil society.'

3. The EU is working to respond to the European Council call in its conclusions of 14 December 'to work on all options to support and help the opposition'. The EEAS has offred additional support to build the capacity of the Coalition and help it provide increased assistance to the Syrian population inside the country.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000333/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Sprawa Asii Bibi

Chrześcijanka Asia Bibi od czerwca 2009 r. przebywa zamknięta w celi bez okien, zlewu i WC, czekając na wyrok śmierci za rzekome znieważenie Koranu. Pakistański sąd nie był w stanie dokładnie uzasadnić swojej decyzji, opierając się tylko na zeznaniach muzułmanów, jednocześnie dając do zrozumienia, że jedynym sposobem na uniknięcie kary jest konwersja na islam.

Co Wysoka Przedstawiciel zrobiła w sprawie Asii Bibi? Jakie dalsze działania planuje w celu uwolnienia zatrzymanej?

Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel interweniowała w Pakistanie w celu złagodzenia artykułu dotyczącego bluźnierstwa (jest on podstawą do skazania na śmierć Asii Bibi)?

Czy rodzina Asii Bibi otrzymała od instytucji Unii Europejskiej jakąkolwiek pomoc? Czy zaproponowano im przyjazd do jakiegokolwiek z krajów UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(15 marca 2013 r.)

Unia Europejska podjęła szereg działań w odpowiedzi na sytuację, w jakiej znalazła się Asia Bibi. W publicznym wystąpieniu Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wyraziła głębokie zaniepokojenie z powodu wyroku skazującego dla Asii Bibi i wezwała Pakistan do przestrzegania praw człowieka zagwarantowanych na mocy konwencji międzynarodowych, których kraj ten jest stroną. Sprawa ta jest systematycznie poruszana na spotkaniach przedstawicieli i urzędników wyższego szczebla UE i Pakistanu, podniesiono ją również podczas wizyty Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej w Islamabadzie w czerwcu 2012 r. Delegatura oraz ambasadorzy UE w Islamabadzie także wielokrotnie zwracali uwagę na tę konkretną sprawę w ramach kontaktów dwustronnych z pakistańskimi władzami.

Kontrowersyjna kwestia stosowania przepisów o bluźnierstwie jest w dalszym ciągu źródłem głębokiego zaniepokojenia ze strony UE. Unia Europejska wyraźnie przedstawiła swoje stanowisko dotyczące przepisów o bluźnierstwie (zob. odpowiedzi na pytania E-010472/2012, E-004204/2012, E-011466/2012 ([1])). Będzie ona w dalszym ciągu skupiała się na konieczności zapewnienia pełnej ochrony prawa do wolności wyznania i przekonań przysługującemu każdej jednostce, zarówno w Pakistanie, jak i w innych krajach. UE będzie również kontynuować finansowanie projektów budujących potencjał na szczeblu instytucji federalnych i regionalnych w celu zwiększenia świadomości w zakresie praw człowieka oraz ich ochrony, poprawy dostępu do wymiaru sprawiedliwości dla grup najbardziej zagrożonych oraz wzmocnienia organizacji społeczeństwa obywatelskiego. Będzie to uzupełnieniem wsparcia UE na rzecz edukacji w Pakistanie – co obejmuje także zagadnienia związane ze zrozumieniem i tolerancją dla innych religii.

Unia Europejska wspiera obrońców praw człowieka oraz ich rodziny poprzez nadzwyczajny fundusz na rzecz zagrożonych obrońców praw człowieka utworzony w ramach Europejskiego Instrumentu na rzecz Wspierania Demokracji i Praw Człowieka (EIDHR). Pochodzące z tego funduszu wsparcie na rzecz obrońców praw człowieka oraz ich rodzin ma charakter poufny ze względu na to, że dotyczy ono kwestii delikatnych.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pl/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000333/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The case of Asia Bibi

Since June 2009 the Christian woman Asia Bibi has been locked in a cell without windows, sink or toilet, awaiting execution for allegedly insulting the Koran. The Pakistani court was unable to give precise grounds for its decision, which was based only on the testimony of Muslims, and hinted that the only way to avoid the sentence would be conversion to Islam.

What has the High Representative done regarding the case of Asia Bibi? What further measures is she planning in order to secure Ms Bibi's release?

Has the High Representative intervened in Pakistan with a view to relaxing the blasphemy law, which was the basis of the death sentence handed down in this case?

Has Ms Bibi's family received any assistance from the EU institutions? Have they been invited to come to any of the Member States?

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

The EU has taken a number of steps in reaction to the situation of Asia Bibi. In a public statement, the HR/VP expressed deep concern over Asia Bibi's conviction and called on Pakistan to respect human rights guaranteed under international conventions to which the country is a party. The case is raised systematically in high-level and senior officials' meetings between the EU and Pakistan, including during the visit by the HR/VP to Islamabad in June 2012. In addition, the EU Delegation and EU Ambassadors in Islamabad have repeatedly raised this specific case with the Pakistani authorities in bilateral contacts.

The controversial application of the blasphemy laws remains a source of deep concern for the EU. It has made its views on the blasphemy laws clear (see replies to previous questions E-010472/2012, E-004204/2012 E-011466/2012 ([1])). The EU will continue to focus on the need to fully protect every individual's right to freedom of religion and belief, in Pakistan or elsewhere. Moreover, the EU will be funding capacity-building projects in federal and provincial institutions to improve awareness and protection of human rights, access to justice for vulnerable groups and strengthen civil society organisations. This is in addition to continued EU support for education in Pakistan — including an understanding and tolerance of other religions.

The EU does provide support to Human Rights Defenders and their families through the emergency fund for Human Rights Defenders at risk of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The support given to defenders and their families through this fund is confidential, due to the sensitivity of the cases.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000334/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Finansowanie Partnerstwa Wschodniego

Jakie kwoty zostały przeznaczone w latach 2009-2012 na realizację programu Partnerstwa Wschodniego (proszę również o przedstawienie danych w odniesieniu do poszczególnych krajów biorących udział w tym przedsięwzięciu)?

Jak Komisja ocenia efektywność tych wydatków, szczególnie wobec celów, jakie stawia sobie Partnerstwo Wschodnie wobec krajów biorących udział w tym przedsięwzięciu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Fülego w imieniu Komisji
(8 marca 2013 r.)

Partnerstwo Wschodnie jest inicjatywą UE realizowaną za pośrednictwem różnych programów, która ma na celu pogłębienie stosunków między UE i jej sześcioma wschodnimi sąsiadami. Łączna kwota w latach 2009-2013 przeznaczona na programy realizowane z państwami objętymi Partnerstwem Wschodnim wynosi 2,8 mld EUR. Z kwoty tej Armenia otrzyma 225 mln EUR, Azerbejdżan – 102 mln EUR, Białoruś – 83 mln EUR, Gruzja – 311 mln EUR, Mołdawia – 424 mln EUR i Ukraina – 627 mln EUR. Obejmuje to dodatkowe środki przyznane Armenii, Gruzji i Mołdawii w 2012 r. z programu na rzecz integracji i współpracy w ramach Partnerstwa Wschodniego (EaPIC) zgodnie z zasadą „więcej za więcej" ([1]) (ewentualne środki przyznane na 2013 r. nie są jeszcze dostępne).

Unijna pomoc finansowa udzielana państwom objętym Partnerstwem Wschodnim przeznaczona jest na wsparcie ich transformacji polityczno-gospodarczej. Jest to proces długofalowy, więc wyniki nie mogą zostać osiągnięte w trybie natychmiastowym. Jednak ogólne tendencje wskazują na bardziej odpowiedzialne rządy, pewne postępy w zakresie reformy wymiaru sprawiedliwości i poprawę zarządzania finansami publicznymi. Reformy strukturalne – w krajach, które je zrealizowały – przyczyniły się do rozwiązania ważnych problemów społeczno-gospodarczych. Wzmocniono również wsparcie dla społeczeństwa obywatelskiego. Poczyniono postępy w negocjacjach dotyczących układów o stowarzyszeniu oraz pogłębionych i kompleksowych stref wolnego handlu. W ramach kompleksowego programu rozwoju instytucjonalnego udzielono wsparcia kluczowym instytucjom w państwach objętych Partnerstwem Wschodnim zaangażowanych w negocjacje dotyczące nowych porozumień. UE wspiera wewnętrzne reformy. Ważne jest jednak, aby pamiętać, że wpływ tego wsparcia zależy nie tylko od wielkości finansowania, lecz również od stopnia zaangażowania krajów partnerskich na rzecz owych reform.

([1]) COM(2011)303 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000334/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Funding of the Eastern Partnership

What sums were allocated for implementation of the Eastern Partnership programme from 2009 to 2012? Please also provide data in relation to each of the countries included in the programme.

What is the Commission's assessment of the effectiveness of this spending, in particular in view of the objectives the Eastern Partnership has set itself regarding the participating countries?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2013)

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) is an EU initiative, implemented via various programmes, to deepen relations between the EU and its 6 Eastern neighbours. The total amount available for programmes with EaP partners is EUR 2.8 billion in 2009-2013. Of this total, Armenia will receive EUR 225 million, Azerbaijan EUR 102 million, Belarus EUR 83 million, Georgia EUR 311 million, Moldova EUR 424 million and Ukraine EUR 627 million. This includes the additional funds granted to Armenia, Georgia and Moldova in 2012 through the Eastern Partnership Integration and Cooperation Programme (EaPIC) according to the principle of 'more for more' ([1]) (EaPIC possible allocations for 2013 are not available yet).

Significant EU financial assistance provided to EaP countries supports their political and economic transformation. It is a long-term process, so the results cannot be achieved immediately. However, general trends already point towards more accountable governance, certain progress in justice sector reform and improvements in public finance management. Structural reforms, where pursued, have contributed to addressing important social-economic challenges. Support to civil society has also been strengthened. Progress has been made in negotiations of the Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas. The Comprehensive Institution Building programme has supported key institutions in the EaP countries involved in the negotiations for the new agreements. However, it is important to note that as the EU supports home-grown reforms, impact depends not only on the volume of funding provided, but also on the degree of partner countries' commitment to reform.

([1]) COM(2011)303 final.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000335/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Procedura nadmiernego deficytu budżetowego

Polska podlega procedurze nadmiernego deficytu budżetowego.

Zgodnie z artykułem 126 ust. 3 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu UE: „Jeśli państwo członkowskie nie spełnia wymogów jednego lub obu tych kryteriów, Komisja opracowuje sprawozdanie. Sprawozdanie Komisji uwzględnia również to, czy deficyt publiczny przekracza publiczne wydatki inwestycyjne i uwzględnia wszelkie inne istotne czynniki, w tym średniookresową sytuację gospodarczą i budżetową państwa członkowskiego.

Komisja może także opracować sprawozdanie, jeśli mimo spełnienia wymagań wynikających z tych kryteriów uzna, że istnieje ryzyko nadmiernego deficytu w państwie członkowskim."

Na jakiej średniookresowej prognozie sytuacji gospodarczej Komisja oparła swoje sprawozdanie?

Czym różni się metodologia obliczania deficytu przez Komisję i rząd RP, skoro ten ostatni podaje dane, zgodnie z którymi nie ma do czynienia z nadmiernym deficytem?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Olliego Rehna w imieniu Komisji
(21 lutego 2013 r.)

1. Procedura nadmiernego deficytu wobec Polski została otwarta w dniu 7 lipca 2009 r. w oparciu o sprawozdanie przygotowane na podstawie art. 126 ust. 3 Traktatu (wówczas jeszcze – zgodnie ze starą numeracją – art. 104 ust. 3), które zostało przedstawione przez Komisję w dniu 13 maja 2009 r. Jak wskazano w tym sprawozdaniu, procedura nadmiernego deficytu nie została otwarta na podstawie prognozowanych danych, lecz w związku z dokonanym przez władze polskie powiadomieniem o deficycie na 2008 r. w wysokości 3,9 % PKB, potwierdzonym przez Eurostat. Polska przekroczyła zatem określoną w Traktacie wartość referencyjną deficytu, wynoszącą 3 % PKB.

2. Zgodnie z protokołem nr 12 do Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej w sprawie procedury dotyczącej nadmiernego deficytu, rozporządzeniem Rady (WE) nr 2223/96 w sprawie europejskiego systemu rachunków narodowych i regionalnych we Wspólnocie i rozporządzeniem Rady (WE) nr 479/2009 o stosowaniu Protokołu w sprawie procedury dotyczącej nadmiernego deficytu załączonego do Traktatu ustanawiającego Wspólnotę Europejską dane liczbowe dotyczące deficytu wykorzystywane na potrzeby stwierdzenia występowania nadmiernego deficytu muszą być opracowane zgodnie z europejskim systemem rachunków, znanym jako ESA95. Dane liczbowe przedstawione przez polski rząd spełniały ten warunek i świadczyły o tym, że w 2008 r. deficyt przekroczył 3 %. Dane dotyczące wyników przedstawione później przez polski rząd zgodnie z ESA 95 skorygowały deficyt do poziomu 3,7 % PKB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000335/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Excessive deficit procedure

Poland is the subject of an excessive deficit procedure.

Article 126(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union reads as follows: 'If a Member State does not fulfil the requirements under one or both of these criteria, the Commission shall prepare a report. The report of the Commission shall also take into account whether the government deficit exceeds government investment expenditure and take into account all other relevant factors, including the medium-term economic and budgetary position of the Member State.

The Commission may also prepare a report if, notwithstanding the fulfilment of the requirements under the criteria, it is of the opinion that there is a risk of an excessive deficit in a Member State.'

On what medium-term prognosis of the economic situation did the Commission base its report?

What was the difference between the methods used by the Commission and those used by the Polish Government to make their calculations, since the data provided by the latter do not show the existence of an excessive deficit?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

1. Poland's EDP was opened on 7 July 2009 on the basis of an Article 126(3) Report (then called an Article 104(3) under the old numbering) presented by the Commission on 13 May 2009. As specified in the report, the EDP was opened not on the basis of forecast data, but on the notification by the Polish authorities of a 3.9% of GDP deficit for the year 2008, which was verified by Eurostat. Poland was therefore in breach of the 3% of GDP deficit reference value of the Treaty.

2. According to Protocol 12 to the treaty on Functioning of European Union on the Excessive Deficit Procedure, Council Regulation 2223/96 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the Community and to Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2009 on the application of the Protocol on the excessive deficit procedure annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community, the deficit figures used for the establishment of an excessive deficit have to be prepared under the European System of Accounts, known as ESA95. It is on this basis that the figures provided by the Polish Government showed a deficit in excess of 3% for 2008. The outturn data subsequently notified by the Polish Government on the ESA 95 revised the deficit to 3.7% of GDP.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000336/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Różnicowanie przez Gazprom cen gazu ziemnego dla odbiorców w państwach unijnych

Czy różnicowanie przez Gazprom cen gazu ziemnego dla odbiorców w państwach unijnych jest zgodne z zasadami konkurencji i wolnego rynku? Według oficjalnych danych Gazpromu, gaz rosyjski jest sprzedawany firmom niemieckim o ok. 10 proc taniej, aniżeli gaz sprzedawany firmom polskim.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquina Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(4 marca 2013 r.)

W dniu 31 sierpnia 2012 r. Komisja przyjęła decyzję o wszczęciu postępowania w celu zbadania ewentualnego naruszenia art. 102 TFUE przez rosyjski koncern Gazprom. Artykuł 102 przewiduje odpowiedzialność przedsiębiorstwa w przypadku nadużycia przez nie pozycji dominującej, która może uniemożliwiać wolny handel między państwami członkowskimi UE. Procedury Komisji, które reguluje rozporządzenie 1/2003 ([1]), są w tym przypadku takie same, jak podczas każdego innego postępowania antymonopolowego.

Komisja podejrzewa występowanie trzech rodzajów praktyk antykonkurencyjnych, które obecnie podlegają szczegółowemu postępowaniu wyjaśniającemu: Komisja zatem bada: 1) czy Gazprom dzieli rynki gazu, uniemożliwiając swobodny przepływ gazu między państwami członkowskimi; 2) czy Gazprom stwarza bariery w dywersyfikacji dostaw poprzez zablokowanie dostępu do alternatywnych źródeł dostaw gazu; 3) czy Gazprom narzucił swoim klientom nieuczciwe ceny.

Komisja bada obecnie, czy praktyki cenowe koncernu Gazprom są zgodne z zasadami konkurencji i wolnym rynkiem. Tylko wynik trwającego postępowania i wynikająca stąd decyzja może odpowiedzieć na pytanie Szanownego Pana Posła.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1/2003 z dnia 16 grudnia 2002 r. w sprawie wprowadzenia w życie reguł konkurencji ustanowionych w art. 81 i 82 Traktatu (obecnie art. 101 i 102 TFUE), Dz.U. L 1/2003 z 4.1.2003, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000336/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Different prices for natural gas charged by Gazprom to buyers in different Member States

Are the different prices for natural gas charged by Gazprom to buyers in different Member States consistent with the principles of competition and the free market? According to official data from Gazprom, Russian gas is sold to German firms at prices that are around 10 % lower than those charged to Polish firms.

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

On 31 August 2012, the Commission adopted a decision to open proceedings to investigate possible infringements of Article 102 TFEU by the Russian group Gazprom. Article 102 provides for liability in the case of abuse by undertakings in a dominant position that may prevent free trade between EU Member States. The procedures are the same as for any other Commission antitrust investigation and are governed by Regulation 1/2003. ([1])

The Commission has identified three suspected anti-competitive practices, which are now subject to an in-depth investigation: (1) whether Gazprom has divided gas markets by preventing the free flow of gas between Member States; (2) whether Gazprom created barriers to supply diversification by preventing access to alternative sources of gas supply; (3) whether Gazprom imposed unfair prices on its customers.

The Commission is currently analysing whether Gazprom's pricing practices are consistent with the principles of competition and the free market. Only the outcome of the ongoing investigation and any resulting decision can answer the question posed by the Honourable Member.

([1]) Council regulation 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules of competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty (now 101 and 102 TFEU), OJ L 1, 4.1.2003, p.1.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000337/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Realizacja programu TEN-E

Decyzją nr 1364/2006/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 6 września 2006 r. ustanawiano wytyczne dla transeuropejskich sieci energetycznych (TEN-E). Ich zadaniem miało być zapewnienie współpracy operacyjnej i rozwój transeuropejskich sieci energetycznych i gazowych oraz poprawa bezpieczeństwa dostaw węglowodorów, a tym samym niezależności energetycznej Wspólnoty Europejskiej.

Proszę Komisję o informacje dotyczące realizowanych projektów, z podziałem na państwa oraz wydatkowanych środków.

Jak Komisja ocenia efektywność tych działań?

Czy Komisja zamierza prolongować program TEN-E?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(5 marca 2013 r.)

Komisja przygotowała, opublikowała i przekazała Parlamentowi Europejskiemu sprawozdanie na temat realizacji programu transeuropejskich sieci energetycznych w latach 2007-2009 ([1]). Sprawozdanie to zawiera ocenę skuteczności środków polityki TEN-E i pomocy finansowej po pierwszych trzech latach realizacji. W towarzyszącym sprawozdaniu dokumencie roboczym służb Komisji zamieszczono ponadto szczegółową analizę projektów leżących w interesie Europy i projektów priorytetowych. Zaktualizowany wykaz projektów, które otrzymały wsparcie finansowe UE w ramach tych ram, jest dostępny pod adresem:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/doc/2012_ten_e_financed_projects_1995_2011.pdf

W październiku 2011 r. Komisja przedstawiła pakiet w sprawie infrastruktury, w tym wnioski dotyczące:

— nowego rozporządzenia w sprawie wytycznych dotyczących transeuropejskiej infrastruktury energetycznej i uchylającego decyzję nr 1364/2006/WE ([2]) („wytyczne"); oraz

— rozporządzenia ustanawiającego instrument „Łącząc Europę" ([3]), w ramach którego proponowane jest przeznaczenie na transeuropejskie projekty infrastruktury energetycznej budżetu w wysokości 9,1 mld euro w formie dotacji i instrumentów finansowych.

Te dwa rozporządzenia zastąpią obecne ramy programu TEN-E obejmujące lata 2014-20. W sprawie wytycznych osiągnięto już porozumienie polityczne, a negocjacje w sprawie instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" są jeszcze w toku.

([1]) COM(2010) 203 i SEC(2010) 505.
([2]) COM(2011) 658.
([3]) COM(2011) 665.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000337/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the TEN-E programme

Decision No 1364/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 September 2006 laid down guidelines for trans-European energy networks (TEN-E). The purpose of these guidelines was to ensure the interoperability and development of trans-European electricity and gas networks and to improve the security of hydrocarbon supply, thereby strengthening the energy independence of the European Union.

Can the Commission please supply information about the projects which have been undertaken and the costs involved, with a breakdown by Member State.

How does the Commission evaluate the effectiveness of these measures?

Does the Commission intend to extend the TEN-E programme?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

The Commission has prepared, published and transmitted to the European Parliament a Report on the implementation of the trans-European energy networks in the period 2007-2009 ([1]). This report evaluates the effectiveness of the measures of the TEN-E policy and financial assistance after the first three years of implementation. The accompanying staff working document, furthermore, provides a detailed analysis on projects of European interest and priority projects. The updated list of projects that received EU financial assistance under this framework is available here: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/doc/2012_ten_e_financed_projects_1995_2011.pdf

In October 2011, the Commission tabled an infrastructure package, including proposals for:

— a new regulation on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1364/2006/EC ([2]) ('Guidelines'); and

— a regulation establishing the Connecting Europe Facility ([3]) (CEF), proposing to dedicate a budget of 9,1 billion euro to trans-European energy infrastructure projects in the form of grants and financial instruments.

These two regulations will replace the current TEN-E framework, covering the period 2014-20. While a political agreement has already been reached on the Guidelines, the negotiations on the CEF are ongoing.

([1]) COM(2010) 203 and SEC(2010) 505.
([2]) COM(2011) 658.
([3]) COM(2011) 665.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000338/13
Komisijai
Leonidas Donskis (ALDE)
(2013 m. sausio 14 d.)

Tema: ES Komisijos pagalba Činų valstijai (Birma (Mianmaras))

Birmos (Mianmaro) vakaruose esanti Činų valstija yra vienas atokiausių ir sunkiausiai prieinamų šalies regionų. 2011 m. Jungtinių Tautų vystymo programos vykdytojai, bendradarbiaudami su Planavimo ir ekonominės plėtros ministerija, Jungtinių Tautų vaikų fondu ir Švedijos tarptautinės plėtros agentūra, nustatė, kad Činų valstija išlieka skurdžiausia iš 14 Birmos (Mianmaro) regionų ir valstijų, 73,3 proc. jos gyventojų gyvena žemiau skurdo ribos.

Manau, kad, nepaisant didelio humanitarinio poreikio, JT agentūrų ir tarptautinių nevyriausybinių organizacijų veiklai Činų valstijoje skiriama per mažai lėšų, o Jungtinių Tautų Humanitarinių reikalų koordinavimo biuras šiame regione nebeatlieka savo koordinavimo vaidmens dėl dabartinės ekstremaliosios padėties Arakano (Rachinų) ir Kačinų valstijose. Nors paslaugų iškeldintiems žmonėms Arakano (Rachinų) ir Kačinų valstijose finansavimas esant dabartinei ekstremaliajai padėčiai turi būti pagrindinis ES prioritetas, taip pat svarbu užtikrinti, kad nebūtų pamiršta užsitęsusi humanitarinė krizė Činų valstijoje. Ar Komisija galėtų pateikti atsakymus į šiuos klausimus:

1. Kokių priemonių imsis Sąjungos vyriausioji įgaliotinė ir Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotoja siekdama užtikrinti, kad ES skiriamų lėšų pakaktų ir išeiti iš ekstremaliosios padėties Arakano (Rachinų) ir Kačinų valstijose, ir įveikti užsitęsusią humanitarinę krizę Činų valstijoje?

2. Kiek kartų praėjusiais metais Komisijos atstovai lankėsi Činų valstijoje siekdami įvertinti humanitarinę padėtį?

3. Ar Komisijos atstovai bandys reguliariai lankyti visas Činų valstijos dalis, įskaitant atokius pietus?

4. Kiek paramos Birmos (Mianmaro) vystymuisi skirta 2013 m.? Kokia šios paramos dalis skirta Činų valstijai? Kokie programų prioritetai Činų valstijoje? Kaip šios programos bus įgyvendintos šioje valstijoje?

K. Georgievos atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. kovo 7 d.)

Činų valstijoje yra didelių su skurdu susijusių struktūrinių trūkumų, kuriuos reikia šalinti laikantis atitinkamų vystymosi strategijų. Išimties tvarka po precedento neturinčio graužikų, 2009 m. sunaikinusių maisto bei sėklų atsargas ir pasėlius, antplūdžio Europos Sąjunga visoje valstijoje, taip pat ir pietinėse apylinkėse, teikė humanitarinę pagalbą (paramą maistu ir pragyvenimui), todėl maisto tiekimo padėtis stabilizavosi. 2012 m. pagalba pagal šias programas suteikta per 70 000 asmenų, be to, iš pietinėje Činų valstijos dalyje surinktų mitybos duomenų matyti, kad pagerėjo vaikų mitybos padėtis. Komisijos 2013 m. Mianmarui skirtame Humanitarinės pagalbos teikimo plane numatyta dar suteikti paramos Činų valstijai; be to, jame dėmesys visų pirma skiriamas krizėms Kačinų ir Rachinų valstijose.

2012 m., paskutinį kartą – gruodžio mėn., Komisijos ekspertai (Humanitarinės pagalbos ir civilinės saugos GD) vykdė dvi stebėjimo misijas pietinėje Činų valstijos dalyje. Jiems nekilo ypatingų prieigos sunkumų.

2012-2013 m. Birmai (Mianmarui) buvo skirta 150 mln. eurų vystymosi paramos. Činų valstijoje ES tebevykdo kelis dvišalio finansavimo projektus, kurių dėmesio centre – vaikų ir motinų sveikata; paramą teikia ir kelių paramos teikėjų patikos fondai (švietimas, sveikata ir pragyvenimo šaltiniai), kurių viena iš svarbiausių finansuotojų yra ES. Įvairių suinteresuotųjų šalių grupė (įskaitant vietos gyventojus ir pilietinės visuomenės organizacijas) šiuo metu diskutuoja, kaip vykdyti bendrą vertinimą, kad būtų galima nustatyti svarbiausius poreikius Činų valstijoje. Tai gali tapti atkūrimo programos pagrindu, kuriuo remiantis gali būti sprendžiama dėl ateities prioritetų.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000338/13
to the Commission
Leonidas Donskis (ALDE)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: EU Commission aid to Chin State, Burma/Myanmar

Chin State in western Burma/Myanmar is one of the most remote and inaccessible parts of the country. In 2011 the United Nations Development Programme, working in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Swedish International Development Agency, found that Chin State remains the poorest of the 14 regions and states in Burma/Myanmar, with 73.3 % of the population living below the poverty line.

It is my understanding that, despite a high level of humanitarian need, UN agency and INGO work in Chin State is underfunded, and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is phasing out its coordination role in the area due to the ongoing emergencies in Arakan/Rakhine and Kachin States. While funding for services for displaced peoples in Arakan/Rakhine and Kachin States in the current emergencies must be a key EU priority, it is also important to ensure that the protracted humanitarian crisis in Chin State is not overlooked. Could the Commission clarify the following points:

1. What measures will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ensure that EU funding is sufficient to address both the emergency situations in Arakan/Rakhine and Kachin States and the protracted humanitarian crisis in Chin State?

2. How many times have Commission representatives visited Chin State in the past year to assess the humanitarian situation?

3. Will Commission representatives seek regular access to all parts of Chin State, including the remote south?

4. How much development aid has been allocated to Burma/Myanmar for 2013; what percentage of that is earmarked for Chin State; what are the programme priorities in Chin State; and how will those programmes be implemented in Chin State?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2013)

Chin state is confronted with large structural deficiencies linked to poverty which need to be addressed by the appropriate development strategies. Exceptionally, following an unprecedented rodent infestation which destroyed food stocks, seed reserves and crops in 2009, humanitarian aid (such as food and livelihood support), was provided by the EU throughout the state, including in the southern townships. This has led to the stabilisation of the food security situation. In 2012, more than 70,000 persons benefited from these programmes, and nutrition data collected in southern Chin has showed an improved nutrition situation among children. The Commission's 2013 Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) for Myanmar includes some further support to Chin and it also clearly addresses the crises in Kachin and Rakhine States as a priority.

In 2012, Commission experts (DG ECHO) conducted 2 monitoring missions in southern Chin, the last one in December and there were no particular problems with access.

Concerning development assistance, for 2012 and 2013 a package of EUR 150 million has been allocated to Burma/Myanmar. The EU has several ongoing projects funded bilaterally in Chin focusing on child and maternal health, and support is also provided by the multi-donor trust funds (education, health and livelihoods) to which the EU is a major contributor. A multi-stakeholder group (including the local population and civil society organisations) are currently discussing how to conduct a joint assessment to identify priority needs in Chin. This can form the basis for a recovery programme upon which future priorities can be decided.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000339/13
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(14 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Carne libre de ractopamina

La ractopamina es un fármaco promotor del crecimiento con efectos similares al clembuterol, prohibido en la Unión Europea y China y autorizado en otros países, como Australia, Brasil, Canadá, Nueva Zelanda y los Estados Unidos. Tras sus últimas inspecciones, la Oficina Veterinaria y Alimentaria ha detectado fallos en el programa «libre de ractopamina» en porcino de Brasil (DG SANCO) 2011-6139-MR FINAL), producción de carne y tripas de bovino con destino a la Unión Europea (DG (SANCO) 2012-6370-MR FINAL) y carne americana (DG (SANCO) 2010-8444-MR FINAL). La Oficina ha detectado claros fallos en la trazabilidad y elegibilidad de la carne exportable, así como en los sistemas de control y utilización de medicamentos.

Sin embargo, al parecer, Brasil ha decidido recientemente dejar de exportar carne tratada con ese producto, debido a las presiones de Rusia, que ha bloqueado la entrada de carne procedente de ese país. Según estudios científicos, existen grandes dificultades para la detección de ractopamina en músculo —única pieza que llega a la Unión Europea—, que no es, además, el órgano de referencia para la detección de su uso. Además, hay que tener en cuenta que la carne que es importada a la Unión Europea es controlada casi exclusivamente de manera documental.

¿Puede asegurar la Comisión que la trazabilidad del supuesto programa «libre de ractopamina» brasileño o americano permite asegurar la ausencia de utilización de ractopamina durante todo el ciclo de vida del animal del que procede la carne? ¿Puede asegurar que la ausencia de residuos en la carne importada es sinónimo de una no utilización de dicha sustancia a lo largo de toda la vida del animal? ¿Qué tipo de controles le permiten garantizar que la carne procedente de países que tienen autorizada la utilización de ractopamina proviene de animales que no la han consumido? ¿Cómo pretende la UE proteger la seguridad de los consumidores de manera realmente eficiente con un único control casi exclusivamente documental?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de febrero de 2013)

La legislación de la UE no permite el uso de hormonas ni de beta-agonistas como activadores del crecimiento del ganado y los Estados miembros no importan animales tratados con hormonas o beta-agonistas ni productos derivados de esos animales destinados al consumo humano.

Para poder acceder al mercado de la UE, los terceros países que autorizan el empleo de esas sustancias han de implantar un sistema de circuitos separados que garantice que la carne destinada a ser exportada a la UE procede únicamente de animales que no han sido tratados con ellas en ningún momento de su vida.

Actualmente, no puede importarse carne de porcino de Brasil. Este país autorizó la importación y el uso de activadores del crecimiento no hormonales (como la ractopamina) para la producción de vacuno en diciembre de 2011. La Comisión pidió inmediatamente a Brasil que implantara un sistema de circuitos separados antes de que comenzaran a comercializarse y utilizarse realmente esas sustancias. Sin embargo, en noviembre de 2012, Brasil revocó la autorización de comercialización de esas sustancias para la producción de vacuno, por lo que el sistema de circuitos separados para la producción de vacuno ya no es necesario.

En lo que se refiere a las importaciones de carne de los Estados Unidos, remito a Su Señoría a la respuesta de la Comisión a su pregunta E-004353/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000339/13
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Ractopamine-free meat

The ractopamine drug promotes lean muscle growth in animals, in a similar way to clembuterol, and is banned in the European Union and China but legal in other countries, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. The latest Food and Veterinary Office audits identified failings in the implementation of the 'ractopamine free' programme in relation to pig meat from Brazil (DG (SANCO) 2011-6139-MR FINAL), the production of bovine meat and casings destined for export to the European Union (DG (SANCO) 2012-6370-MR FINAL) and meat from the United States (DG (SANCO) 2010-8444-MR FINAL). The Office identified weaknesses in the system used for ensuring that meat exports are traceable and comply with standards, as well as in the control systems in place and the use of medicinal products.

Nevertheless, it appears that Brazil has recently decided to stop exporting meat that has been treated with ractopamine, due to pressure from Russia, which has blocked imports of Brazilian meat. Scientific studies show that it is very difficult to detect ractopamine in animal muscle, which is the only part of the animal that enters the European Union, and moreover, this is not the reference organ. Furthermore, the checks on meat imports to the European Union depend almost exclusively on the accompanying documentation.

Is the Commission satisfied that the methods for tracing meat under the so-called Brazilian and American 'ractopamine-free' programmes are sufficient to ascertain that ractopamine has not been used at any stage in the animal's life? Is the Commission satisfied that, if no traces of the substances are detected in the meat imports, this means that the drug has never been administered to the animal? What type of checks are used to guarantee that meat from countries in which ractomapine use is legal comes from animals that have not received the drug? How does the EU expect to genuinely and efficiently protect consumer safety if the only control in place depends almost exclusively on meat documentation?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

EU legislation does not authorise the use of hormones and beta-agonist as growth promoters in livestock, and Member States do not import hormone/beta-agonist treated animals and products derived from such animals and intended for human consumption.

In order to maintain access to the EU market, third countries which authorise the use of these substances have to put in place a 'split system' guaranteeing that meat eligible for export to the EU has only been derived from animals which have not been treated with such substances during their lives.

Imports of pig meat from Brazil are not currently approved. Brazil authorised the import, and use of non-hormonal growth promoters (like Ractopamine) in beef production in December 2011. The Commission immediately requested Brazil to put in place a 'split system' before these substances were effectively commercialised and used. However, Brazil withdrew the authorisation to commercialise these substances for beef production in November 2012, therefore the 'split system' for beef production is not any more required.

As regards imports of meat from United States I refer to the answer provided by the Commission to your Question E-004353/2012 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000340/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(14 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Φοροδιαφυγή στην Ελλάδα και ανάγκη εκσυγχρονισμού και ενίσχυσης των τελωνείων

Το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα περιλαμβάνει, μεταξύ άλλων, και την ανάγκη αντιμετώπισης της εκτεταμένης φοροδιαφυγής στο πεδίο του ΦΠΑ και του λαθρεμπορίου. Πρόσφατη μελέτη αναδεικνύει την πιθανή έκταση φοροδιαφυγής σε μια σειρά εμπορευματικών συναλλαγών, όπως οι εξαγωγές πετρελαιοειδών, οι συνήθεις εξαγωγές, οι εφοδιασμοί, το τελωνειακό καθεστώς 42. Έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Ελεγκτικού Συνεδρίου τόσο για το καθεστώς 42 όσο και για τις τελωνειακές απλουστεύσεις, αναδεικνύει σειρά προβλημάτων και δυσχερειών που ευνοούν την φοροδιαφυγή συνολικά στην ΕΕ, ωστόσο με μεγαλύτερη δημοσιονομική και κοινωνική επίπτωση σε χώρες, όπως η Ελλάδα. Στο πλαίσιο αναδιοργάνωσης των δημοσιονομικών υπηρεσιών στην Ελλάδα, οι οργανικές μονάδες των τελωνείων έχουν μειωθεί σημαντικά με αποτέλεσμα πολλά παράκτια μέρη και νησιά να μην έχουν πλέον τελωνειακή παρουσία, ενώ η ηλεκτρονική μηχανοργάνωση των τελωνειακών διαδικασιών και η περαιτέρω απλούστευσή τους, χωρίς αναβάθμιση και ενίσχυση των τελωνείων με επαρκές και εξειδικευμένο προσωπικό, μάλλον αποδυναμώνει την προσπάθεια μείωσης του λαθρεμπορίου και υπονομεύει τον πραγματικό εκσυγχρονισμό της τελωνειακής υπηρεσίας.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει υπόψη της και αν ναι, ποια είναι η θέση της για την δραματική συρρίκνωση των τελωνειακών μονάδων σε ένα κράτος με παράκτιο και νησιωτικό χαρακτήρα;

2. Πώς μπορεί να συνδράμει στην ενίσχυση με εξοπλισμό των ελληνικών τελωνείων;

3. Ποια θέση υποστηρίζει εντός της Τρόικα σχετικά με την ανάγκη ενίσχυσης με εξειδικευμένο προσωπικό των ελληνικών τελωνείων;

4. Ποιες πρωτοβουλίες έχει αναλάβει σε σχέση με την καταστρατήγηση του τελωνειακού καθεστώτος 42 στις εμπορευματικές συναλλαγές Ελλάδας-Βουλγαρίας;

5. Πώς σκοπεύει να αντιμετωπίσει τη διασφάλιση των δημοσιονομικών συμφερόντων στο πλαίσιο των τελωνειακών απλουστεύσεων (πχ. κεντρικός εκτελωνισμός) κατά την κατάρτιση των διατάξεων εφαρμογής του υπό υιοθέτηση Ενωσιακού Τελωνειακού Κώδικα;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Μαρτίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για τη μείωση των τελωνειακών μονάδων στην Ελλάδα. Η προβλεπόμενη εξυγίανση, η οποία περιλαμβάνει και νέο πρόγραμμα στελέχωσης, αποτελεί απαραίτητη δέσμευση της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης για την αντιμετώπιση της χρηματοπιστωτικής κρίσης και παραμένει ευθύνη της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης.

2. Οι ελληνικές αρχές ενέκριναν τον Νοέμβριο του 2012 μια ολοκληρωμένη στρατηγική εμπορικών διευκολύνσεων και χάρτη πορείας. Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει τις προσπάθειες της ελληνικής διοίκησης, ιδίως με την παροχή τεχνικής βοήθειας από τις υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής, η οποία θα συντονίζεται από την ειδική ομάδα Ελλάδα (TFGR) σε συνεργασία με τα κράτη μέλη και τους διεθνείς οργανισμούς.

3. Ο χάρτης πορείας προβλέπει εξορθολογισμό των τελωνειακών καθεστώτων, βελτίωση των διαδικασιών και καλύτερες λειτουργίες πληροφορικής με στόχο τη σημαντική ενίσχυση της παραγωγικότητας και την απελευθέρωση ανθρώπινων πόρων. Η Επιτροπή κατανοεί ότι όπου υπάρχει ανάγκη ειδικής στελέχωσης, αυτό πρέπει να επιτευχθεί με την πρόσληψη ή εσωτερική κινητικότητα και σύμφωνα με το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας (πιο συγκεκριμένα: μία αντικατάσταση ανά πέντε αναχωρήσεις).

4. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει λεπτομερή στοιχεία σχετικά με την εφαρμογή του καθεστώτος 42 στα ελληνοβουλγαρικά σύνορα. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή έχει προβεί σε ενέργειες για τη βελτίωση της λειτουργίας του καθεστώτος 42 με την τροποποίηση του νομοθετικού πλαισίου ([1]).

([1]) ΕΚΤΕΛΕΣΤΙΚΟΣ ΚΑΝΟΝΙΣΜΟΣ (ΕΕ) αριθ. 756/2012 ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ, ΕΕ L 223 της 21.8.2012 και οδηγία 2009/69/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου, ΕΕ L 175 της 12 4.7.2009.

5. Ιδιαίτερη προσοχή δίνεται στην προστασία των οικονομικών συμφερόντων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και των κρατών μελών της κατά την εκπόνηση και την πρόταση νέων εννοιών στην τελωνειακή νομοθεσία, όπως ο κεντρικός εκτελωνισμός. Διεξοδική ανάλυση πραγματοποιείται σε συνεργασία με όλους τους εμπλεκόμενους φορείς, έχουν συσταθεί ομάδες εργασίας, γίνονται προσομοιώσεις, κτλ. Όλες οι πτυχές θα παρακολουθούνται διεξοδικώς όταν καταστούν λειτουργικά τα νέα καθεστώτα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000340/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Tax evasion in Greece and the need to modernise and strengthen the Greek customs authorities

The financial adjustment programme for Greece addresses a number of problems, and notably the need to tackle widespread VAT evasion and smuggling. A recent study highlights the possible extent of tax evasion in a range of commercial transactions such as petroleum exports, ordinary exports, supplies and customs procedure 42. A Court of Auditors report on procedure 42 and the simplification of procedures highlights a number of problems and difficulties that encourage tax evasion in the EU overall, but have a greater financial and social impact in countries such as Greece. As part of the reorganisation of financial services in Greece, the number of customs organisational units has fallen significantly and many islands and coastal regions no longer have a customs presence. At the same time, the IT processing of customs procedures and their further simplification, without any concomitant upgrading and strengthening of customs services through the recruitment of a sufficient number of qualified staff, in effect prevent any real progress being made in reducing smuggling and modernising the customs service.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of the dramatic reduction in the number of customs units in Greece, a state with a long coastline and many islands? If so, how does it view this situation?

2. How can it help upgrade the equipment of the Greek customs authorities?

3. What is its position in the Troika on the need to strengthen the Greek customs authorities through the recruitment of specialised staff?

4. What initiatives has it taken in relation to the circumvention of customs procedure 42 in commercial exchanges between Greece and Bulgaria?

5. How does it intend to safeguard financial interests in measures to streamline customs arrangements (e.g. central clearance) when drafting the implementing rules of the EU Customs Code which is currently being adopted?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the reduction of customs units in Greece. The anticipated reorganisation, including a new staffing plan, is a necessary commitment of the Greek Government to overcome the financial crisis and remains a responsibility of the Greek Government.

2. The Greek Authorities have adopted in November 2012 a comprehensive trade facilitation strategy and roadmap. The Commission is supporting the efforts of the Greek Administration, notably through Technical Assistance from Commission services, coordinated by the Task Force Greece (TFGR) in coordination with Member States and International Organisations.

3. The roadmap provides for a streamlining of customs procedures, improvements to processes and better IT functionalities to greatly enhance productivity and free up human resources. It is the Commission's understanding that where specialised staffing is needed, this should take place through recruitment or internal mobility and in line with the economic adjustment programme of Greece (in particular: one replacement out of five departures).

4. The Commission has no detailed information on the use of procedure code 42 at the Greek-Bulgarian border. The Commission has however taken actions to improve functioning of procedure code 42 by amending the legislative framework ([1]).

5. Special attention is given to the protection of the financial interests of the European Union and its Member States when preparing and proposing new concepts in customs legislation such as Centralised Clearance. Thorough analysis is made in cooperation with all stakeholders, working groups are set up, simulations are made, etc. All aspects will be monitored in detail when new procedures become operational.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 756/2012, OJ L 223, 21.08.2012 and Council Directive 2009/69/EC, OJ L 175, 12 4.7.2009.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000341/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(14 januari 2013)

Angående: Underlaget till kommissionens barnskyddsåtgärder

I fråga E-007751/2012 bad jag kommissionen om information om det underlag på vilket den grundar sin politik för skydd av barn på Internet. I sitt svar gav kommissionen inga exempel och erkände att den – genom hela Internets historia och trots de miljoner euro som spenderats på programmet för säkrare Internet – har misslyckats totalt med att ta fram någon statistisk analys.

I sitt svar på fråga E-009979/2012 förklarar kommissionen att problemet existerar (och svarar falskeligen på en fråga som jag aldrig ställde) och hänvisar ännu en gång till ospecificerad forskning på vilken den tydligen grundar sin politik för skydd av barn på Internet.

Kommissionen har två gånger misslyckats med att besvara mina frågor och har misslyckats med att ge relevant information om konsekvensanalysen av det nyligen antagna direktivet. Därför frågar jag med all respekt kommissionen för tredje gången: Kan kommissionen berätta vilket underlag den använder vid utarbetandet av sin politik på detta mycket viktiga område?

Svar från Cecilia Malmström på kommissionens vägnar
(1 mars 2013)

Kommissionen har redan besvarat parlamentsledamotens fråga uttömmande i sina svar på parlamentsledamotens föregående frågor E-009979/2012 och E-007751/2012.

Kommissionen vill dock ännu en gång betona att vetenskapliga och akademiska uppgifter om denna företeelse tydligt angavs i den konsekvensanalys ([1]) som medföljer kommissionens förslag till direktiv om utnyttjande av barn ([2]). Avsaknaden av konsoliderade statistiska uppgifter på EU-nivå om antalet utredningar eller åtal för barnpornografibrott innebär inte alls att direktivet skulle sakna underlag. Kommissionen upprepar sin fasta föresats att agera mot sexuella övergrepp på barn på nätet – som inte är mindre outhärdliga till följd av bristande statistik – och att rädda utsatta barn. Kommissionen är övertygad om att Europaparlamentet och rådet delar denna föresats och påminner om att Europaparlamentet antog direktivet med stor majoritet, och att stödet i rådet var enhälligt.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2009:0355:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) Europaparlamentets och rådets direktiv 2011/93/EU av den 13 december 2011 om bekämpande av sexuella övergrepp mot barn, sexuell exploatering av barn och barnpornografi, och om ersättande av rådets rambeslut 2004/68/RIF (EUT L 335, 17.12.2011, s. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000341/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(14 January 2013)

Subject: Evidence base for child protection measures adopted by the Commission

In Question E-007751/2012, I asked the Commission for information about the evidence on which it bases its Internet child protection policy. In its reply, the Commission provided no examples, admitting that it has failed completely — throughout the entire history of the Internet, and notwithstanding the millions of euros spent on the Safer Internet Programme — to develop any statistical analysis.

In its reply to Question E-009979/2012, the Commission explains that the problem exists (disingenuously answering a question that I did not ask) and points, again, to unspecified research on which its online child protection policy is apparently based.

The Commission has failed twice to answer my questions, and has failed to include relevant information in the impact assessment of the recent directive. I therefore respectfully ask the Commission, for the third time, to inform me what evidence it is using to develop policy in this very important policy area.

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission has already provided complete answers to the Honourable Member's question in its replies to the Honourable Member's previous questions E-009979/2012 and E-007751/2012.

Nevertheless, the Commission would like to stress once again that scientific and academic evidence on this phenomenon was clearly referenced in the impact assessment ([1]) accompanying the Commission proposal for the Child Exploitation Directive ([2]). The lack of consolidated statistics at EU level on the number of investigations or prosecutions for child pornography offences does not at all imply a lack of factual basis for the directive. The Commission reiterates its determination to take action to combat child sex abuse online, which no shortage of detailed statistics make any more tolerable, and to rescue child victims. The Commission is confident that the European Parliament and the Council share this determination and recalls that the European Parliament adopted the directive by a large majority, and that there was unanimous support in the Council.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2009:0355:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 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, p. 1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-000342/13
à la Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(15 janvier 2013)

Objet: Impacts de l'harmonisation européenne sur l'assainissement non collectif

L'assainissement non collectif est soumis en France à un environnement législatif qui découle du droit de l'Union européenne. Il concerne 20 % de la population française. Les évolutions dans la législation européenne font naître plusieurs questions. Ainsi, à compter du premier juillet 2013, les installations devront, par exemple, satisfaire aux exigences fondamentales du règlement (UE) n° 305/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 9 mars 2011 établissant les conditions harmonisées de commercialisation pour les produits de construction et abrogeant la directive 89/106/ CEE du Conseil.

La Commission peut elle nous éclairer sur les conséquences concrètes de ces évolutions? En particulier:

— Quel est l'avenir de l'arrêté du 7 mars 2012 fixant les prescriptions techniques applicables aux installations d'assainissement non collectif?

— Les nombreux équipements utilisés dans divers pays de l'Union et qui n'ont pas été agréés en France le deviendront-ils immédiatement?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(1er mars 2013)

Le règlement (UE) n° 305/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 9 mars 2011 établissant des conditions harmonisées de commercialisation pour les produits de construction et abrogeant la directive 89/106/CEE du Conseil ([1]), comme la directive 89/106/CEE qu'il remplace, vise à mettre en place les conditions permettant la création d'un marché intérieur des produits de construction et l'élimination des barrières injustifiées aux échanges commerciaux.

Ce règlement harmonise les spécifications techniques européennes applicables aux produits de construction. Pour l'application de ces spécifications, les autorités des États membres doivent retirer les spécifications nationales incompatibles régissant la commercialisation et l'utilisation des produits de construction.

Les États membres sont autorisés à maintenir leurs exigences concernant des niveaux de sécurité justifiés. Toutefois, ils doivent accepter, sans introduire d'agréments nationaux supplémentaires, les produits de construction qui ont les performances requises pour l'usage spécifique prévu. Ces performances devront être exprimées conformément aux spécifications techniques européennes.

La Commission tient à préciser que le règlement (UE) n° 305/2011 précité ne s'applique à aucune installation d'assainissement déjà en place.

En ce qui concerne l'arrêté français du 7 septembre 2009 modifié par l'arrêté du 7 mars 2012, la Commission estime que ce texte semble comporter des dispositions sur l'agrément des installations préfabriquées qui pourraient être contraires à la directive 89/106/CEE et au règlement (UE) n° 305/2011. En effet, ces dispositions semblent imposer des agréments supplémentaires pour des produits auxquels s'appliquent des normes européennes harmonisées.

La Commission examinera les problèmes susmentionnés avec les autorités françaises.

([1]) JO L 88 du 4.4.2011, p. 5.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000342/13
to the Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Impact of European harmonisation on individual wastewater treatment systems

In France, individual wastewater treatment systems, which are used by 20% of people, are regulated by legislation based on EC law. Changes in EC law have now raised a number of questions. For instance, as from 1 July 2013 wastewater systems will have to comply with Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106/EEC.

What impact will the new regulation have on individual wastewater treatment systems? Specifically,

— How will the regulation affect the decree of 7 March 2012 on technical requirements for individual wastewater treatment systems?

— Under the new regulation, will the different types of individual wastewater treatment system used in other EU Member States automatically be authorised in France, despite the fact that they have not been approved by the French authorities?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

Regulation (EU) 305/2011 ([1]) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106/EEC, much like Directive 89/106/EEC it replaces, aims to set the conditions for the creation of an Internal Market for construction products and the elimination of unjustified barriers to trade.

It harmonises European technical specifications for construction products. In applying these specifications, Member States authorities must withdraw conflicting national specifications concerning the marketing and use of construction products.

Member States are allowed to maintain their requirements on justified safety levels. However, they have to accept, without introducing additional national approvals, construction products which have the necessary performance for the specific intended use, expressed in line with European technical specifications.

The Commission would like to clarify that none of the already installed wastewater treatment plants are affected by the said Regulation (EU) 305/2011.

Concerning the French decree of 7 September 2009 amended by the decree of 7 March 2012, the Commission considers that the decree seems to contain provisions on the approval of prefabricated installations which may constitute an infringement of the directive 89/106/EEC and the regulation (EU) 305/2011 insofar as they seem to impose additional approvals for products covered by harmonised European standards.

The Commission will clarify the above issues with the French authorities.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011, p. 5.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000343/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(15. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: PIU-Ausschreibung

Die Kommission hat eine Ausschreibung zum Aufbau von sogenannten Passenger Information Units (PNR-Zentralstellen) veröffentlicht, bevor überhaupt eine Entscheidung im Rat bzw. im EU-Parlament darüber getroffen wurde, ob überhaupt ein EU-PNR-System aufgebaut werden soll.

1. Wie begründet die Kommission die Ausschreibung, obwohl zum Zeitpunkt der Ausschreibung nicht sicher war, ob ein EU-PNR-System eingeführt werden soll?

2. Wie steht die Kommission dem Vorwurf gegenüber, das EU-Parlament und den Rat übergangen zu haben, indem sie Fakten schafft, obwohl noch keine Entscheidung bezüglich des EU-PNR getroffen worden ist?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(25. Februar 2013)

Die gezielte Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen für die Einrichtung von PNR-Zentralstellen, die in den Mitgliedstaaten für die Verarbeitung von PNR-Daten zuständig sind, steht im Einklang mit den Zielen des Förderprogramms „Kriminalprävention und Kriminalitätsbekämpfung“ (ISEC), in dessen Rahmen sie veröffentlicht wurde: Es sollen innovative Methoden und Technologien entwickelt werden, die zu einem hohen Maß an Sicherheit für Bürger beitragen. Die Kommission hatte diese Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen am 19. September 2011 in Dokument C(2011)6306 angekündigt.

Es handelt sich hierbei um eine eigenständige Fördermaßnahme im Rahmen des ISEC-Programms, mit der zur Verhütung, Aufdeckung, Aufklärung und strafrechtlichen Verfolgung von terroristischen Straftaten und schwerer Kriminalität beigetragen werden soll. Sie steht in keinem direkten Zusammenhang mit den laufenden Verhandlungen zwischen dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat über den Vorschlag der Kommission für ein PNR-System der EU ([1]). Im Gegensatz zum Kommissionsvorschlag, der die Verpflichtung aller Mitgliedstaaten zur Einrichtung einer Behörde zur Erhebung, Speicherung und Analyse von PNR-Daten vorsieht, sollen einzelne Mitgliedstaaten unterstützt werden, die auf der Grundlage nationaler Rechtsvorschriften freiwillig ein nationales PNR-System einrichten.

Die Ausschreibung und der Kommissionsvorschlag für ein PNR-System der EU verfolgen das gleiche zweifache Ziel: Sie sollen die Verarbeitung von PNR-Daten als wirksames Instrument zur Bekämpfung von schwerer Kriminalität und terroristischer Straftaten in der EU fördern und diese gleichzeitig an strenge Bedingungen und wirksame Garantien knüpfen, um die Einhaltung der Charta der Grundrechte und den Schutz personenbezogener Daten sicherzustellen. Dies sind die Gründe, warum ähnliche Bedingungen und Garantien wie beispielsweise eine strikte Zweckbindung und angemessene Speicherfristen sowohl in den Prioritäten der Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen als auch im Vorschlag der Kommission enthalten sind.

([1]) KOM(2011)32 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000343/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Tendering procedure for PIUs

The Commission published an invitation to tender for the establishment of Passenger Information Units (central PNR offices) before any decision was taken in the Council or the European Parliament on whether an EU PNR system is even to be set up.

1. How does the Commission justify publishing an invitation to tender even though it was not certain at the time of publication whether an EU PNR system was to be introduced?

2. How does the Commission respond to the charge of going over the heads of the European Parliament and the Council by creating a *fait accompli* even though no decision concerning EU PNR has yet been taken?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

As part of the funding programme on the 'Prevention of and Fight against Crime' (ISEC), the targeted call for proposals to set up Passenger Information Units in Member States for the processing of PNR data is in accordance with the objectives of the ISECprogramme, namely to develop innovative methods and technologies that contribute to a high level of security for citizens. The intention of the Commission to publish this call for proposals was published since 19.9.2011 in document C(2011) 6306.

The call for proposals is a stand-alone funding action within the ISECprogramme to contribute to the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and serious crime. It is not directly linked to the ongoing negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council on the Commission proposal for an EU PNR system ([1]). Unlike the Commission proposal, which would make it obligatory for all Member States to set up a competent authority to collect, store and analyse PNR data, the call for proposals aims at supporting individual Member States that voluntarily set up a national PNR system on the basis of national law.

The call for proposals and the Commission proposal for an EU PNR system share the same dual objective, namely to foster the processing of PNR data as an effective tool to fight serious crime and terrorism in the EU, while making this processing subject to strict conditions and effective safeguards in order to comply with the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the protection of personal data. This is the reasons why similar conditions and safeguards, such as a strict purpose limitation and a proportionate retention period, can be found both in the priorities of the call for proposals and in the Commission proposal.

([1]) COM(2011) 32 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000345/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Presencia de dioxinas en diversas marcas de leche en las Islas Canarias

El pasado 1 de abril de 2012 se publicó en la revista científica *Chemosphere* un artículo realizado por profesionales de la salud españoles que trabajan en las instituciones públicas de Canarias. En dicho artículo, los científicos exponen los resultados de su investigación, según los cuales han encontrado altos contenidos de dioxinas y sustancias similares en varias marcas de leche comercializadas en las islas.

Según la investigación, realizada sobre 26 marcas diferentes de leche comercializadas en las islas, se han encontrado niveles de contaminación superiores a los niveles permitidos establecidos por las agencias internacionales. Los autores han seleccionado a la población de las Islas Canarias debido a que el consumo de leche y productos lácteos en el archipiélago supera la media española y europea.

Las dioxinas o sustancias similares a las mismas encontradas en los análisis de la leche comercializada son agentes muy peligrosos para la salud, que pueden afectar a la reproducción y el desarrollo de los seres humanos, e incluso pueden provocar cáncer. Las dioxinas investigadas en el artículo proceden de pesticidas empleados en la agricultura desde los años 70 que, pese a haber sido regulados a diferentes niveles normativos, continúan estando presentes en las grasas animales que contienen las diferentes marcas de leche analizadas.

Con este artículo se confirma la presencia de este tipo de agentes contaminantes en la leche por encima de los umbrales permitidos, con el importante riesgo para la salud pública que esto supone.

¿Dispone la Comisión de datos sobre las sustancias químicas procedentes de pesticidas que contiene la leche en los Estados miembros? ¿En cuáles de ellos se superan los límites recomendados de ingestión de dichas dioxinas?

¿Dispone la Comisión de información sobre los efectos que los actuales niveles de concentración de dioxinas en la leche europea pueden tener sobre la salud humana?

¿Está llevando a cabo la Comisión algún plan para reducir el nivel de contaminación de la leche con estos elementos procedentes de pesticidas usados en la agricultura?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión

(27 de febrero de 2013)

Todos los plaguicidas organoclorados a los que se refiere el artículo publicado en la revista científica «Chemosphere» están prohibidos en la EU, la mayoría desde hace varios decenios. Estos compuestos son muy persistentes y su presencia en el medio ambiente como consecuencia de su utilización en épocas pasadas puede hacer que sigan apareciendo niveles bajos en la cadena alimentaria humana y animal. Todos los niveles de plaguicidas organoclorados que se indican en el artículo cumplen la legislación de la UE, lo que refleja la situación en el conjunto de la UE.

La presencia en la leche de bifenilos policlorados, en especial los similares a las dioxinas, de la que habla el artículo no guarda relación con la presencia de residuos de plaguicidas organoclorados ni con la utilización de estos productos en épocas pasadas. En la UE está prohibido utilizar y producir bifenilos policlorados y su presencia en la leche está relacionada con la contaminación medioambiental producida por estas sustancias persistentes.

En la Directiva 2002/32/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo ([1]) y en el Reglamento (CE) n° 1818/2006 de la Comisión ([2]) se han fijado los niveles máximos de bifenilos policlorados, en especial los similares a las dioxinas, para los piensos y los alimentos, respectivamente. La leche que no es conforme con esos niveles máximos no debe introducirse en el mercado, o debe retirarse de él. En el mercado de la UE solo puede introducirse leche que respete esos niveles, pues no es nociva para la salud humana. Se ha informado a las autoridades españolas de las conclusiones expuestas en el artículo y se les ha pedido que realicen el seguimiento necesario.

La Comisión adoptó en 2001 la «Estrategia comunitaria sobre las dioxinas, los furanos y los policlorobifenilos» ([3]), con el fin de reducir la presencia de estos compuestos en el medio ambiente, los piensos y los alimentos. Desde entonces se han publicado los correspondientes informes de situación sobre la aplicación de esa estrategia ([4]).

([1]) DO L 140 de 30.5.2002, p. 10.
([2]) DO L 364 de 20.12.2006, p. 5.
([3]) COM(2001) 593.
([4]) Informes de situación disponibles en: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/dioxin/doing.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000345/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Presence of dioxins in various brands of milk in the Canary Islands

On 1 April 2012, an article was published in the scientific journal *Chemosphere* by Spanish health professionals working in the Canary Island's public institutions. In this article, the scientists set out the results of their research, which confirmed they had found a high content of dioxins and similar substances in various brands of milk sold on the islands.

According to the results of their research, which was conducted on 26 different brands of milk sold on the islands, the levels of contamination found were greater than the permitted levels laid down by international agencies. The Canary Islands were chosen by those who wrote the article because their inhabitants consume more milk and dairy products on average than the rest of Spain and Europe.

The dioxins and other similar substances found in the milk being sold pose a health risk, and can affect reproduction and human development, and even cause cancer. The dioxins in question come from pesticides used in agriculture since the 1970s, which, despite having been regulated by different levels of standards, can still be found in the animal fats contained in the various different brands of milk that were tested.

This article confirms that the type of contaminating agents found in the milk exceed the permitted levels and pose a significant risk to public health.

Does the Commission have any information on the chemical substances from pesticides contained in the milk in the Member States? In which Member States do these dioxins exceed the recommended levels for consumption?

Does the Commission have any information on the effects that the current concentration levels of dioxins in European milk can have on human health?

Does the Commission have any plans to reduce the level of contamination of milk caused by these substances that come from pesticides used in agriculture?

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

The organochlorine pesticides referred to in the article published in the scientific journal Chemosphere have all been prohibited in the EU, most of them already several decades ago. These compounds are very persistent and their presence in the environment as the consequence of historical use can still result in low levels in the feed and food chain. The levels of organochlorine pesticides referred to in the article are all in compliance with EU legislation, which reflects the situation in the whole EU.

The presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), including the dioxin-like PCBs in the milk as reported in the article is not related to the presence of residues of organochlorine pesticides or the historical use of organochlorine pesticides. The use and production of PCBs has been banned in the EU and the presence of PCBs in milk is related to contamination of the environment by these persistent substances.

Maximum levels for PCBs including dioxin-like PCBs have been established in feed and food respectively by Directive 2002/32/EC of the European Parliament and the Council ([1]) and by Commission Regulation (EC) 1881/2006 ([2]). Milk that is not compliant with the maximum levels shall not be placed on the market or withdrawn from the market. Only milk compliant with these levels can be placed on the market in the EU and does not affect adversely the human health. The Spanish authorities have been informed of the findings reported in the article with the request to ensure the necessary follow-up.

The Commission adopted in 2001 a 'Community strategy for Dioxins, Furans and PCBs' ([3]) with the objective to reduce the presence of these compounds in the environment, in feed and food.

Since then progress reports on the implementation of the strategy have been published ([4]).

([1]) OJ L 140, 30.5.2002, p. 10.
([2]) OJ L 364, 20.12.2006, p.5.
([3]) COM(2001) 593.
([4]) Progress report available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/dioxin/doing.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000346/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(15 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αιθαλομίχλη, παράνομη υλοτομία και παραβίαση των οριακών τιμών για τα αιωρούμενα μικροσωματίδια

Ο πρώην Επίτροπος Περιβάλλοντος κ. Δήμας, σε σχετική ερώτησή μου είχε απαντήσει (10.12.2009) ότι *«η Επιτροπή έχει κινήσει διαδικασία επί παραβάσει κατά της Ελλάδος για παραβίαση των τιμών των PM10»*, ότι *«περισσότεροι από 1,5 εκ. άνθρωποι φαίνεται να έχουν εκτεθεί σε συγκεντρώσεις PM10 άνω των οριακών τιμών για το σύνολο της χώρας»* και *«η Επιτροπή έχει εκτιμήσει ότι η απώλεια 4 εκ. ετών ζωής στην Ελλάδα θα μπορούσε να αποδοθεί στη ρύπανση από τα σωματίδια»*. Με δεδομένα ότι,

α) Σήμερα στην Ελλάδα, κυρίως στο λεκανοπέδιο Αττικής, στη Θεσσαλονίκη και σε άλλα αστικά κέντρα, καταγράφηκαν επί σειρά ημερών μεγάλες υπερβάσεις στις οριακές τιμές για τα αιωρούμενα σωματίδια PM10 και PM2.5, καθώς και στην οριακή τιμή του διοξειδίου του αζώτου και του μονοξειδίου του άνθρακα λόγω της αιθαλομίχλης από τη χρήση καυσόξυλων,

β) Δεν έχουν υπάρξει μέτρα μείωσης των συγκεντρώσεων μικροσωματιδίων όπως απαιτεί η Οδηγία,

γ) Τόσο εκτεταμένη υλοτόμηση έχει να συμβεί από την περίοδο της γερμανικής κατοχής και η παράνομη υλοτόμηση έχει πάρει δραματικές διαστάσεις με αποτέλεσμα την αποψίλωση των ελληνικών δασών και την επιπλέον επιβάρυνση και υποβάθμιση του περιβάλλοντος.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σε τι στάδιο βρίσκεται η διαδικασία κατά της Ελλάδος για παραβίαση των οριακών τιμών των αιωρούμενων σωματιδίων που κίνησε η Επιτροπή στις 20.9.2009, και σε τι ενέργειες προέβη ή προτίθεται να προβεί προς τις ελληνικές αρχές μετά τις τελευταίες μετρήσεις που κατέδειξαν αρκετές φορές σοβαρή αύξηση πάνω από τα όρια των αιωρούμενων σωματιδίων μέχρι PM10 που παραβιάζουν κατάφωρα τη σχετική κοινοτική νομοθεσία;

2. Υπάρχουν στοιχεία που να δείχνουν αύξηση των μικροσωματιδίων, των βαρέων μετάλλων ή άλλων βλαβερών ουσιών στον αέρα που να συσχετίζονται με την αυξημένη χρήση καυσόξυλων για την θέρμανση;

3. Σκοπεύει να επανεξετάσει την απόφασή της για αύξηση της τιμής του πετρελαίου θέρμανσης, διότι, λόγω της τεράστιας μείωσης των εισοδημάτων, η αύξηση αυτή οδήγησε σε αύξηση της χρήσης των καυσόξυλων για θέρμανση και την ανεξέλεγκτη αύξηση της παράνομης υλοτομίας; Αν όχι, τι άλλα μέτρα προτείνει για την κάλυψη των αναγκών για θέρμανση του ελληνικού λαού;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαρτίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή αποφάσισε να διευρύνει το περιεχόμενο της δικαστικής διαδικασίας κατά της Ελλάδας όσον αφορά την παραβίαση των οριακών τιμών για τα αιωρούμενα σωματίδια. Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου θα βρει περισσότερες πληροφορίες στο πρόσφατο δελτίο τύπου της Επιτροπής: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-47_en.htm

2. Υπάρχουν πολλές μελέτες στις οποίες τεκμηριώνεται ότι η καύση των ξύλων συμβάλλει στα επίπεδα των σωματιδίων PM10 στην ατμόσφαιρα. Ως παράδειγμα, μια πολύ πρόσφατη μελέτη (Chemkar III) έδειξε ότι ο αριθμός των ημερών — σε ετήσια βάση — κατά τις οποίες σημειώνεται υπέρβαση της ημερήσιας οριακής τιμής των PM (50 μικρογραμμάρια/m^3) έχει αυξηθεί από 23 σε 45 ημέρες λόγω της καύσης ξύλων. Ο έλεγχος των εν λόγω εκπομπών είναι μία από τις πτυχές που αξιολογούνται στο πλαίσιο της αναθεώρησης της θεματικής στρατηγικής για την ατμοσφαιρική ρύπανση ([1]).

3. Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι εξουσιοδοτημένη να καθορίζει τις τιμές των ενεργειακών προϊόντων, συμπεριλαμβανομένου και του πετρελαίου θέρμανσης, στα κράτη μέλη. Δεν θα μπορούσε, επομένως, να έχει λάβει απόφαση για την αύξηση της τιμής του πετρελαίου θέρμανσης στην Ελλάδα. Παρομοίως, η Επιτροπή δεν είναι αρμόδια να καλύπτει τις ανάγκες των ευρωπαίων πολιτών σε θέρμανση, ούτε η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ περιλαμβάνει διατάξεις για την κάλυψη των εν λόγω αναγκών. Η οδηγία 2009/72/ΕΚ ([2]) καλύπτει πράγματι την πρόσβαση στην ενέργεια από ευρύτερη σκοπιά απαιτώντας την αντιμετώπιση της ενεργειακής ένδειας στις περιπτώσεις που διαπιστώνεται. Ωστόσο, με βάση την εν λόγω νομοθεσία (άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 8), η σχετική αρμοδιότητα έχει σαφώς ανατεθεί στα κράτη μέλη.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm
([2]) Οδηγία 2009/72/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 13ης Ιουλίου 2009, σχετικά με τους κοινούς κανόνες για την εσωτερική αγορά ηλεκτρικής ενεργείας, ΕΕ L 211 της 14.8.2009, σ. 55-93.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000346/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Smog, illegal logging and violation of limit values for airborne particulates

The former Environment Commissioner Mr Dimas, in response to a question I had asked about this issue, answered on 10 December 2009 that 'the Commission launched infringement proceedings against Greece for breaching the PM10 limit values,' that 'more than 1 500 000 people seem to be exposed to a concentration of PM10 above the limit values for the whole country' and 'the Commission has, however, estimated that in 2000 around 4 million life years were lost in Greece that could be attributed to fine particle pollution.' Given that:

(a) In Greece mainly in the Attica basin, Thessaloniki and other cities, over several days values far higher than the limit values for the particulate matters PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ and for nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide have been recorded due to smog from the use of firewood;

(b) No measures have been taken to reduce concentrations of particulate matter, as required by the directive;

(c) Logging on such a scale has not occurred since the period of the German occupation and illegal logging has assumed dramatic proportions, resulting in the deforestation of Greek forests and additional environmental pollution and degradation;

Will the Commission say:

1. What stage have proceedings against Greece reached for breaching limit values for particulate matter initiated by the Commission on 20 September 2009, and what action has it taken or does it intend to take vis-à-vis the Greek authorities following the latest measurements which show on several occasions a significant increase over the limit values of particulates, including PM_{10} particulates, in flagrant violation of the relevant Community legislation?

2. Is there any evidence to suggest an increase in fine particles, heavy metals or other harmful substances in the air associated with increased use of firewood for heating?

3. Will it reconsider its decision to raise the price of heating oil because, due to the huge reduction in people's income, this as led to the increased use of firewood for heating and a rampant increase in illegal logging? If not, what other measures does it propose to meet the heating needs of the Greek people?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2013)

1. The Commission has decided to expand the scope of the case against Greece for breaching limit values for particulate matter. For more information, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its recent press release: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-47_en.htm.

2. There are many studies providing evidence that wood burning contributes to the levels of PM_{10} in the atmosphere. As an example, a very recent study ('Chemkar III') showed that the annual number of days of exceedance of the PM daily limit value of 50 microgram/m3 has increased from 23 to 43 days due to the combustion of wood. The control of such emissions is one of the aspects being evaluated during the review of the thematic strategy of air pollution ([1]).

3. The Commission is not empowered to determine the prices of energy products, including heating oil, in Member States. It could therefore not have taken a decision to raise the price of heating oil in Greece. Equally, the Commission is not empowered to ensure the heating needs of European citizens, nor does EU legislation include provisions for ensuring such needs. Directive 2009/72/EC ([2]) does address access to energy in more general terms by requiring that energy poverty be addressed where identified. However, the responsibility in this regard is clearly given by this legislation (Article 3.8) to Member States.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm
([2]) Directive 2009/72/EC of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009, pp. 55-93.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000347/13
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Further allegations of a breach of Directive 2009/147/EC in Malta

Numerous incidents of bird hunting and trapping in Malta, which appear to contravene EU Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, continue to be reported. Most recently, I am informed that two British witnesses from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds testified in a court case in October 2012 to the shooting of a protected species in Malta, supported by video evidence and a confession from the perpetrator of the shooting. However, the case was thrown out by the court on the grounds that the video did not have the bird and hunter in the same field of view. I am informed that the police will not permit an appeal to be made.

In July 2012, the Commission advised that it had initiated a dialogue with a number of stakeholders on the matter and that it was following up on a ruling by the European Court of Justice condemning Malta's actions on hunting issues.

What action has the Commission therefore taken in this regard? What further steps will it be taking to ensure that Malta fully enforces EU Directive 2009/147/EC?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

The Commission is closely monitoring the situation in Malta and has raised the issue of illegal hunting and trapping of protected birds with the competent Maltese authorities on several occasions, most recently during an annual bilateral environmental package meeting held in October 2012.

The Commission recalls however that it is primarily the responsibility of the national law enforcement authorities, including in courts of law, to ensure that the relevant EU nature protection laws, including those affecting bird hunting and trapping are properly enforced, and that violations of these laws are properly investigated to lead to prosecutions and convictions. In this regard Malta appears to have taken certain measures to improve the enforcement system. According to information provided by the Maltese authorities, the magnitude of penalties possible under Maltese legislation has doubled over the past few years and a substantial record of prosecutions can be noted. We therefore consider that Maltese authorities are stepping their efforts in order to combat unlawful and excessive hunting.

Furthermore, acknowledging that illegal practices affecting bird populations occur in several countries in Europe, the Commission is developing, in consultation with Member States and stakeholders, a list of specific actions to address the problems, covering areas such as monitoring of illegal activities, information exchange and awareness-raising, prevention and enforcement improvements.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000348/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Asesinato en París de tres activistas kurdas

En la madrugada del pasado jueves 10 de enero aparecieron asesinadas en París tres militantes kurdas. Los cadáveres de Sakine Cansiz, una de las fundadoras del Partido de los Trabajadores del Kurdistán (PKK), Fidan Dogan y Leyla Soylemez fueron hallados con disparos en la cabeza, sin que se disponga hasta el momento de más información sobre el asesinato.

Las tres militantes fueron encontradas alrededor de la una de la madrugada en el Centro de Información del Kurdistán situado en la capital francesa. Fueron sus amigos quienes, preocupados porque aquellas no respondían a sus llamadas, descubrieron los cadáveres. Según la policía francesa, los autores del crimen utilizaron armas con silenciador, en lo que la emisora France Info ha calificado como una «ejecución programada».

Ante dicho asesinato, la Federación de Asociaciones Kurdas de Francia (FEYKA) ha convocado a la comunidad kurda europea a una manifestación en París para repudiar el atentado. Este atentado se produce en un momento histórico en el que se había anunciado el inicio de las conversaciones de paz entre el Gobierno turco y el líder fundador del PKK, Abdulá Ocalan, encarcelado por las autoridades turcas desde 1999.

El proceso de paz iniciado en la región está siendo boicoteado a través de asesinatos violentos como estos que pretenden abortarlo. Pese a desconocer la autoría de dicha atrocidad, podemos considerar clara la intencionalidad política del asesinato al producirse en el exacto momento en el que el Gobierno turco ha iniciado las conversaciones en un contexto marcado por la fuerte presión del pueblo kurdo.

1. ¿Ha condenado la Comisión el triple asesinato? ¿Dispone la Comisión de más información?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que el Gobierno de Turquía debe garantizar el desarrollo de un proceso de paz transparente y que garantice la seguridad de la población kurda y de los activistas del PKK?

3. ¿Piensa plantear la Comisión alguna medida de presión ante el Gobierno turco para que este garantice el cumplimiento de los derechos humanos del pueblo kurdo?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de febrero de 2013)

La Alta Representante/vicepresidenta está al corriente de los sucesos mencionados por Su Señoría y está atenta a las investigaciones en curso de las autoridades francesas para esclarecerlos.

La UE siempre ha hecho hincapié en la importancia de abordar la cuestión kurda en foros democráticos y con la contribución más extensa posible de todas las fuerzas democráticas, inclusive en el marco de la actual actividad de elaboración de una nueva constitución democrática. En el sudeste de Turquía se necesitan paz, democracia y estabilidad, así como un desarrollo social, económico y cultural. Esto solo puede conseguirse mediante un consenso sobre las medidas concretas de ampliación de los derechos sociales, económicos y culturales de las personas que viven en la región.

La UE apoya plenamente las conversaciones en curso encaminadas a poner fin a un conflicto que se ha cobrado un número demasiado alto de víctimas en las tres últimas décadas. La UE también se congratula del apoyo de la sociedad civil y los distintos partidos a esta iniciativa. También alienta a todas las partes interesadas a no dejarse desviar de su objetivo por el horrible suceso a que se refiere Su Señoría o por otras posibles provocaciones que se produzcan en el futuro.

La Alta Representante seguirá de cerca la evolución de la situación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000348/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Murder of three Kurdish activists in Paris

In the early hours of 10 January 2013, three Kurdish militants were murdered in Paris. The bodies of Sakine Cansiz, one of the founders of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Fidan Dogan and Leyla Soylemez were found with bullet wounds in their heads, but no further information has been released on the murder thus far.

The three militants were found at around 01.00 in the Kurdistan information centre in the French capital. Their bodies were discovered by their friends who first became concerned when they failed to contact them by phone. According to the French police, the perpetrators of the crime used weapons fitted with silencers, in what the radio station France Info described as a 'planned execution'.

The Federation of Kurdish Associations in France (FEYKA) has called the Kurdish community in Europe to a demonstration in Paris to condemn the attack. These murders took place at an historic moment, which marked the start of peace talks between the Turkish government and the PKK's founding leader, Abdulá Ocalan, who has been in prison since his arrest by the Turkish authorities in 1999.

The peace process under way in the region is being boycotted by violent acts of murder in an attempt to derail it. Although the perpetrator of this atrocity is still unknown, the political motive for the murders is clear, given that they occurred at the precise moment in which the Turkish government began talks in light of extreme pressure from the Kurdish people.

1. Has the Commission condemned these three murders? Does the Commission have any further information?

2. Does the Commission believe that the Turkish government should ensure the development of a transparent peace process that guarantees the security of the Kurdish people and the PKK activists?

3. Does the Commission plan on putting any pressure on the Turkish government to ensure the human rights of the Kurdish people are fully respected?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the events referred to by the Honourable Parliamentarian and is following the ongoing investigations by the French authorities into these events.

The EU has always underlined the importance of addressing the Kurdish issue in the democratic arena, with the widest possible contribution of all democratic forces, including in the framework of the ongoing work on a new democratic constitution. The South-East needs peace, democracy and stability as well as social, economic and cultural development. This can only be achieved via consensus over concrete measures expanding the social, economic and cultural rights of the people living in the region.

The EU gives its full support to the ongoing talks aimed at ending a conflict which has claimed far too many victims in the past three decades. The EU also welcomes the cross-party and civil society support for this initiative. It encourages all parties involved not to let the horrible incident referred to by the Honourable Member or other possible provocations in the future distract them from their goal.

The High Representative will be following developments closely.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000349/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(15 ianuarie 2013)

Subiect: Defrișarea pădurilor în contextul schimbărilor climatice

Pădurile ocupă suprafețe semnificative ale planetei și sunt ecosisteme importante atât pentru om, cât și din punct de vedere strict ecologic. Pentru oameni, pădurea are valențe estetice, recreaționale, dar și economice. Lemnul, precum și alte produse ale pădurii au atât o importanță economică locală, cât și mondială. Se estimează că o treime din populația lumii este dependentă în continuare de lemn ca sursă importantă de energie.

Modul în care a fost și este exploatată pădurea, mai ales despăduririle excesive, a condus la reducerea substanțială a suprafețelor împădurite la nivel mondial.

Cauzele, dar și efectele defrișării pădurilor sunt variate și depind de condițiile economico-sociale specifice fiecărei zone climatice.

Având în vedere că Uniunea Europeană s-a angajat în lupta împotriva schimbărilor climatice, în acest context, industria forestieră poate juca un rol important în politica de protecție a mediului înconjurător la nivelul Uniunii, dar și în ceea ce privește programele de reîmpădurire în Europa.

Care sunt măsurile prin care intenționează Comisia să stabilească la nivel european o legislație a managementului forestier care să combată defrișările abuzive în condițiile actualelor schimbări climatice?

Răspuns dat de dna Hedegaard în numele Comisiei
(4 martie 2013)

Pădurile din Europa (la fel ca cele din toată lumea) sunt esențiale atât pentru atenuarea schimbărilor climatice, cât și pentru strategiile de adaptare la acestea. În consecință, Comisia este extrem de preocupată de utilizarea și gestionarea corespunzătoare și durabilă a acestora. Regulamentul european privind exploatarea lemnului, care va intra în vigoare în martie 2013, are scopul de a garanta că lemnul care intră pe piața UE este tăiat legal.

Comisia colaborează strâns cu statele membre, pentru a pregăti o nouă strategie UE privind pădurile, care va promova gestionarea durabilă a pădurilor din Europa și utilizarea corespunzătoare a produselor forestiere recoltate ca material durabil și ecologic. Această strategie va fi susținută de continuarea eforturilor legate de durabilitatea biomasei solide (inclusiv păduri) și gazoase și de inițiative internaționale având ca obiect gestionarea durabilă a fondului forestier, precum inițiativa „Reducerea emisiilor cauzate de despăduriri și de degradarea pădurilor” (REDD+).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000349/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Deforestation in the context of climate change

Forests occupy significant areas of the planet and are important ecosystems both for humans and from a strictly environmental viewpoint. For humans, the forest has aesthetic and recreational, but also economic value. Wood, like other forest products, is of both local and global economic importance. It is estimated that one third of the world's population is still dependent on wood as an important source of energy.

The way the forest has been, and is being, exploited, especially by excessive deforestation, has led to a substantial reduction in forested areas worldwide.

The causes and effects of deforestation are diverse and dependent on the socioeconomic conditions specific to each climate zone.

Given that the European Union is committed to the fight against climate change, in this context the forestry industry can play a significant role in environmental protection policy at EU level, as well as in the reforestation programmes in Europe.

Given the current climate changes, what are the measures through which the Commission plans to establish forestry management legislation at European Level in order to combat abusive deforestation?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

Forests in Europe — and worldwide — are essential to both climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies. Consequently, ensuring their appropriate and sustainable management and use is a key concern of the Commission. The EU Timber Regulation which enters into force in March 2013 aims to ensure that timber which enters the EU market is legally harvested.

The Commission is working closely with the Member States to prepare a new EU Forest Strategy, which will promote sustainable management of forests in Europe and appropriate use of harvested wood products as a sustainable and climate-friendly material. This Strategy will be supported by further work on sustainability for solid (including forest) and gaseous biomass, and international initiatives addressing sustainable forest management such as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000350/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 ianuarie 2013)

Subiect: Inițiativă legislativă privind eticheta europeană în domeniul turismului

În programul de lucru al Comisiei pentru anul 2012 era prevăzută prezentarea unei inițiative legislative privind eticheta europeană în domeniul turismului. Printre obiectivele unei astfel de inițiative legislative se numără: creșterea gradului de conștientizare privind turismul durabil, atât în rândul publicului, cât și al părților private interesate; facilitarea accesului consumatorilor la servicii turistice de înaltă calitate; calitate și transparență în modul de evaluare a calității serviciilor de turism.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia când va prezenta această inițiativă legislativă și care sunt etapele și acțiunile cheie prin care se vor atinge aceste obiective?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(13 martie 2013)

Comisia a consultat deja părțile implicate și lucrează, în prezent, la o propunere legislativă privind crearea unei etichete europene în domeniul turismului (eticheta ETQ), menită să le dea consumatorilor posibilitatea de a alege în cunoștință de cauză, printr-o evaluare coerentă a anumitor aspecte legate de calitatea serviciilor turistice în rândul sistemelor de calitate participante și al membrilor acestora.

Acest lucru se va realiza prin stabilirea unui set de criterii comune vizând: a) informațiile oferite consumatorilor, b) gradul de satisfacție a clientului, c) procesele aferente serviciilor, d) formarea angajaților. Criteriile vor fi generale și se vor aplica unei game largi de subsectoare din domeniul turismului, pentru a permite acoperirea, de către eticheta ETQ, a unei mase critice de sisteme de calitate și întreprinderi de turism.

Eticheta ETQ le va oferi întreprinderilor de turism un instrument eficient de informare în relația cu consumatorii, stimulându-le să investească mai mult în calitatea serviciilor. Va fi o etichetă de referință, în primul rând pentru călătorii din UE și pentru cei provenind din țări terțe, menită să identifice serviciile turistice de calitate de pe teritoriul UE.

Comisia va asigura implicarea tuturor grupurilor relevante de părți interesate din sectorul public și privat și va verifica dacă se respectă cerințele. Implementarea etichetei ETQ va fi facilitată de activități de informare și promovare destinate întreprinderilor și consumatorilor.

Comisia intenționează să își prezinte propunerea în următoarele luni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000350/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Legislative initiative on the European Tourism Label

In the Commission's work programme for 2012, provision was made for the presentation of a legislative initiative on the European Tourism Label. Among the objectives of such a legislative initiative were: raising awareness of sustainable tourism, both amongst the public and interested private parties; facilitating consumer access to high-quality tourist services; quality and transparency in the quality assessment model for tourism services.

When will the Commission present this legislative initiative and what are the key stages and actions for meeting these objectives?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2013)

The Commission has already consulted stakeholders and is currently working on the legislative proposal for the European Tourism Label (ETQ Label), which aims at facilitating the informed choice of consumers through the consistent evaluation of certain tourism service quality aspects among the participating quality schemes and their members.

This will be achieved through the establishment of a set of common criteria focusing on: a) information offered to consumers, b) customer satisfaction, c) service processes, d) employee training. The criteria will be general and applicable to a wide range of tourism sub-sectors, in order to enable the coverage of a critical mass of quality schemes and tourism businesses by the ETQ Label.

The ETQ Label will offer an effective information tool for tourism businesses vis-à-vis consumers, improving their incentives to further invest in service quality. It will represent a reference label, primarily for cross-border travellers within the EU and from third countries, for the identification of EU quality tourism services.

The Commission will ensure the involvement of all relevant and interested public and private stakeholder groups, as well as the monitoring and verification of compliance. The implementation of the ETQ Label will be facilitated by information and promotional activities offered to businesses and consumers.

The Commission aims to present its proposal in the coming months.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000351/13
an die Kommission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(15. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Vertragsverletzungen beim Abkommen über das Programm zum Aufspüren der Finanzierung des Terrorismus (TFTP-Abkommen)

Die Kommission wird ausdrücklich gebeten, die folgenden Fragen zu dem Bericht über die zweite gemeinsame Überprüfung der Umsetzung des TFTP-Abkommens ausschließlich mit „Ja" oder „Nein" zu beantworten.

Datenminimierung

1. Trifft es zu, dass Ersuchen des US-Finanzministeriums um Herausgabe von Daten zu den Zwecken des Abkommens gemäß Artikel 4 des TFTP-Abkommens so eng wie möglich gefasst sein müssen?

2. Trifft es zu, dass der weitaus größte Teil der vom US-Finanzministerium seit dem Inkrafttreten des TFTP-Abkommens beantragten Daten in Wirklichkeit nie von diesem Ministerium abgefragt werden?

Rechte der Betroffenen

1. Trifft es zu, dass jede Person gemäß Artikel 16 des TFTP-Abkommens das Recht hat, die Berichtigung ihrer vom US-Finanzministerium verarbeiteten personenbezogenen Daten zu verlangen?

2. Trifft es zu, dass die Berichtigung von Daten im engeren Sinne seit dem Inkrafttreten des TFTP-Abkommens sich als technisch nicht durchführbar erwiesen hat?

Aufbewahrungsfrist von Daten

1. Trifft es zu, dass alle nicht extrahierten Daten, die am 20. Juli 2007 oder später beim US-Finanzministerium eingegangen sind, gemäß Artikel 6 des TFTP-Abkommens spätestens fünf Jahre nach Eingang gelöscht werden?

2. Trifft es zu, dass die Daten, die zwischen dem 20. Juli 2007 und dem 20. Oktober 2007 beim US-Finanzministerium eingegangen sind, in Wirklichkeit nicht vor dem 21. Oktober 2012 gelöscht wurden?

Aufsicht

1. Trifft es zu, dass gemäß Artikel 12 des TFTP-Abkommens einem von der Europäischen Kommission benannter Prüfer die Befugnis übertragen wird, alle Suchabfragen der bereitgestellten Daten in Echtzeit und nachträglich zu überprüfen?

2. Trifft es zu, dass es seit dem Inkrafttreten des TFTP-Abkommens gewisse Einschränkungen gegeben hat, die den Prüfer der EU dran gehindert haben, einige Daten einzusehen?

Transparenz

1. Trifft es zu, dass die Parteien gemäß Artikel 13 des TFTP-Abkommens gemeinsam die im Abkommen enthaltenen Bestimmungen, insbesondere in Bezug auf die Anzahl der abgerufenen Zahlungsverkehrsdaten, überprüfen?

2. Trifft es zu, dass insbesondere die Anzahl der abgerufenen Zahlungsverkehrsdaten seit dem Inkrafttreten des TFTP-Abkommens nie Gegenstand der gemeinsamen Überprüfungen war?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(5. März 2013)

Die Kommission ist dabei, die zur Beantwortung der Frage benötigten Informationen zusammenzustellen. Die Ergebnisse wird sie baldmöglichst mitteilen.

Ergänzende Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(30. April 2013)

In Bezug auf die jeweils erste Frage zu jedem Abschnitt verweisen wir den Herrn Abgeordneten auf den Wortlaut des Abkommens ([1]).

Ersuchen des US-Finanzministeriums sind möglichst eng eingegrenzt, damit die Menge der angeforderten Daten möglichst gering gehalten werden kann ([2]). Das Ministerium prüft ex post den Nutzen der verschiedenen Datenarten unter Berücksichtigung des Bedarfs und verfeinert so neue Ersuchen. Wenn Grund zu der Annahme besteht, dass die betreffende Person einen Bezug zu Terrorismus oder Terrorismusfinanzierung aufweist, dann werden zwar alle Daten innerhalb des übermittelten Datensatzes durchsucht, aber es wird bei einer Suche tatsächlich nur auf einen geringen Anteil einzelner Daten zugegriffen.

Gemäß dem Abkommen dürfen TFTP-Daten weder bearbeitet, verändert noch ergänzt werden. Das US-Finanzministerium hat jedoch vor der Annahme des Abkommens eine alternative Herangehensweise vorgeschlagen; demnach sollen Informationen, die einer Berichtigung bedürfen, in den extrahierten Daten oder den auf diesen Daten beruhenden Berichten markiert werden ([3]). Die Kommission hat empfohlen, dass dies auf der Website des US-Finanzministeriums klargestellt wird.

Das US-Finanzministerium hat alle nicht-extrahierten Daten, die es vor dem 20. Juli 2007 erhalten hat, gelöscht und den technisch intensiven Prozess der Löschung aller zwischen dem 20. Juli 2007 und 20. Juli 2008 eingegangenen nicht-extrahierten Daten eingeleitet ([4]). Es werden derzeit Maßnahmen getroffen, um zu gewährleisten, dass alle nicht-extrahierten Daten spätestens fünf Jahre nach Eingang gelöscht werden.

Wegen der Anforderungen der Vereinigten Staaten an die Sicherheitsüberprüfung gab es gewisse Einschränkungen, die den Prüfer der EU daran hinderten, einige Daten einzusehen. Dies hat den Kontrollmechanismus nicht gehemmt, da die Prüfer sich in ihrer Arbeit ergänzen. Die Situation hat sich mit der Ernennung des stellvertretenden Prüfers der EU weiter verbessert ([5]).

Tatsächlich abgerufene Zahlungsverkehrsdaten können in mehreren Suchabfragen erscheinen. Deshalb können keine Informationen über ihre Menge bereitgestellt werden ([5]).

([1]) Abkommen zwischen der Europäischen Union und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika über die Verarbeitung von Zahlungsverkehrsdaten und deren Übermittlung aus der Europäischen Union an die Vereinigten Staaten für die Zwecke des Programms zum Aufspüren der Finanzierung des Terrorismus („Abkommen").

([2]) Im Einklang mit Artikel 4 Absatz 2 des Abkommens und unter Berücksichtigung der darin genannten Faktoren.

([3]) Bisher sind keine entsprechenden Ersuchen um Berichtigung von Daten beim US-Finanzministerium eingegangen.

([4]) Das US-Finanzministerium geht davon aus, dass die Löschung dieses Datensatzes binnen weniger Wochen abgeschlossen ist.

([5]) Weitere Einzelheiten finden sich im Bericht über die zweite gemeinsame Überprüfung der Durchführung des Abkommens (SWD(2012)454 endg.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000351/13
to the Commission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Breaches of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP) Agreement

The Commission is specifically requested to answer the following questions on the report on the second joint review of the implementation of the TFTP Agreement with 'yes' or 'no' only:

Data minimisation

1. Is it correct that, according to Article 4 of the TFTP Agreement, requests from the US Treasury Department for data necessary for the purposes of the Agreement shall be tailored as narrowly as possible?

2. Is it correct that by far the greater part of the data requested by the US Treasury Department since the entering into force of the TFTP Agreement will in fact never be accessed by said department?

Data subject rights

1. Is it correct that, according to Article 16 of the TFTP Agreement, any person has the right to seek the rectification of his or her personal data processed by the US Treasury Department?

2. Is it correct that since the entering into force of the TFTP Agreement rectification of data in the strict sense has in fact proved technically infeasible?

Data retention period

1. Is it correct that, according to Article 6 of the TFTP Agreement, all non-extracted data received by the US Treasury Department on or after 20 July 2007 should have been deleted not later than five years after receipt?

2. Is it correct that the data received by the US Treasury Department between 20 July 2007 and 20 October 2007 was in fact not deleted before 21 October 2012?

Oversight

1. Is it correct that, according to Article 12 of the TFTP Agreement, an overseer appointed by the Commission shall have the authority to review in real time and retrospectively all searches made of the provided data?

2. Is it correct that since the entering into force of the TFTP Agreement there have in fact been certain limits preventing the EU overseer from seeing some data?

Transparency

1. Is it correct that, according to Article 13 of the TFTP Agreement, the Parties shall jointly review the provisions set out in the Agreement having particular regard to the number of financial payment messages accessed?

2. Is it correct that, in fact, since the entry into force of the TFTP Agreement none of the joint reviews had particular regard to the number of financial payment messages accessed?

Preliminary answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

The Commission is collecting the information it needs to answer the question. It will communicate its findings as soon as possible.

Supplementary answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

With regard to the first question under each section we refer the Honourable Member to the text of the Agreement ([1]).

United States Treasury requests are tailored as narrowly as possible in order to minimise the amount of data requested ([2]). Its necessity-based reviews look at the responsiveness of different types of data in the past and result in refinement of future requests. While all data within the provided data set are subject to search when there is a reason to believe the subject of the search has a nexus to terrorism or its financing, only a small proportion of individual messages are actually accessed in connection with any given search

The Agreement prohibits TFTP data from being subject to any manipulation, alteration or addition. However, the US Treasury suggested, prior to the adoption of the Agreement, an alternative way of addressing the issue by flagging information requiring rectification within any extracted data or reports based upon that data ([3]). The Commission recommended that this is made clear on the Treasury website.

United States Treasury deleted all non-extracted data received prior to 20 July 2007 and has begun the technically intensive process of deleting all non-extracted data received between 20 July 2007 and 20 July 2008 ([4]). Measures are being taken to ensure that all non-extracted data will be deleted no later than 5 years from receipt.

Due to United States security clearance requirements, there have been certain limits for the EU overseer to see some data. This has not hampered the control mechanism as the overseers work in a complementary way. The situation has further improved with the appointment of the EU deputy overseer ([5]).

Financial messages actually accessed may appear in multiple searches made. It is therefore not possible to provide the information about their volumes ([5]).

([1]) Agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on the processing and transfer of Financial Messaging Data from the European Union to the United States for the purpose of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Program ('Agreement').
([2]) In line with Article 4.2(c) of the Agreement and taking into account the factors identified in it.
([3]) Until now, no compliant requests for data rectification have been received by the US Treasury.
([4]) US Treasury expects to finalise the deletion of this dataset within a few weeks.
([5]) Further details are included in the report on the second joint review of the implementation of the Agreement (SWD(2012) 454 final).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000352/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Protests in Iraq against women prisoners being subjected to horrific forms of torture and rape

I have been informed by two of my London constituents that on 26 December 2012 thousands of people in Iraq participated in large but peaceful demonstrations against the Iraqi Government in response to allegations that women prisoners held in government-controlled prisons were being subjected to horrific forms of torture and rape at the hands of interrogators and prison guards.

Demonstrators in Mosul, marching towards the city's Liberation Square in protest against these crimes, were met with aggressive behaviour from Iraqi army units, which drove their military vehicles into the crowd in an attempt to coerce the demonstrators away from the square by force. Four demonstrators were seriously injured and taken to hospital, and there are unconfirmed reports that they may have died from their injuries.

In response to this horrendous chain of events:

1. what political pressure has the European External Action Service exerted, or does it intend to exert, on the Iraqi authorities to bring an end to rape and torture, especially where they are perpetrated against women held in Iraqi prisons?

2. what form of pressure can it apply to help protect peaceful Iraqi protesters against Iraq's security apparatus?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President Ashton follows the situation in Iraq very closely. She is concerned about the continuing unacceptable violence across the country and the impact this has on the human rights situation.

The EEAS services, both in headquarters and the EU Delegation are treating allegations of human rights abuses in Iraq seriously. The EU is regularly voicing its human rights concerns to the Iraqi authorities, both publicly and through diplomatic channels. The EU implements locally the EU Guidelines on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In addition, the EU continues to engage Iraq on its international commitments including those made at the Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review on Iraq in February 2010.

Since 2003 the EU supported measures to improve the rule of law and human rights, including through the Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX-Iraq) that assists in promoting a culture of respect for human rights within the criminal justice system. Finally, the EU proposes to substantially upgrade cooperation on human rights with Iraq through the implementation of the EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000353/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(15 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Inspecciones de la OLAF a proyectos europeos de la Diputación de Ourense

En la pasada primavera de 2012, nos hacíamos eco en Galicia (España) de las inspecciones realizadas por técnicos de la Oficina Europea de Lucha Contra el Fraude (OLAF) a distintos proyectos desarrollados por la Diputación de Ourense con recursos provenientes de los fondos de cohesión de la Unión Europea.

En respuesta a mi pregunta E-003308/2012, la Comisión Europea informaba de que, efectivamente, los Proyectos del Plan Daredo y del Plan Deputráns estaban siendo investigados. Estos proyectos están destinados a la adquisición de depuradoras de aguas residuales domésticas para diferentes ayuntamientos de esta diputación. Sin embargo, en el momento de la respuesta de la Comisión, mayo de 2012, la OLAF no podía aportar información adicional por encontrarse las investigaciones aún en curso.

En aquella pregunta advertía, asimismo, de la polémica existente sobre la ejecución del Plan Estaciones, desarrollado al amparo de fondos provenientes del Programa Interreg IIIA y destinado a la rehabilitación y puesta en marcha de un conjunto de seis estaciones funiculares en Ourense y un funicular en Viana do Castelo en Portugal —con un coste de más de 6 millones de euros.

¿Podría la Comisión facilitar información actualizada sobre estas investigaciones? Y, en su caso, ¿podría la Comisión informar sobre cuándo se prevé la conclusión de aquellos expedientes que puedan estar aún en curso? ¿Considera la Comisión que el Plan Estaciones está siendo ejecutado de manera correcta?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión ha sido informada por la Oficina Europea de Lucha contra el Fraude (OLAF) de que esta no ha concluido todavía su investigación sobre los proyectos del Plan Daredo y del Plan Deputrans, en la provincia de Orense (España), aunque dicha investigación está muy avanzada.

En estas circunstancias, la OLAF no puede dar ninguna otra información en la materia por el momento. No obstante, entendemos que la OLAF tiene previsto concluir el asunto para mediados de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000353/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) inspections of European projects of the Ourense Provincial Government

In the spring of 2012, we called attention in Galicia (Spain) to inspections made by European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) technical staff of various projects undertaken by the Ourense Provincial Government using European Union Cohesion Fund resources.

In reply to my Question E-003308/2012, the European Commission reported that projects in the Daredo Plan and Deputráns Plan were, in fact, being investigated. These projects are aimed at the acquisition of domestic wastewater treatment plants for different municipalities in this council. However, at the time of the Commission's reply, in May 2012, OLAF could not provide any additional information, since its investigations were still in progress.

In that question I also reported the controversy existing with regard to implementation of the Stations Plan, developed with funding from the Interreg IIIA Programme, aimed at refurbishing and putting into service a set of six funicular stations in Ourense and a funicular train in Viana do Castelo in Portugal, at a cost of more than EUR 6 million.

Can the Commission provide an update on these investigations? If any proceedings are still in progress, can the Commission report on when they are expected to be concluded? Does the Commission believe that the Stations Plan is being executed properly?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission has been informed by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) that its investigation into the projects of the Daredo Plan and the Deputrans Plan, in the province of Ourense, Spain, whilst well advanced, is not yet concluded.

In the circumstances OLAF can give no further information in the matter at this stage. However, it is understood that OLAF intends to have the case finalised by mid-2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000354/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Mögliche Lehren aus den Erfahrungen mit den „Wackelkandidaten"

Welche Lehren hat die Kommission im Detail für Ihre Arbeit aus dem Fall Griechenland gezogen — und zwar in Bezug auf weitere „Wackelkandidaten" in der Eurozone?

Wie geht die Kommission mit diesen Erfahrungen gegenwärtig (Zypern) und zukünftig um?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(25. März 2013)

Der Fall Griechenland hat gezeigt, dass Probleme in einem Mitgliedstaat zu einem systemischen Risiko für den gesamten Euroraum führen können. Deshalb ist es wichtig, die wirtschaftspolitische Steuerung zu stärken, denn dadurch wird verhindert, dass sich makroökonomische Ungleichgewichte aufbauen und die Schuldenstände untragbar werden; gleichzeitig werden negative externe Effekte minimiert. Diesem Ziel dient das Europäische Semester für die Koordinierung der Wirtschaftspolitik, das durch den „Six-Pack" (Stärkung des Stabilitäts- und Wachstumspakts und Einführung des Verfahrens bei einem makroökonomischen Ungleichgewicht) und den „Two-Pack" untermauert wurde.

Das Konzept der Kommission für eine vertiefte und echte Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion ([1]) weist den Weg in die richtige einzuschlagende Richtung.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/134069.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000354/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Possible lessons to be learned from experience with 'wobbling dominoes'

What detailed lessons has the Commission learned from the case of Greece for its work on other 'wobbling dominoes' in the eurozone?

How is the Commission applying this experience currently (in relation to Cyprus), and how will it use this experience in the future?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

The Greek case has taught that problems in one Member State can pose a systemic risk to the euro area as a whole. For that reason, it is important to strengthen the economic governance framework that will.prevent the building-up of macroeconomic imbalances and unsustainable debt positions in the future and minimise the negative spillovers. This objective is being achieved through the European Semester of economic policy coordination, reinforced by the six-pack that strenghtened the Stability and Growth Pact and introduced the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure, and the two-pack of legislation.

The Commission Blueprint for a deep and genuine economic and monetary union ([1]) constitutes a beacon for the way ahead.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/134069.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000355/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(15 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δομές παιδικής φροντίδας και απασχόληση στην Ευρώπη της κρίσης

Η τρέχουσα οικονομική κρίση έχει λάβει ανησυχητικές κοινωνικές διαστάσεις σε όλη την Ευρώπη και κυρίως στις χώρες που αντιμετωπίζουν μεγαλύτερα οικονομικά προβλήματα, με τον κοινωνικό ιστό να έχει αποδυναμωθεί λόγω των εκτεταμένων περικοπών στις κοινωνικές και προνοιακές πολιτικές. Η απασχόληση έχει πληγεί σημαντικά με τα ποσοστά ανεργίας να ανέρχονται σε νέα ιστορικά υψηλά, τόσο σε επίπεδο Ένωσης, όσο και σε πολλά κράτη μέλη όπως η Ελλάδα όπου πλέον αγγίζει το 26% και παρουσιάζει ανοδική δυναμική. Οι γυναίκες αποτελούν μία από τις πληθυσμιακές ομάδες που έχουν ιδιαίτερα πληγεί από την κρίση παρουσιάζοντας μεγαλύτερα ποσοστά ανεργίας και ποσοστά υλικής υστέρησης. Σε αυτή την κατεύθυνση και δεδομένου ότι η εργασία αποτελεί τη βασική ασπίδα έναντι της φτώχειας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού, υπάρχει έντονη ανάγκη ενίσχυσης των ποσοστών απασχόλησης των γυναικών, σύμφωνα και με τους τρεις βασικούς κοινωνικούς στόχους της Στρατηγικής ΕΕ 2020. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπάρχει διασύνδεση μεταξύ της οργάνωσης των δομών παιδικής φροντίδας και των ποσοστών γυναικείας απασχόλησης και απασχόλησης γενικότερα; Διαθέτει στοιχεία για το ποια κράτη μέλη έχουν τις πιο οργανωμένες και εύκολα προσβάσιμες δομές παιδικής φροντίδας και τα αντίστοιχα ποσοστά απασχόλησης (και ανά φύλο) και ποια η θέση της Ελλάδας;

2. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα κονδύλια για την ενίσχυση των δομών παιδικής φροντίδας; Ποια κράτη μέλη τα έχουν αξιοποιήσει;

3. Σε ποιά κράτη μέλη έχει επιτευχθεί η βέλτιστη αξιοποίηση των αντίστοιχων κονδυλίων (λόγος κόστους και προσφερόμενων υπηρεσιών);

4. Προτίθεται να προβεί σε σχετικές συστάσεις προς τα κράτη μέλη που υπολείπονται στο συγκεκριμένο τομέα;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Απριλίου 2013)

Το 3ο Ευρωπαϊκό Εξάμηνο για τον συντονισμό των οικονομικών πολιτικών δρομολογήθηκε στο πλαίσιο της Ετήσιας Επισκόπησης της Ανάπτυξης ([1]) (ΕΕΑ) του 2013. Η σημασία της ύπαρξης διαθέσιμων και οικονομικά προσιτών, ποιοτικών υπηρεσιών βρεφονηπιακής φροντίδας για τη βελτίωση των επιπέδων απασχολησιμότητας, την προώθηση της κοινωνικής ένταξης και την αντιμετώπιση της φτώχειας τονίστηκε στην ΕΕΑ και στο σχέδιο της κοινής έκθεσης για την απασχόληση. Η Επιτροπή αναλύει ετησίως την πρόοδο που σημειώνεται όσον αφορά την ισότητα των φύλων και την εναρμόνιση ιδιωτικής και επαγγελματικής ζωής ([2]). Φέτος, η Επιτροπή θα υποβάλει επίσης έκθεση σχετικά με τις επιδόσεις των κρατών μελών σε σχέση με τους στόχους της Βαρκελώνης ([3]) όσον αφορά τις υπηρεσίες βρεφονηπιακής φροντίδας. Η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε πρόσφατα σύσταση με τίτλο «Επένδυση στα παιδιά: σπάζοντας τον κύκλο της μειονεξίας» ([4]) με την οποία καλεί τα κράτη μέλη να παρέχουν πρόσβαση σε προσιτές, από άποψη κόστους, ποιοτικές υπηρεσίες, επενδύοντας σε προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα (ΠΕΦ) και αξιοποιώντας τα συναφή χρηματοδοτικά μέσα της ΕΕ πιο αποδοτικά για τον εν λόγω σκοπό.

Η Επιτροπή ενθαρρύνει τα κράτη μέλη να κάνουν χρήση της χρηματοδοτικής στήριξης που τους προσφέρεται μέσω των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων:

— Στα περισσότερα κράτη μέλη, τα επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου αντιμετωπίζουν την εναρμόνιση ιδιωτικής και επαγγελματικής ζωής με μέτρα για τη διευκόλυνση της πρόσβασης στις υπηρεσίες βρεφονηπιακής φροντίδας και σε υπηρεσίες περίθαλψης για άλλα εξαρτώμενα άτομα.

— Το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) στηρίζει τις γυναίκες στην απασχόληση μέσω επενδύσεων σε εγκαταστάσεις βρεφονηπιακής φροντίδας. Σήμερα, ποσοστό 74,3% του προγραμματισμένου ποσού (ήτοι 616 034 837 ευρώ) έχει κατανεμηθεί σε επιλεγμένες δράσεις. Ορισμένα παραδείγματα ορθής πρακτικής διατίθενται στη βάση δεδομένων με επιτυχημένα παραδείγματα έργων του ΕΤΠΑ ([5]).

([1]) COM(2012)750.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/progress_on_equality_between_women_and_men_in_2011.pdf
([3]) Το 2002, στο Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο της Βαρκελώνης τέθηκαν στόχοι όσον αφορά τη φροντίδα των παιδιών σε όλη την ΕΕ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/el/ec/71025.pdf
([4]) Κοινωνικές επενδύσεις για την ανάπτυξη και τη συνοχή — μεταξύ άλλων μέσω της εφαρμογής του. Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου 2014-2020, COM(2013)83 τελικό· Επένδυση στα παιδιά: σπάζοντας τον κύκλο της μειονεξίας C(2013)778 τελικό.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_el.cfm

Για την επόμενη περίοδο, η βελτίωση της ποιότητας και η πρόσβαση σε εγκαταστάσεις βρεφονηπιακών υπηρεσιών εξετάζεται στο προπαρασκευαστικό έργο της Επιτροπής ως βάση για τις διαπραγματεύσεις με τα κράτη μέλη.

Η αποτελεσματικότητα της εφαρμογής των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων θα μπορεί να αξιολογηθεί μόνον στα τέλη της τρέχουσας περιόδου.

Με βάση τον προσανατολισμό της πολιτικής της ΕΕΑ, τα κράτη μέλη θα υποβάλουν τον Απρίλιο του 2013 τα εθνικά τους προγράμματα μεταρρύθμισης. Η Επιτροπή θα τα αξιολογήσει και θα προτείνει συστάσεις ανά χώρα στα κράτη μέλη που δεν παρουσιάζουν ικανοποιητικές επιδόσεις στον εν λόγω τομέα. Το 2012, 9 κράτη μέλη έλαβαν συστάσεις ανά χώρα στον εν λόγω τομέα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000355/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Childcare structures and employment in crisis-hit Europe

The current economic crisis has assumed alarming social dimensions throughout Europe, in particular in countries facing major economic problems, where the social fabric has weakened because of extensive social and welfare cuts. Employment has been severely affected, with unemployment rates reaching unprecedented levels at both Union level and in many Member States such as Greece where it now stands at 26% and is rising. Women are one of the population groups particularly affected by the crisis, suffering higher rates of unemployment and material backwardness. In this context, since work is the main protection against poverty and social exclusion, it is urgently necessary to increase the employment rate of women, according to the three key social objectives of the EU 2020 strategy. In this connection, will the Commission say:

1. Is there a link between the organisation of childcare structures and female employment rates and employment rates in general? Does it have any information about which Member States have the best organised and most easily accessible childcare structures and about corresponding employment rates (including per gender) and what rank does Greece occupy?

2. Are any funds available to support childcare structures? Which Member States have used them?

3. Which Member States have achieved the optimum use of the relevant funds (ratio between cost and services provided)?

4. Will it make recommendations to those Member States that are lagging behind in this area?

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

The 2013 Annual Growth Survey ([1]) (AGS) launched the 3rd European Semester of economic policy coordination. The importance of available and affordable quality childcare facilities for improving employability levels, promoting social inclusion and tackling poverty was stressed in the AGS and the draft Joint Employment Report. The Commission analyses yearly the progress on gender equality and reconciliation between work and private life ([2]). The Commission will also report this year on the Member States performances towards the Barcelona targets ([3]) on childcare facilities. The Commission has recently adopted a recommendation Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage ([4]) that invites Member States to provide access to affordable quality services, by investing in ECEC and exploiting relevant EU financial instruments more efficiently for that purpose.

The Commission encourages Member States to make use of the financial support provided through the Structural Funds:

— In most Member States, European Social Fund operational programmes tackle reconciliation with measures to facilitate access to childcare and care to other dependents.

— The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supports women in employment through investments in childcare infrastructure. In the current period 74.3% of the planned amount (EUR 616 034 837) has been allocated to selected operations. Some good practice examples are available in the ERDF success stories database ([5]).

For the next period, the improvement of the quality and access to childcare facilities is addressed in the Commission's preparatory work as a basis for the negotiations with the Member States.

([1]) COM(2012) 750.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/progress_on_equality_between_women_and_men_in_2011.pdf
([3]) In 2002, the European Council in Barcelona set objectives for childcare provision across the EU http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/71025.pdf
([4]) Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion — including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020, COM(2013) 83 final; Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage C(2013) 778 final.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm

The efficiency of the implementation of structural funds can only be evaluated at the end of the current period.

Based on the policy guidance in the AGS, Member States will submit in April 2013 their Reform Programmes. The Commission will assess them and propose country specific recommendations (CSR) to the Member States underperforming in this field. 9 Member States received CSR in this area in 2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000356/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Die finanzielle Stabilität Zyperns

In ihrer Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-000803/2011 zur finanziellen Stabilität Zyperns schrieb die Kommission: „Alles in allem lässt sich feststellen, dass auf der Grundlage der derzeit vorliegenden Informationen der ‚Abwärtstrend' nicht weiter andauern wird. Im Gegenteil, die haushaltspolitischen Aussichten scheinen sich sogar deutlich verbessert zu haben".

1. Kann die Information die Grundlage (Informationsquelle) für diese Erklärung erläutern?

2. Wie erklärt die Kommission die jüngste Abwärtsbewegung in Zypern, die der oben genannten Ansicht der Kommission diametral entgegensteht?

3. Welche Maßnahmen zieht sie in Betracht, um zu vermeiden, dass sich die Situation ähnlich wie in Griechenland entwickelt?

4. Die zyprische Bevölkerung leidet bereits erheblich in humanitärer Sicht, wegen des „Zypern-Problems". Was gedenkt die Kommission zu unternehmen, um zu vermeiden, dass die zyprische Bevölkerung nicht noch stärker belastet wird und auch in finanzieller Hinsicht leiden muss?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(7. März 2013)

Bei der Schlussfolgerung der Kommission wurden alle damals verfügbaren Informationen zugrunde gelegt. Die betreffende Analyse ist abrufbar unter:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/30_edps/other_documents/2011-01-27_cy_communication-swp_en.pdf

Seit Anfang 2011 gestaltet sich die Wirtschaftsentwicklung in Zypern schwierig, zumal der auf den Abbau unhaltbarer wirtschaftlicher Ungleichgewichte folgende Kreditabbau noch nicht abgeschlossen ist: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp101_en.pdf

Im Juni 2012 stellten die zyprischen Behörden einen Antrag auf finanziellen Beistand der Euroraum-Mitgliedstaaten. Angesichts der Herausforderungen, vor denen Zypern insbesondere aufgrund seines angeschlagenen Bankensektors und noch vorhandener makroökonomischer Ungleichgewichte steht, wurde dieser Antrag von der Eurogruppe begrüßt.

Die Minister forderten die Kommission auf, in Abstimmung mit der EZB, den zyprischen Behörden und dem IWF ein Programm aufzustellen, das vor allem Folgendes beinhaltet:

— Ehrgeizige Maßnahmen zur Sicherung der Stabilität des Finanzsektors durch Behebung erwarteter Eigenkapitallücken und Gesunderhaltung der Finanzinstitute, erforderlichenfalls auch durch Restrukturierung und Verkleinerung,

— energische Durchführung der finanzpolitischen Anpassung zur Unterstützung der laufenden Finanzkonsolidierung,

— Strukturreformen zur Stützung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und eines nachhaltigen und ausgewogenen Wachstums, wobei dem Abbau makroökonomischer Ungleichgewichte Rechnung zu tragen ist ([1]).

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/367984/eg statement cyprus 27 june 2012.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000356/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: The financial stability of Cyprus

In its answer to Written Question E-000803/2011 on Cyprus's financial stability, the Commission wrote that 'all in all, on the basis of currently available information, the "downward trend" does not continue. On the contrary, there seems to be a significant improvement in the fiscal outlook'.

1. Can the Commission explain the basis (source of information) for this statement?

2. How does the Commission explain the recent downward development in Cyprus, which is quite the opposite of the Commission's view quoted above?

3. What steps does it plan to take to prevent the development of a situation similar to that in Greece?

4. The Cypriot people already undergo considerable suffering, from a humanitarian viewpoint, because of the 'Cyprus problem'. What does the Commission intend to do to avoid any further burden being placed on the Cypriot people, with financial consequences?

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

The Commissions' conclusion was based on all available information at that time. The underlying analysis is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/30_edps/other_documents/2011-01-27_cy_communication-swp_en.pdf

Since early 2011, economic developments in Cyprus have been difficult, notably due to the ongoing deleveraging process that followed the unwinding of unsustainable economic imbalances:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp101_en.pdf

In June 2012, the Cypriot authorities requested financial assistance from euro area Member States.The Eurogroup welcomed the request in view of the challenges that Cyprus is facing in particular due to distress in the banking sector and the presence of macroeconomic imbalances.

Ministers invited the Commission, in liaison with the ECB, with the Cypriot authorities and the IMF to agree on a programme which will be based on:

— Ambitious measures to ensure the stability of the financial sector by adressing expected capital shortfalls and preserving the soundness of financial institutions, including restructuring and downsizing where needed.

— Determined action to carry out the fiscal adjustment to support the ongoing process of fiscal concolidation.

— Structural reforms to support competitiveness and sustainable and balanced growth , allowing for the unwinding of macroeconomic imbalances ([1]).

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/367984/eg statement cyprus 27 june 2012.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000357/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(15 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: La Cina e la crisi in Europa

Sempre più spesso si viene a conoscenza di interventi speculativi immobiliari da parte dei cinesi, che approfittano della crisi finanziaria di alcuni comuni di paesi dell'Unione europea come l'Italia. Se l'apporto di capitali stranieri in un'economia nazionale indebolita dalla crisi può svolgere una funzione di stimolo, d'altro canto una strategia speculativa mirata e persistente può rappresentare una pericolosa infiltrazione negli affari economici di quel paese. Potrebbe essere, ad esempio, il caso del mega-affaire della riconversione delle aree ex Falk di Sesto San Giovanni, un intervento urbanistico enorme: un milione di metri quadrati da edificare e quattro miliardi di euro di investimenti. Pare che gli operatori cinesi abbiano manifestato, come in tanti altri casi, il loro interesse per il recupero e il restauro dell'area in questione, progetto ritenuto di interesse dalla stessa Repubblica popolare cinese e il cui sviluppo è seguito dal Consolato cinese di Milano.

1. Non ritiene, la Commissione, che questa persistente strategia speculativa possa rappresentare un'infiltrazione oggettivamente pericolosa per lo sviluppo autonomo delle economie dei nostri paesi?

2. È in grado di monitorare questa presenza cinese nel mercato immobiliare dei paesi dell'Unione?

3. Quali eventuali iniziative può porre in essere per contrastare questo andamento che, oltre certi limiti, può rappresentare una seria minaccia alla nostra autonomia?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(8 marzo 2013)

La Commissione monitorizza i flussi e *stock* di investimenti esteri diretti. Tuttavia compete alle autorità italiane valutare i potenziali rischi o benefici di un singolo investimento, come quello cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare. In una prospettiva più generale, nonostante le statistiche confermino un aumento degli investimenti cinesi in Italia e nel resto dell'Europa ([1]), il contributo della Cina all'afflusso globale di investimenti è ancora marginale rispetto ad alti grandi partner commerciali. In base alle esperienze finora maturate gli investimenti esteri diretti hanno un impatto positivo sull'economia europea. È pertanto nell'interesse dell'UE, così come sancito dal trattato sull'Unione europea, continuare ad essere un'economia molto aperta, poiché questo approccio ha contribuito al nostro benessere globale. La vendita di proprietà a investitori stranieri è di pertinenza delle autorità nazionali e locali competenti. Il principale compito della Commissione è garantire che le misure restrittive siano giustificate e proporzionate conformemente ai trattati dell'UE e alla giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea ([2]). Per quanto riguarda la possibilità per uno Stato membro di porre restrizioni agli investimenti esteri diretti, la Commissione rimanda alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-010705/2011.

([1]) Cfr la risposta della Commissione all'interrogazione scritta E-000260/2013.
([2]) Cfr. l'articolo 65, paragrafo 1, lettera b), del TFUE e le cause riunite C-163/94, C-165/94 e 250/94 Sanz de Lera e altri nonché la causa C-54/99 Eglise de Scientologie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000357/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: China and the crisis in Europe

There are increasingly frequent reports of property speculation by Chinese investors taking advantage of the financial crisis of some municipalities in European Union countries, including Italy. Although the influx of foreign capital into a crisis-hit national economy can stimulate growth, carefully targeted and persistent speculation can also amount to dangerous interference in the country's economic affairs. This might apply, for example, in the case of the mega-project for the regeneration of the area formerly occupied by the Falck plant in Sesto San Giovanni, a huge urban development project stretching across a million square meters and requiring EUR4 billion in investment. It seems that, as so often before, Chinese stakeholders have expressed interest in renovating and restoring the area in question, a project in which the People's Republic of China itself is taking an interest, and whose progress is being monitored by the Chinese Consulate in Milan.

1. Does the Commission consider that this persistent speculation could interfere with, and represent a real threat to, the independent development of our countries' economies?

2. Is the Commission able to monitor Chinese involvement in the property markets of Union countries ?

3. What steps could the Commission take to halt this trend, which, unless it is kept in check, could represent a serious threat to our independence?

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

The Commission monitors flows and stocks of foreign direct investments. However, it is for the Italian authorities to assess the possible harmful or positive effects of an individual investment such as the one Honourable Member refers to. More generally, though statistics confirm that Chinese investment is increasing in Italy and in the rest of Europe ([1]), it still represents a marginal part of the whole investment inflow, compared to other major trade partners. Experience shows that foreign direct investments have a positive impact on Europe's economy. It is therefore in the EU's interest — as enshrined in the Treaty on the European Union — to remain a highly open economy, as this has contributed to our overall well-being. The sale of properties to foreign investors is dealt by national and local authorities under their competences. . The role of the Commission is primarily to ensure that restrictive measures are justified and proportionate according to the EU treaties and the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union ([2]). The Commission would also refer to its reply to Written Question E-010705/2011 as regards Member States possibility to restrict foreign direct investments.

([1]) See the Commission's reply to written questions E-000260/2013.
([2]) See Art. 65 (1) b TFEU and joined cases C-163/94, C-165/94 and -250/94 Sanz de Lera and Others and Case C-54/99 Eglise de Scientologie.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000358/13
do Komisji
Andrzej Grzyb (PPE)
(15 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Konkursy wewnętrzne dla urzędników Komisji

DG ds. Zasobów Ludzkich opublikowała niedawno plan konkursów wewnętrznych. Istotny cel stanowi poprawa sytuacji urzędników zatrudnionych po 2004 r., która stała się niekorzystna w wyniku reformy Regulaminu pracowniczego przeprowadzonej w 2004 r. Zgodnie z załącznikiem XIII do Regulaminu pracowniczego urzędnicy ci byli zatrudniani w grupie zaszeregowania AD5; dotychczas przeważająca większość nie przekroczyła grupy zaszeregowania AD7. Znaczny odsetek planowanych konkursów wewnętrznych dotyczy grup zaszeregowania AD8 i AD11.

Czy Komisja mogłaby udzielić bliższych informacji o kryteriach dotyczących tych konkursów? Dlaczego procedury selekcyjne w konkursach na stanowiska AD10 i AD12 opierają się na CV i rozmowach kwalifikacyjnych, natomiast konkursy na stanowiska AD7 i AD8 są o wiele bardziej zgodne z zasadami takimi jak anonimowość i uczciwość? Czy Komisja może wyjaśnić to podejście i odmienne traktowanie różnych kategorii urzędników?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Maroša Šefčovicia w imieniu Komisji
(5 marca 2013 r.)

Zgodnie ze zobowiązaniami, jakie komisarz ds. stosunków międzyinstytucjonalnych i administracji podjął w ramach negocjacji na temat wniosku dotyczącego zmiany regulaminu pracowniczego UE w stosunku do personelu, służby Komisji dopracowują obecnie praktyczne zasady organizacji konkursów wewnętrznych. Konkursy te będą zasadniczo konkursami na administratorów grupy zaszeregowania AD7, AD8 i AD9, doradców AD10 i AD12, a także grup AST3 i AST4. Szczegółowy charakter testów jest jeszcze dyskutowany, zasady będą natomiast jednakowe dla wszystkich konkursów grupy zaszeregowania AD: etap komputerowej selekcji anonimowych CV (narzędzie stosowane w ramach konkursów zewnętrznych organizowanych przez EPSO), po którym następuje egzamin ustny. Konkursy AST będą się odbywały zasadniczo w formie pytań wielokrotnego wyboru oraz rozmów kwalifikacyjnych. W każdym razie zasady te – zgodne z regułą równego traktowania – mają na celu wybór najlepszych kandydatów i umożliwienie im jak najszybszej ścieżki kariery.

W imię prawidłowego zarządzania konkursy te nie będą miały wpływu na budżet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000358/13
to the Commission
Andrzej Grzyb (PPE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Internal competitions for Commission officials

DG HR recently published a plan for internal competitions. A key objective is to improve the situation of post-2004 officials, which was distorted after the 2004 reform of the Staff Regulations. In accordance with Annex XIII to the Staff Regulations, these officials were hired at grade AD5; to date, the vast majority of them have been able to progress no further than grade AD7. A significant proportion of the planned internal competitions are for grades AD8 to AD11.

Would you be able to clarify the criteria for these competitions? Why are the selection procedures for the AD10 and AD12 competitions CV- and interview-based, whereas the AD7 and AD8 competitions are much more in line with principles such as anonymity and fairness? Can the Commission explain this approach and the differing treatment accorded to different types of official?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(5 mars 2013)

Conformément aux engagements pris par le Commissaire responsable des Relations interinstitutionnelles et Administration à l'égard du personnel dans le cadre des négociations de la proposition de révision du Statut des fonctionnaires de l'UE, les services de la Commission sont actuellement en train de finaliser les modalités pratiques liées à l'organisation de concours internes. Ces concours seront en principes des concours d'administrateurs aux grades AD7, AD8 et AD9, des conseillers AD10 et AD12 ainsi que des concours AST3 et AST4. La nature précise des épreuves est encore en cours de discussions mais les modalités seront communes pour tous les concours dans le groupe de fonction AD: une phase de sélection informatisée de CV anonymes (outil utilisé dans le cadre de concours externes organisés par EPSO) suivie d'une épreuve orale. Les concours AST se feront en principe avec des questions à choix multiples suivies d'entretiens. Ces modalités respecteront en tout état de cause les principes d'égalité de traitement et viseront à sélectionner les candidats les plus méritants pour leur permettre une carrière plus rapide.

Dans un souci de saine gestion, ces concours seront neutres d'un point de vue budgétaire.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000359/13
do Komisji
Andrzej Grzyb (PPE)
(15 stycznia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Szczegółowe informacje na temat reformy Regulaminu pracowniczego

Ilu urzędników na stanowiskach AD zatrudnia Komisja? Ilu z nich zajmuje stanowiska kierownicze w rozumieniu Regulaminu pracowniczego (zastępca szefa zespołu, szef zespołu, dyrektor, zastępca dyrektora generalnego lub ktokolwiek inny otrzymujący dodatek z tytułu pełnienia funkcji kierowniczej)? Czy we wniosku dotyczącym reformy Regulaminu pracowniczego przewidziano jakikolwiek mechanizm, mający zastosowanie do wszystkich kategorii urzędników UE, który kompensowałby środki oszczędnościowe?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Maroša Šefčoviča w imieniu Komisji
(19 marca 2013 r.)

W styczniu 2013 r. Komisja zatrudniała 12 900 pracowników w grupie AD, 10 600 pracowników w grupie AST oraz 5 800 pracowników kontraktowych. W grupie AD 1 500 urzędników zatrudnionych było na stanowiskach kierowniczych.

Wniosek Komisji dotyczący zmiany Regulaminu pracowniczego nie kompensuje środków oszczędnościowych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000359/13
to the Commission
Andrzej Grzyb (PPE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Clarification of the reform of the Staff Regulations

How many AD officials does the Commission employ? How many of them hold management positions within the meaning of the Staff Regulations (deputy head of unit, head of unit, director, deputy director-general or anyone else receiving a managerial allowance)? Does the proposal for the reform of the Staff Regulations provide for any kind of mechanism, applicable to any category of EU officials, that would compensate for austerity measures?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2013)

In January 2013, the Commission employed 12 900 AD, 10 600 AST and 5 800 contract agents. 1 500 AD officials held management positions.

The proposal of the Commission to amend the Staff regulation does not compensate for austerity measures.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000360/13
alla Commissione
Salvatore Caronna (S&D)
(15 gennaio 2013)

Oggetto: Presunta violazione delle direttive 92/43/CEE «Habitat» e 79/409/CEE «Uccelli» e di altre normative comunitarie da parte del comune di Valdobbiadene (TV) — IT

Nel 2008, il Comune di Valdobbiadene (Treviso) ha autorizzato, in località Pianezze, la realizzazione di un'antenna per radiocomunicazione; si tratta, nella fattispecie, di un impianto costituito da un enorme traliccio di circa 60 metri di altezza che forma la struttura portante e dalle relative antenne che ne amplificano la dimensione ed il volume.

La struttura, per la sua configurazione e l'impatto visivo che genera, risulta incompatibile con il luogo ove è collocata

Il Comune di Valdobbiadene è sito in una zona di particolare valore paesaggistico, rinomata per il pregio delle sue aree collinari che unisce alla produzione vitivinicola di alta qualità una forte attrazione turistica e un rilevante valore ambientale.

La realizzazione di tale struttura è avvenuta nonostante il parere contrario della Soprintendenza e nonostante questa abbia impartito una sospensione dei lavori, mai rispettata.

Tutta l'area a nord di Valdobbiadene risulta individuata come zona di incompatibilità assoluta ai fini di nuovi insediamenti industriali rilevanti, in quanto parte di essa è inserita nella perimetrazione dei Siti di interesse comunitario (SIC) e in Zone di protezione speciale (ZPS).

Inoltre, la fase preliminare della VIA, intesa a valutare l'incidenza del progetto, è stata effettuata senza alcuna verifica od istruttoria tecnica sui principali effetti sull'ambiente e sul patrimonio culturale — paesaggistico che il progetto avrebbe potuto produrre.

Sono stati inoltre del tutto omessi, da parte delle autorità sanitarie locali, gli accertamenti ed i controlli dei limiti magnetici derivanti dall'impianto di radiodiffusione sulle abitazioni circostanti.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può dire la Commissione quali azioni intende porre in atto per impedire il deturpamento di uno dei luoghi più suggestivi del patrimonio ambientale e culturale italiano, avvenuto in presunta violazione di normative comunitarie ambientali e delle norme di sicurezza igienico-sanitaria derivanti dalle radiazioni degli impianti di teleradiocomunicazione?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(20 febbraio 2013)

Le direttive 2009/147/CE ([1]) («direttiva uccelli») e 92/43/CEE ([2]) («direttiva habitat») non vietano l'installazione di antenne radio all'interno di siti designati. Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti valutare, caso per caso, se un dato progetto possa avere incidenze significative sulle specie e gli habitat per cui il sito è stato designato ed autorizzare tale progetto dopo aver verificato che esso non pregiudichi l'integrità del sito. Se viene accertato che il progetto avrà un'incidenza sul sito, esso potrà essere autorizzato soltanto se vengono soddisfatte le condizioni di deroga stabilite dall'articolo 6, paragrafo 4, della direttiva habitat.

La direttiva 2011/92/UE (direttiva sulla valutazione dell'impatto ambientale o direttiva VIA ([3])) non riguarda le antenne radio e pertanto non è pertinente in questo caso.

Sulla base delle informazioni disponibili, la Commissione non ravvisa alcuna potenziale violazione delle summenzionate disposizioni.

([1]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.
([2]) GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([3]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000360/13
to the Commission
Salvatore Caronna (S&D)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Alleged infringement of Directives 92/43/EEC (Habitats) and 79/409/EEC (Birds) and other Community legislation by the municipality of Valdobbiadene (Treviso), Italy

In 2008, the municipality of Valdobbiadene (Treviso) authorised, in the Pianezze area, the construction of a radio antenna which, essentially, is a system made up of a huge 60-metre high tower (the basic structure) and its associated antennas, which amplify its size and volume.

The tower, due to its configuration and visual impact, is incompatible with the place in which it is located.

The municipality of Valdobbiadene is in an area with a particularly beautiful landscape and is renowned for the beauty of its hilly areas which produce high-quality wine and are a major tourist attraction of substantial environmental value.

This structure was built despite the adverse opinion of the Cultural Heritage and Environment Department (*Soprintendenza*) and despite the fact that the latter ordered the work to be suspended — an order which was never complied with.

The whole area north of Valdobbiadene has been identified as an area of absolute incompatibility with major new industrial areas, since part of it is included within the perimeter of Sites of Community Interest (SCIs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Furthermore, the preliminary stage of the EIA, which is supposed to assess the impact of the project, was carried out without any verification or technical examination of the main effects the project could have on the environment, the cultural heritage and the landscape.

The local health authorities also completely failed to look into and monitor the magnetic impact the radio antenna would have on surrounding houses.

In the light of the above, can the Commission say what action it intends to take to prevent one of the most evocative places in the Italian cultural and environmental landscape from being ruined, supposedly in breach of EU environmental laws and health and safety standards with regard to radiation emitted by TV and radio installations?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

Directives 2009/147/EC ([1]) (Birds Directive) and 92/43/EEC ([2]) (Habitats Directive) do not prohibit the installation of radio antennas inside designated sites. It is up to the competent national authorities to assess, on a case by case basis, whether a certain project could cause significant negative effects on the species and habitats for which the site has been established and to authorise it after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site. If it is determined that the project will adversely affect the site then it may proceed only if the derogation conditions, set out in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, are met.

Directive 2011/92/EU (the Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA Directive ([3])) does not cover radio antennas and hence is not relevant in this case.

On the basis of the available information, the Commission cannot identify any potential breach of the abovementioned provisions.

([1]) OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.
([2]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-000361/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(15 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αδιαφανείς σχέσεις της τρόικας με εταιρείες συμβούλων και δικηγορικά γραφεία στην Ελλάδα

Δημοσιεύματα σε ελληνικά ΜΜΕ και συγκεκριμένα στο περιοδικό «Βημαγκαζίνο» της 12.12.2012 και στην ιστοσελίδα «tovima.gr» της 16.10.2012, κάνουν λόγο για συνεχή επικοινωνία για πολλούς μήνες ελληνικών εταιρειών συμβούλων και δικηγορικών γραφείων με την τρόικα, στην οποία συμμετέχει η Επιτροπή. Τονίζεται επιπλέον ότι οι εταιρείες αυτές έχουν πετύχει σε αρκετές περιπτώσεις να διαμορφώσουν τις θέσεις της τρόικας, στο πλαίσιο των διαπραγματεύσεων της με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση, προς όφελος των επιχειρηματικών συμφερόντων που εκπροσωπούν. Στην P-001864/2011 ερώτησή μου, είχα επισημάνει ότι ο εκπρόσωπός της Επιτροπής στην τρόικα, μετά από συνομιλίες του με τους, κατά δήλωσή του, «πιο σημαντικούς ανθρώπους της Ελλάδας που βρίσκονται εκτός πολιτικής», υποστήριξε δημόσια την καθολική ιδιωτικοποίηση της δημόσιας περιουσίας και την πώληση παραλιών για την ανάπτυξη της τουριστικής κατοικίας.

Το μοντέλο της τουριστικής κατοικίας συνεπάγεται την ανάπτυξη «ιδιωτικών χωριών», χωρίς την εφαρμογή κανόνων πολεοδόμησης και θεωρείται ο κύριος λόγος κατάρρευσης της ισπανικής οικονομίας εξαιτίας των εκατομμυρίων απούλητων κατοικιών. Λίγους μήνες αργότερα, η τουριστική κατοικία θεσπίστηκε με τον ν. 4002/11. Τη συγκεκριμένη περίοδο ετοιμάζεται το νέο χωροταξικό πλαίσιο για τον τουρισμό σχετικά με το οποίο ανακοινώθηκε ήδη από την αρμόδια υπουργό Όλγα Κεφαλογιάννη η περαιτέρω ανάπτυξη της τουριστικής κατοικίας.

Δεδομένου ότι, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 298 της Συνθήκης Λειτουργίας της ΕΕ, τα θεσμικά όργανα και οι οργανισμοί της Ένωσης πρέπει να στηρίζονται σε ευρωπαϊκή διοίκηση, ανοιχτή, αποτελεσματική και ανεξάρτητη, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχουν εγγραφεί στο ευρωπαϊκό Μητρώο Διαφάνειας εταιρείες συμβούλων και δικηγορικά γραφεία που έχουν έδρα στην Ελλάδα;

2. Έχουν έρθει σε επικοινωνία εκπρόσωποι της Επιτροπής που μετέχουν στην τρόικα με εταιρείες συμβούλων και δικηγορικά γραφεία στην Ελλάδα; Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να διαθέσει τη σχετική λίστα επαφών σε εφαρμογή του άρθρου 42 του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ και του Κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1049/2001;

3. Μπορεί να γνωστοποιήσει τη λίστα επαφών της τρόικας με ιδιωτικούς φορείς από τον Μάιο του 2010 έως σήμερα;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Μαρτίου 2013)

Το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα και η διαδικασία ιδιωτικοποιήσεων πρέπει να αξιολογούνται με βάση τις δημοσιονομικές προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει η χώρα. Ενώ τα κράτη μέλη οφείλουν να συμμορφώνονται με την επιβαλλόμενη από τη Συνθήκη υποχρέωση να αποφεύγουν τα υπερβολικά ελλείμματα, η οποία διατυπώνεται στο άρθρο 126 της ΣΛΕΕ, καθώς και με τις σχετικές αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου, η επιλογή του τρόπου διόρθωσης των δημοσιονομικών ανισορροπιών και, στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η επιλογή των περιουσιακών στοιχείων ή εταιρειών του Δημοσίου που θα πρέπει να ιδιωτικοποιηθούν καθώς και του τρόπου ιδιωτικοποίησής τους αποτελεί αποκλειστικά μέριμνα εκάστου κράτους μέλους.

Οι εκπρόσωποι της Επιτροπής διατηρούν τακτικές και άμεσες επαφές με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση, περιλαμβανομένων πολιτικά διορισμένων αξιωματούχων και δημοσίων υπαλλήλων, με σκοπό την παρακολούθηση της τήρησης των υποχρεώσεων που έχουν αναληφθεί στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής.

Το ταμείο ιδιωτικοποιήσεων (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ) συστάθηκε με σκοπό την εκτέλεση του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποιήσεων της κυβέρνησης με επαγγελματικό και διαφανή τρόπο. Στο ταμείο παρέχουν στήριξη διάφοροι τεχνικοί, νομικοί και οικονομικοί σύμβουλοι που έχουν προσληφθεί με ανοικτές και διαφανείς διαδικασίες ανάθεσης δημόσιων συμβάσεων. Οι εκπρόσωποι της Επιτροπής δεν διατηρούν επαφές με τους συμβούλους αυτούς.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000361/13
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Lack of transparency in relations between the Troika and consultancies and law firms in Greece

Reports in the Greek media, more specifically the magazine *Vimagazino* of 12.12.2012 and the website *tovima.gr* of 16.10.2012, refer to continual communications over many months between Greek consultancies and law firms and the Troika, which includes the Commission. They also emphasise that these consultancies have managed in a number of cases to influence the positions of the Troika, in its negotiations with the Greek Government, for the benefit of the corporate interests they represent. In my Question P-001864/2011, I had pointed out that the Commission's representative in the Troika, after talks with 'the most influential people of Greece outside politics' (his words), had publicly supported the complete privatisation of state property and the sale of beaches for the development of tourist accommodation.

This model of tourist accommodation involves the development of 'private villages' where planning regulations do not apply which is considered the main factor in the collapse of the Spanish economy because of the millions of unsold homes. A few months later, this tourist accommodation model was established by Law 4002/11. The new planning framework for tourism is currently being drawn up and, in this connection, Olga Kefalogianni, the minister responsible, has already announced the further development of tourist accommodation.

Given that, under Article 298 TFEU, in carrying out their missions, the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union shall have the support of an open, efficient and independent European administration, will the Commission say:

1. Have any consultancies and law firms based in Greece been entered in the European Transparency Register?

2. Have Commission representatives involved in the Troika come into contact with consultancies and law firms in Greece? Could the Commission provide the relevant contact list in accordance with Article 42 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001?

3. Can it disclose the list of Troika contacts with private entities since May 2010?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2013)

The economic adjustment programme of Greece and the privatisation process have to be seen against the budgetary challenges the country faces. While Member States have to comply with the Treaty obligation to avoid excessive deficits expressed in Article 126 TFEU, and with the related Council decisions, the choice on how to correct the budgetary imbalances and, in this context, of what and how far public assets or companies should be privatised remains entirely with the Member States.

The Commission representatives have regular and direct contacts with the Greek Government, including politically-appointed officials and civil servants, to carry out the monitoring of the commitments assumed in the context of the economic adjustment programme.

The privatisation fund (HRADF) was created with the objective of implementing the government privatisation program in a professional and transparent manner. In this process it is helped by a number of technical, legal and financial advisors hired according to open and transparent public procurement procedures. The Commission representatives do not have contacts with these advisors.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000362/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Prohibición de la importación de vaqueros tratados con la técnica del chorro de arena

La práctica del lavado de pantalones vaqueros con chorro de arena para provocar el efecto de «envejecimiento» tan demandado por las principales cadenas de distribución de este tipo de prendas en la Unión Europea está ampliamente extendida en Bangladesh. Dicha práctica supone un importantísimo riesgo para la salud de los trabajadores del sector textil, ya que la exposición a dicho chorro de arena incrementa notablemente el riesgo de sufrir importantes enfermedades respiratorias.

Bangladesh exporta más de 200 millones de pantalones vaqueros, sobre aproximadamente la mitad de los cuales se aplica esta técnica del chorro de arena, lo que supone la exposición de millones de trabajadores a los graves problemas de salud que esta técnica acarrea. Con esta técnica, los sistemas respiratorios de los trabajadores se ven expuestos a partículas de silicio que pueden provocar la grave enfermedad de la silicosis u otros muchos problemas en el sistema respiratorio.

Esta técnica fue prohibida en Turquía en 2009 gracias a una investigación que demostró que los trabajadores de las fábricas que producían vaqueros con la técnica del chorro de arena desarrollaban la silicosis, enfermedad típica de los trabajadores de la minería o la construcción. Tras esta prohibición, la producción de este tipo de vaqueros solamente se desplazó a diferentes países, especialmente Bangladesh. Son muchas las compañías internacionales que importan a la Unión Europea vaqueros tratados con esta técnica, perfectamente conocedoras de las consecuencias que tiene para la salud de los trabajadores. Estos vaqueros, también conocidos como «vaqueros de la muerte», se continúan produciendo como si no se conociesen sus efectos para la salud, y compañías causantes de numerosas muertes por silicosis en Turquía simplemente han «deslocalizado» su producción y continúan importando normalmente este tipo de mercancía.

¿Dispone la Comisión de una lista de las empresas que importa este tipo de vaqueros? ¿Dispone de información sobre las compañías que exportaban estos vaqueros de Turquía hasta 2009 y que han desplazado su producción sin preocuparse de los efectos para la salud de los trabajadores? En caso afirmativo, ¿podría facilitarla?

¿Está la Comisión planteándose prohibir la importación de este tipo de vaqueros al mercado de la Unión Europea debido al incumplimiento del Derecho internacional que supone, especialmente del Convenio 155 de la OIT?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de febrero de 2013)

El planteamiento de la UE de utilizar la política comercial para promover el trabajo digno se centra principalmente en el uso de incentivos positivos sobre la base de un sistema de cooperación y de compromiso, además de las condiciones necesarias para obtener y mantener el acceso preferencial al mercado en el marco del Sistema de Preferencias Generalizadas.

A este respecto, la Comisión también señala a la atención de Su Señoría la declaración conjunta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta de la Comisión, Catherine Ashton, y el Comisario de Comercio de la UE, Karel de Gucht, de 30 de enero de 2013 a raíz de los incendios ocurridos en fábricas en Bangladesh, en los que hubo víctimas mortales. En ella se señala que la UE es el mayor socio comercial de Bangladesh, que tiene acceso preferencial al mercado de la UE, y se reitera que la Unión Europea está preocupada por las condiciones de trabajo, incluida la salud y seguridad de los trabajadores de fábricas en todo el país. En la Declaración se pide a las autoridades de Bangladesh que actúen inmediatamente para garantizar que las fábricas cumplen las normas internacionales del trabajo, incluidos los convenios de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo, y se ofrece a las autoridades de Bangladesh la ayuda de la UE para cumplir esas normas. Asimismo, se pide a empresas europeas e internacionales que hagan mayores esfuerzos para promover mejores condiciones de salud y seguridad en fábricas de prendas de confección en Bangladesh, de conformidad con las directrices reconocidas internacionalmente sobre la responsabilidad social de las empresas.

La Comisión no dispone de información específica relativa a las empresas concretas solicitada por Su Señoría.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000362/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Ban on imports of sandblasted jeans

The practice of washing jeans by sandblasting, in order to get the 'worn' look demanded by major retail chains in the European Union, is widespread in Bangladesh. This practice is a major health risk for workers in the textile sector, as exposure to sandblasting significantly increases the risk of serious respiratory diseases.

Bangladesh exports more than 200 million pairs of jeans, about half of which undergo sandblasting, exposing millions of workers to the serious health problems associated with this method. Sandblasting exposes workers' respiratory systems to silica particles, which can cause the chronic disease of silicosis and other problems in the respiratory system.

This technique was banned in Turkey, in 2009, following an investigation that showed that workers in factories producing sandblasted jeans develop silicosis, a disease typical in mining and construction workers. Following this ban, production of this type of jeans simply moved to other countries, especially Bangladesh. Many international companies import these treated jeans to the European Union, being fully aware of the consequences for workers' health. These jeans, also known as 'killer jeans', continue to be produced as if their health effects were unknown, and companies responsible for numerous deaths from silicosis in Turkey have simply 'relocated' production and continue to import this type of merchandise as usual.

Does the Commission have a list of companies that import this type of jeans? Does it have information about companies that exported these jeans from Turkey until 2009 and that have shifted their production with no concern for the health effects on workers? If so, can it provide this information?

Is the Commission considering banning the import of this type of jeans to the European Union market, due to the breaches of international law — especially ILO Convention 155?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The EU approach to using trade policy to promote decent work is one that focuses primarily on the use of positive incentives based on a system of cooperation and engagement, combined with conditions to qualify and to maintain referential market access under the General Scheme of Preferences.

In this regard, the Commission recalls the recent joint statement of High Representative/Vice-President Catherine Ashton and EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht of 30 January 2013 ([1]) following fatalities in fires in textiles factories in Bangladesh. It notes that the EU is Bangladesh's largest trade partner with preferential access to the EU market and reiterates the EU's deep concern about the labour conditions, including health and safety provisions, established for workers in factories across the country. The statement called upon the Bangladeshi authorities to act immediately to ensure that factories comply with international labour standards including International Labour Organisation conventions and offered any possible EU assistance to the Bangladeshi authorities to meet such standards. It also called on European and international companies to do more to promote better health and safety standards in garment factories in Bangladesh, in line with internationally recognised guidelines on Corporate Social Responsibility.

The Commission does not have the specific information regarding individual companies requested by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-79_en.htm?locale=EN

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000363/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(15 januari 2013)

Angående: Regional konsumtion som ett handelspolitiskt skyddsinstrument

I artikel 34 i fördraget om Europeiska unionens funktionssätt (före detta artikel 28 EG) föreskrivs att kvantitativa importrestriktioner samt åtgärder med motsvarande verkan ska vara förbjudna mellan medlemsstaterna. Det är dock artikel 36 i fördraget om Europeiska unionens funktionssätt (före detta artikel 30 EG) som utgör grunden för det avvikande förfarandet för förbud mot eller restriktioner för import, export eller transitering som grundas på hänsyn till bland annat skydd av industriell eller kommersiell äganderätt.

Det är tydligt att förbud för rättighetsinnehavare att importera till områden där den immateriella äganderätten är skyddad faktiskt fungerar som kvantitativa importrestriktioner samt åtgärder med motsvarande verkan varje gång den vara som belagts med importförbud kommer från ett tredjeland. Principen om regional konsumtion antas ta följande i beaktande: Så snart en produkt försedd med ett varumärke har släppts ut på marknaden av rättighetsinnehavaren eller med dennes samtycke kan rättighetsinnehavaren, i enlighet med EU:s regelverk, inte använda sina varumärkesrättigheter för att förhindra ytterligare spridning av denna vara inom det nationella eller regionala området, men får däremot utöva denna rättighet i andra länder. Regional konsumtion är inte tillämplig för parallellimport av varor med ursprung i tredjeländer, men trots detta saluförs varorna av rättighetsinnehavaren eller med dennes samtycke. Industriell äganderätt ska dock inte användas för att snedvrida den fria rörligheten för varor mellan medlemsstaterna. Att förbjuda import av varor från en marknad utanför det berörda området, inom den så kallade grå marknaden, kommer troligtvis att leda till att principen om regional konsumtion blir ett handelspolitiskt skyddsinstrument.

Sedan Silhouette-domen 1996 (C-355/96) har Europeiska unionens domstol vägrat att beakta regional konsumtion som en minimistandard som medlemsstaterna kan förlita sig på, med motiveringen att EU:s myndigheter skulle kunna utöka denna till att omfatta varor som släpps ut på marknaden i ett tredjeland, i enlighet med artikel 7 i direktiv 89/104/EEG, och i fall då integreringen är väldigt god, som exempelvis inom EES.

Kan kommissionen förtydliga huruvida principen om regional konsumtion ska anses vara ett handelspolitiskt skyddsinstrument, och om så är fallet, kan kommissionen förklara varför detta inte genomgår en lika noggrann granskning som andra liknande instrument?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(10 april 2013)

Systemet med regional konsumtion kan inte anses vara ett ”handelspolitiskt skyddsinstrument” utan är en begränsning av de exklusiva rättigheter som har tilldelats varumärkesinnehavarna. Det nuvarande systemet med regional konsumtion av varumärken i EU utgör en balans mellan behovet av att säkerställa den fria rörligheten för varor på den inre marknaden och skyddet av varumärkesinnehavarnas rättigheter, såsom föreskrivs i artiklarna 34 och 36 i fördraget om Europeiska unionens funktionssätt.

Baserat på tidigare studier ([1]) har man inte hittat några bevis på fall av missbruk av varumärken med avseende på den fria rörligheten av varor i enlighet med det nuvarande systemet. I avsaknad av en global inre marknad skulle ett system med internationell konsumtion på det hela taget göra mera skada än nytta för den internationella handeln och de internationella investeringarna. Det finns också starka argument för att konsumenterna i EU inte nödvändigtvis skulle få det bättre med ett system med internationell konsumtion i stället för med det existerande systemet med regional konsumtion. Ämnet konsumtion och begreppet ”samtycke” har ytterligare undersökts inom ramen för kommissionens omfattande utvärdering av hur det europeiska varumärkessystemet fungerar. Inga skadliga effekter av det existerande systemet med regional konsumtion kunde hittas och det har heller inte kommit in några kommentarer från de användarföreningar eller andra berörda parter som konsulterats under loppet av studien.

([1]) ”Eventuellt missbruk av varumärkesrättigheter i EU inom ramen för gemenskapskonsumtionen”, arbetsdokument från kommissionen, 21.5.2003, SEC(2003) 575; The Economic consequences of the choice of a regime of exhaustion in the area of trade marks, Slutrapport för Europeiska kommissionens GD XV, NERA/SJ Berwin & Co/IFF Research, 1999 (tillgängligt på GD Inre marknadens webbplats).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000363/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Regional exhaustion as a trade defence instrument

According to Article 34 TFEU (ex Article 28 EC), quantitative restrictions on imports and all measures having equivalent effect are prohibited between Member States. Yet it is Article 36 TFEU (ex Article 30 EC) that constitutes the basis for the derogatory procedure for prohibition or restriction of imports, exports or goods in transit justified on grounds such as protection of industrial or commercial property.

It is clear that prohibitions of imports by rightholders in territories where intellectual property rights are protected do act technically as quantitative restrictions on imports and measures having equivalent effect every time the incriminated goods come from a third country. The doctrine of regional exhaustion presumes to take this into account: once products bearing a trademark have been placed on the market by or with the consent of the rightholder, under Community law rightholders cannot use their trademark rights to prevent a further distribution of those goods within the national or regional area, but may nonetheless exercise those rights in other countries. Regional exhaustion is not applicable to parallel imports originating in third countries, but even so the goods are marketed by or with the rightholder's consent. Still, industrial property rights should not be used to distort free movement of goods between members. Indeed, to prohibit imports of goods from outside the area, within the so-called 'grey market', is liable to turn the regional exhaustion doctrine into a trade defence instrument.

Since the Silhouette ruling of 1996 (C-355/96), the European Court of Justice has refused to consider regional exhaustion as a minimal standard that Member States can rely on, on the grounds that Community authorities could extend it to goods placed on the market in a third country under Article 7 of Directive 89/104/EEC, in cases where there is a very high degree of integration, as for instance within the EEA.

In this regard, can the Commission clarify whether the doctrine of regional exhaustion is to be considered a trade defence instrument, and, if so, explain why it is not submitted to a scrutiny as close as that applying to other such instruments?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The regime of regional exhaustion cannot be considered a 'trade defence instrument' but is a limitation to the exclusive rights conferred to trade mark proprietors. The current system of regional exhaustion of trade marks within the EU represents a balance between the need to ensure the free movement of goods within the Single Market and the protection of the rights of trademark holders, as is foreseen by Articles 34 and 36 TFEU.

Based on previous studies ([1]), no evidence of cases of abuse of trade marks with regard to the free movement of goods under the current regime was found. In the absence of a global single market, a regime of international exhaustion would on balance be more harmful than beneficial to international trade and investment. There are also strong arguments that consumers in the EU would not necessarily be better off under a regime of international than under the existing regime of regional exhaustion. The topic of exhaustion and the notion of 'consent' have been further examined in the context of the Commission's comprehensive evaluation of the overall functioning of the European trade mark system. No detrimental effects of the existing regime of regional exhaustion could be found or were commented on by user associations or other stakeholders consulted in the course of the study.

([1]) 'Possible abuses of trade mark rights within the EU in the context of Community Exhaustion', Commission Staff Working Paper, 21.05.2003, SEC(2003) 575; 'The Economic consequences of the choice of a regime of exhaustion in the area of trade marks', Final Report for DGXV of the European Commission, NERA/SJ Berwin & Co/IFF Research, 1999 (available on the DG Markt website).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000364/13
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(15 januari 2013)

Betreft: Gevaarlijke stoffen in kinderspeelgoed

Op 8 januari 2013 heeft de Commissie antwoord gegeven op de gestelde schriftelijke vraag van 11 november 2012 over gevaarlijke stoffen in kinderspeelgoed. In haar antwoord schrijft de Commissie te werken aan de vaststelling van de risico's van gevaarlijke stoffen en de te volgen regelgevende benaderingen. Voorts buigt de werkgroep voor chemische stoffen in speelgoed zich momenteel over een prioriteitenlijst van CMR-stoffen en hormoonontregelaars waarvan het gebruik in speelgoed zou kunnen worden beperkt door een wijziging van Richtlijn 2009/48/EG, overeenkomstig de procedure van artikel 46.

Wat is de stand van zaken van de prioriteitenlijst van CMR-stoffen en hormoonontregelaars waar de werkgroep voor chemische stoffen in speelgoed op dit moment aan werkt en wanneer verwacht de Commissie dat deze prioriteitenlijst klaar zal zijn?

Wanneer komt de Commissie met concrete voorstellen voor de wijziging van Richtlijn 2009/48/EG om het gebruik van CMR-stoffen en hormoonontregelaars in speelgoed te beperken?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(25 februari 2013)

De leden van de werkgroep voor chemische stoffen in speelgoed hebben verschillende voorgestelde lijsten van prioritaire CMR-stoffen besproken. Op de laatste vergadering hebben de leden afgesproken om informatie te verzamelen over de detectiegrens van 22 CMR-stoffen zonder drempelwaarde, zoals aniline en benzeen. Bovendien worden de meest recente wetenschappelijke gegevens over fenol en formaldehyde verder onderzocht. Op 20 maart 2013 zal de werkgroep voor chemische stoffen een voorstel bespreken om laatstgenoemde stoffen aan beperkingen te onderwerpen.

In verband met hormoonontregelaars hebben de leden van de werkgroep slechts één stof, bisfenol A, besproken met het oog op een wijziging van de migratielimieten voor speelgoed. Deze bespreking wordt met de lidstaten voortgezet op een comitévergadering, die voorlopig in april 2013 is gepland.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000364/13
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(15 January 2013)

Subject: Hazardous substances in children's toys

On 8 January 2013, the Commission gave an answer to the written question of 11 November 2012 on hazardous substances in children's toys. In its reply, the Commission writes that it is working on identifying the risks posed by hazardous substances and the regulatory approaches to be taken. Moreover, the working group on chemical substances in toys is currently looking at a priority list of CMR substances and endocrine disruptors which could be restricted in toys through an amendment to Directive 2009/48/EC in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 46 thereof.

What is the status of the priority list of CMR substances and endocrine disruptors that the working group on chemical substances in toys is currently working on and when does the Commission expect this priority list to be ready?

When will the Commission put forward concrete proposals for the amendment of Directive 2009/48/EC to limit the use of CMR substances and endocrine disruptors in toys?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The members of the working group on chemical substances in toys discussed several proposed lists of priority CMR substances. During the last meeting members agreed to gather information on the detection limit of 22 non-threshold CMR substances, such as aniline and benzene. In addition, further verification of the latest scientific information regarding phenol and formaldehyde is ongoing. Regarding the latter, a proposal to restrict these substances will be discussed in the upcoming working group on chemical substances on 20 March 2013.

Regarding endocrine disruptors, the members of the working group discussed only one substance, Bisphenol A in view of changing the migration limits from toys. This discussion will continue with Member States in a Committee meeting tentatively scheduled for April 2013.