IV

(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

(2014/C 40 E/01)

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do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(6 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Symulowany atak rosyjskich bombowców na Szwecję

29 marca 2012 r. formacja rosyjskich bombowców strategicznych naruszyła granice Szwecji. Samoloty symulowały atak bombowy. Celem lotu miały być dwa niesprecyzowane cele strategiczne w Szwecji. Rosyjskie samoloty przeleciały między innymi nad niezamieszkaną wyspą Gotska Sandön. Oznaczałoby to, że maszyny naruszyły przestrzeń powietrzną Szwecji.

1. Czy incydent będzie omawiany w czasie najbliższego spotkania między Unią Europejską, a Rosją?

2. Jakie kroki zamierza podjąć Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel w stosunku do Rosji?

3. Czy planowane jest umiędzynarodowienie problemu rosyjskich zbrojeń, szczególnie dozbrajanie garnizonów przy granicy z Unią Europejską?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(17 lipca 2013 r.)

Incydent wskazany przez Szanownego Pana Posła nie stanowi podstawy do działań ze strony UE oraz nie znalazł się w programie spotkania na szczycie UE-Federacja Rosyjska w dniach 3-4 czerwca. Trzecie pytanie Szanownego Pana Posła wchodzi w zakres Traktatu o konwencjonalnych siłach zbrojnych w Europie. Traktat ten jest jednak aktualnie zawieszony odnośnie do Rosji, bez konkretnej perspektywy wznowienia.

Żaden obcy statek powietrzny nie naruszył jednak szwedzkiej przestrzeni powietrznej dnia 29 marca 2013 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004960/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(6 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Simulated attack against Sweden by Russian bombers

On 29 March 2012, a formation of Russian strategic bombers made incursions into Swedish territory. The aircraft were simulating a bomb attack, with purpose of the flight apparently being to reach two unspecified strategic targets in Sweden. The Russian aircraft flew over locations including the uninhabited island of Gotska Sandön, which would mean that they entered Swedish airspace.

1. Will this incident be discussed during the upcoming meeting between the European Union and Russia?

2. What action does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to take in relation to Russia?

3. Are there any plans at international level to deal with the problem of Russian armaments, in particular the rearmament of garrisons located near the border with the European Union?

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

The incident referred to does not give rise to action by the EU and was not on the agenda of the 3-4 June EU-Russian Federation Summit meeting. The third question raised by the Honorary Member would fall within the scope of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty which however is in a state of suspension with regard to Russia without any clear perspective of being reactivated.

Any foreign aircraft did not however violate Swedish airspace on 29 March 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004961/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Einfrieren der Beitrittsperspektive für Bosnien-Herzegowina

Bisher konnte Bosnien-Herzegowina nicht einmal das Assoziierungs- und Stabilisierungsabkommen mit der EU umsetzen. Nachdem nun nach einer Vielzahl von gescheiterten Anläufen die Verfassungsreform erneut gescheitert ist, hat die EU die Perspektive für einen Beitritt eingefroren. Der Stillstand in Bosnien-Herzegowina beruht im Kern darauf, dass die serbischen Bosniaken die Unabhängigkeit bzw. weitreichende Autonomie ihres Landesteils, der „Republika Srpska", anstreben.

1. Gibt es in der EU Pläne für den Fall, dass die bosnischen Serben — wie im Kosovo — (verfassungswidrig) einseitig ein Referendum über die Unabhängigkeit ausrufen?

2. Trifft die EU Vorbereitungen für den Fall, dass Bosnien-Herzegowina als Gesamtstaat zerfällt und sich die bosnischen Serben bzw. bosnischen Kroaten an ihre Mutterländer anschließen?

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

Die EU hat sich seit Jahren im Rahmen des Stabilisierungs- und Assoziierungsprozesses dafür eingesetzt, Bosnien und Herzegowina auf seinem Weg in die EU zu unterstützen. Im Dezember 2012 bekräftigte der Rat erneut die vorbehaltlose Unterstützung der EU-Perspektive für Bosnien und Herzegowina als souveränes und geeintes Land mit vollständiger territorialer Integrität.

Die EU unterstützt aktiv den Dialog zwischen den politischen Führern der verschiedenen Volksgruppen in Bosnien und Herzegowina, dessen Ziel es ist, die Spaltung zu überwinden und die Schaffung einer gemeinsamen Vision für die Zukunft des Landes zu erleichtern. Die EU ist davon überzeugt, dass die verbleibenden politischen und verfassungsmäßigen Herausforderungen durch konstruktives Engagement, Dialog und Kompromisse angegangen werden müssen, was auch die Fortschritte des Landes auf dem Weg in die EU verstärken würde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004961/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Accession prospects frozen for Bosnia and Herzegovina

To date, Bosnia and Herzegovina has not even been able to implement the Stabilisation and Association Agreement signed with the EU. Following the latest in a series of failed attempts to reform the constitution, the EU has now frozen the country's prospects for accession. The stalemate in Bosnia and Herzegovina is largely attributable to the fact that the Bosnian Serbs are seeking independence and/or extensive autonomous powers for their region, the 'Republika Srpska'.

1. Has the EU considered how it would respond should the Bosnian Serbs unilaterally and unconstitutionally hold a referendum on independence, as happened in Kosovo?

2. Is the EU making arrangements for its response should the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina collapse and the Bosnian Serbs and/or Bosnian Croats seek to merge BiH territory with the neighbouring countries with whose peoples they have ethnic ties?

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

The EU has engaged for years to further anchor Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) on its EU path throught the Stabilisation and Association Process. In December 2012, the Council reiterated again the unequivocal support for BiH's EU perspective as a sovereign and united country enjoying full territorial integrity.

The EU actively supports the dialogue among the political leaders of the different communities in BiH, which aims at overcoming divisions and facilitating a joint vision for the future of their country. The EU is convinced that the remaining political and constitutional challenges need to be adressed through constructive engagement, dialogue and compromise, which would also re-energize BiH's progress towards the EU.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004962/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(6 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανταγωνιστικότητα και παραγωγικότητα της ελληνικής οικονομίας

Για τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας της ελληνικής οικονομίας μειώνονται βίαια οι μισθοί και απορυθμίζεται η αγορά εργασίας. Το κόστος εργασίας των επιχειρήσεων μειώθηκε ανά μονάδα προϊόντος κατά 16,1%, στην τριετία 2010-2012, και θα μειωθεί επιπλέον 17,6% στην τριετία 2012-2014. Ενώ μικρή είναι η αύξηση της ανταγωνιστικότητας, η ζημιά στην πραγματική οικονομία είναι πολύ μεγάλη, συρρικνώθηκε η συμμετοχή της αμοιβής της μισθωτής εργασίας στο ΑΕΠ 5 ποσοστιαίες μονάδες μεταξύ 2009 (36,7%) και 2012 (31,7%), η ανεργία αυξάνεται στο 27%, επεκτείνεται η μαύρη-ανασφάλιστη εργασία στο 40% της εργασίας, τα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία έχουν προβλήματα βιωσιμότητας, 450 000 νοικοκυριά δεν έχουν κανένα εργαζόμενο, η φτώχεια ακόμα και για όσους έχουν εργασία αυξάνεται.

Δεν επιλέχθηκε βελτίωση του εμπορικού ισοζυγίου και της ανταγωνιστικότητας της οικονομίας μέσω καινοτομίας, εξοικονόμησης και αποτελεσματικής χρήσης ενέργειας και φυσικών πόρων. Η αύξηση στο κόστος πρώτων υλών, μεταξύ των εισαγωγών Α' τριμήνου 2009 και Γ' τριμήνου 2011, ισοδυναμεί κατά μ.ο. στο 50% του ελλείμματος τρεχουσών συναλλαγών των χωρών της κρίσης κατά την ίδια περίοδο ([1]). Το εμπορικό ισοζύγιο και η ανταγωνιστικότητα της ελληνικής οικονομίας επηρεάζονται από τις εισαγωγές πετρελαίου (20 δισ. ευρώ ετησίως) και τις χαμηλές επιδόσεις σε θέματα χρήσης ενέργειας και φυσικών πόρων ανά μονάδα ΑΕΠ ([2]).

Με δεδομένο ότι η Ολομέλεια του Ευρωκοινοβουλίου προτείνει εξέταση αλλαγών και επικαιροποιήσεων στα προγράμματα προσαρμογής, προκειμένου να ληφθούν υπόψη οποιεσδήποτε σημαντικές αποκλίσεις τους ([3]), ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πότε θα προβεί σε αξιολόγηση και επικαιροποίηση των προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής;

2. Γιατί παραβλέπονται άλλοι παράγοντες που επιδρούν στην ανταγωνιστικότητα της οικονομίας και όλο το βάρος πέφτει στην εργασία;

3. Ποια μέτρα έχει προτείνει στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση για βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας της οικονομίας μέσω αποτελεσματικότερης χρήσης ενέργειας, φυσικών πόρων και καινοτομίας, ιδιαίτερα οικολογικής;

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

1. Η συμμόρφωση με τους όρους και τις προϋποθέσεις του προγράμματος ελέγχεται τακτικά. Στις 17 Μαΐου 2013, η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε από κοινού με την ΕΚΤ την αξιολόγηση της προόδου που πραγματοποίησε η Ελλάδα, βασιζόμενη στα πορίσματα της τελευταίας αποστολής ελέγχου. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στο εν λόγω έγγραφο, το οποίο περιλαμβάνει λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με το πρόγραμμα ([4]).

2. Το πρόγραμμα εστιάζεται ιδιαιτέρως στις διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις, στόχος των οποίων είναι η βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας της οικονομίας, ούτως ώστε να τεθούν τα θεμέλια για βιώσιμη οικονομική ανάπτυξη. Μεταξύ αυτών περιλαμβάνονται σημαντικά μέτρα για τη μεταρρύθμιση των αγορών προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών, τη βελτίωση του επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος, την αύξηση της αποδοτικότητας και αποτελεσματικότητας της δημόσιας διοίκησης και την αντιμετώπιση της πρόκλησης της ανεργίας. Λεπτομερής απολογισμός αυτών των ευρέος φάσματος μέτρων περιλαμβάνεται στο προαναφερόμενο έγγραφο.

3. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στο εθνικό πρόγραμμα μεταρρυθμίσεων για το 2013 (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/nrp2013_greece_en.pdf) που υπέβαλαν οι ελληνικές αρχές, το οποίο περιγράφει μέτρα που εφαρμόζονται ή προβλέπεται να εφαρμοστούν στους τομείς στους οποίους αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου.

([1]) http://gruenlink.de/8oc
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/itre/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=78395
([3]) Έκθεση Gauzes (A7-0172/20120) για την «Ενίσχυση της οικονομικής και δημοσιονομικής εποπτείας των κρατών μελών με σοβαρές δυσκολίες αναφορικά με τη χρηματοοικονομική τους σταθερότητα στη ζώνη του ευρώ».
([4]) Δεύτερο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα, Δεύτερη αναθεώρηση, Μάιος 2013. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004962/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(6 May 2013)

Subject: Competitiveness and productivity of the Greek economy

In order to boost the competitiveness of the Greek economy, wages are being savagely reduced and the labour market is being deregulated. The labour costs of enterprises fell per production unit by 16.1% over the three years from 2010 to 2012, and will fall by a further 17.6% over the three years from 2012 to 2014. While the increase in competiveness has been slight, the damage to the real economy has been enormous, wages and salaries as a percentage of GDP fell by 5% between 2009 (36.7%) and 2012 (31.7%), unemployment has risen to 27%, black or uninsured work now accounts for 40% of labour, pension funds have viability problems, 450 000 households have no member in employment and poverty is becoming more widespread, even for those with work.

No decision was taken to improve the balance of trade and the competitiveness of the economy through innovation and the conservation and efficient use of energy and natural resources. The increase in the cost of raw materials in imports in the first quarter of 2009 and the third quarter of 2011 was equivalent on average to 50% of current account deficit in countries in crisis over the same period ([1]). The balance of trade and the competitiveness of the Greek economy are affected by oil imports (EUR 20 billion per year) and poor performance in terms of the use of energy and natural resources per unit of GDP ([2]).

Given that the European Parliament in plenary sitting has proposed examining changes and updates to adjustment programmes in order to take account of any significant deviation ([3]), will the Commission say:

1. When will evaluate and update the adjustment programmes?

2. Why are other factors affecting the competitiveness of the economy being overlooked so that the entire burden is falling on labour?

3. What measures has the Greek Government proposed to boost the economy's competitiveness through a more efficient use of energy, natural resources and innovation, particularly ecological innovation?

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

1. Compliance with the terms and conditions of the programme is monitored on a regular basis. On 17 May 2013 the Commission published jointly with the ECB its assessment of progress made by Greece based on the findings of the last review mission. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to this document, where detailed information about the programme can be found ([4]).

2. The programme has a strong focus on structural reforms whose objective is precisely to improve the competitiveness of the economy, thereby laying the foundations for sustainable economic growth. These include, among others, important measures to reform product and services markets, improve the business environment, increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the public administration and tackle the unemployment challenge. A detailed account of these wider-ranging measures can be found in the abovementioned document.

3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the National Reforms Programme for 2013 (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/nrp2013_greece_en.pdf) presented by the Greek authorities, which outlines measures being implemented or planned in the domains mentioned by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://gruenlink.de/8oc.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/itre/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=78395.
([3]) Gauzes Report (A7-0172/2012) 'on the strengthening of economic and budgetary surveillance of Member States experiencing or threatened with serious difficulties with respect to their financial stability in the euro area'.
([4]) The Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece-Second Review May 2013. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004963/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Incitamento al terrorismo nelle scuole dell'UNRWA

Il 26 aprile 2013 il sito di notizie online *Ynet* ha pubblicato un articolo e un video a cura dell'organizzazione di informazione Near East Policy Research (NEPR), che mostra come le scuole di Gaza gestite dall'Agenzia delle Nazioni Unite per il soccorso e l'occupazione dei profughi palestinesi nel Vicino Oriente (UNRWA) e finanziate dagli Stati Uniti e dall'Europa pongono le basi per la prossima generazione di terroristi.

Secondo NEPR, gli studenti inizierebbero le loro giornate gridando: «Gloria e vita eterna ai martiri e ai giusti; Gerusalemme è nostra e noi la libereremo». Il diritto al ritorno rappresenta uno dei principali insegnamenti del programma scolastico delle scuole dell'UNRWA, presso le quali membri della Jihad islamica tengono lezioni o discorsi sulla costruzione di bombe, sul lancio di missili Qassam, sugli attentati suicidi e sul martirio.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al corrente del programma scolastico delle scuole gestite dall'UNRWA a Gaza?

2. Quali provvedimenti intende prendere al fine di assicurare che gli insegnamenti del programma che incitano al terrorismo siano rimossi e che l'UNRWA offra agli studenti un'istruzione basata sulla costruzione della pace e sulla coesistenza?

3. Qualora il terrorismo continuasse a far parte del programma delle scuole gestite dall'UNRWA, intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante adottare misure volte ad assicurare che l'Agenzia delle Nazioni Unite non sia più finanziata con il denaro dei contribuenti dell'UE?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(31 luglio 2013)

L'Unione europea attribuisce la massima importanza al rispetto del mandato dell'UNRWA e alla piena conformità con il relativo quadro normativo. L'UE non è a conoscenza di alcun caso accertato in cui l'UNRWA non abbia rispettato pienamente le norme in questione. Se questo dovesse verificarsi, l'UE solleverebbe immediatamente la questione con l'UNRWA.

Per quanto riguarda le accuse cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato, l'UNRWA ha confermato che le sue scuole seguono generalmente i programmi di studio dei paesi ospiti, in funzione della sede specifica della scuola stessa. Da vari esami dei libri di testo utilizzati nelle scuole dell'UNRWA è risultato che affrontano in modo equilibrato le questioni connesse al modo in cui sono rappresentati palestinesi e israeliani. L'UNRWA ha sempre preso molto sul serio le accuse secondo le quali il suo personale si esprimerebbe in modo non compatibile con l'impegno di neutralità dell'Agenzia e con i relativi obblighi dei singoli dipendenti. L'Agenzia ha inoltre sottolineato che le persone indicate nella relazione della NEPR non fanno più parte del suo personale e che tutte le interviste tranne una si sono svolte fuori dai locali dell'Agenzia.

Pur non essendo una materia di studio centrale nelle scuole dell'UNRWA, il diritto al ritorno è menzionato nei programmi su storia e diritti umani.

L'UNRWA adotta diverse misure per garantire la neutralità del suo personale e delle sue strutture nell'ambito del programma ad hoc «Operations Support Officer» istituito nel 2001 a tal fine. Lo statuto dell'UNRWA, così come le norme e le direttive applicabili al suo personale, contengono obblighi e restrizioni rigorosi in termini di partecipazione dei dipendenti ad attività politiche, attività e interessi esterni e comportamento individuale. In caso di violazione di tali norme si applica la «tolleranza zero» che a seconda dei casi può comportare la cessazione del rapporto di lavoro e l'annullamento delle prestazioni dopo la cessazione dell'attività lavorativa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004963/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Terrorism encouraged at UNRWA schools

On 26 April 2013, the *Ynet* online news website published an article and a video clip produced by Near East Policy Research (NEPR), which showed how schools operated in Gaza by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and funded by the US and Europe, had been preparing the ground for the next generation of terrorists.

According to NEPR, students begin their day by exclaiming 'Glory and eternal life to the martyrs and the righteous, Jerusalem is ours, we will liberate it'. The right of return is taught as a major part of the curriculum, and members of the Islamic Jihad teach lessons or deliver speeches in UNRWA schools on building bombs, launching Qassam rockets, suicide bombings and martyrdom.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the curriculum at Gaza's UNRWA schools?

2. What steps will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ensure that those aspects of the curriculum which encourage terror are removed and that UNRWA provides students with an education based on peace building and coexistence?

3. If terrorism remains a part of the curriculum at UNRWA schools, will the Vice-President/High Representative take steps to ensure that UNRWA is no longer funded with EU taxpayers' money?

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

The EU attaches the utmost importance to UNRWA's respect for its mandate and full compliance with its own regulatory framework. The EU is not aware of any confirmed incident where UNRWA has failed to adhere fully to these standards. Should such an event even occur, the EU would immediately raise any concern with UNRWA.

In view of the allegations mentioned by the Honourable Member, UNRWA has confirmed that its schools generally follow the host countries' curricula, on the basis of the schools' specific location. Several reviews of textbooks used in UNRWA schools have confirmed their balance in addressing issues related to how Palestinians and Israelis are portrayed. UNRWA has always taken very seriously allegations that UNRWA staff members engage in speech that is not compatible with the Agency's commitment to neutrality and related obligations on staff members. The Agency has also underlined that the concerned individuals referred to in the NEPR report are not or are no longer UNRWA staff members and all but one of the interviews were shot outside UNRWA premises.

While not a central subject taught at UNRWA schools, the right of return is mentioned as part of the history and human rights curricula.

UNRWA takes a range of measures to ensure the neutrality of its staff and installations with a dedicated 'Operations Support Office Programme' established in 2001 for this purpose. UNRWA Staff Regulations, Staff Rules, and Personnel Directives contain strict obligations and limitations on staff engagement in political activities, outside activities and interest, and personal conduct. Zero tolerance is enforced in cases of breach, with termination of employment and cancellation of post-employment benefits as appropriate.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004967/13
till kommissionen
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(6 maj 2013)

Angående: FN:s resolution 1325

En stor del av dödsoffren i beväpnade konflikter är civila, det är inte längre endast soldaters liv som drabbas. Både kvinnor och män drabbas av krig. Trots detta utesluts kvinnor ur fredsförhandlingar. En granskning gjord av UN Women 2010 visar att 92,4 procent av deltagarna i fredsförhandlingar och 97,5 procent av undertecknarna av fredsavtal är män.

För att uppnå fred och stabilitet är det viktigt att hela befolkningen och deras erfarenheter representeras vid fredsförhandling. När ett fredsavtal sluts så formas nya samhällskonstitutioner. Om kvinnor inte är delaktiga i processen så glöms kvinnors rättigheter bort när framtiden för samhället konstitueras. Detta leder till ytterligare inskränkning av de mänskliga rättigheterna, ojämlikheten stärks och befästs. Ojämlikheten skapar förutsättningar för framtida konflikter. En jämställd fredsprocess och ett fredsavtal som beaktar också kvinnors och flickors behov är av vikt för en hållbar fred i samhällen som byggs upp efter en konflikt

Som en konsekvens av denna vetskap har FN:s säkerhetsråd antagigt resolution 1325 för kvinnor, fred och säkerhet. Även på europeisk nivå har kunskapen om kvinnors diskriminering vid fredsprocesser uppmärksammats och år 2008 antog Europeiska rådet fram en strategi för att säkra att europeiska stater implementerar FN-resolutionen. Ytterligare har EU tagit fram en handlingsplan för jämställdhet och kvinnors medbestämmande vid konflikter.

Idag har fortfarande majoriteten av Europas stater inte antagit en handlingsplan för implementeringen av resolution 1325. Kvinnors medbestämmande vid krishantering är fortsatt låg.

Mot bakgrund av detta vill jag fråga kommissionen:

Vilka åtgärder tas idag för att främja kvinnor medbestämmande i fredsprocesser?

Hur arbetar kommissionen för att alla medlemsstater ska implementera FN-resolutionen snarast?

Svar från den höga representanten/vice ordföranden Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar
(9 juli 2013)

EU verkar inom kvinnofrågor, fred och säkerhet i över 70 länder. Dess stöd uppgår till cirka 200 miljoner euro per år för bland annat utveckling och genomförande av nationella handlingsplaner.

Informationsutbyte mellan aktörer bör uppmuntras ([1]). En arbetsgrupp för kvinnorätt, fred och säkerhet, bestående av den personal som arbetar med jämställdhetsfrågor och säkerhetsfrågor på de olika avdelningarna och är öppen för alla medlemsstater i EU, internationella organisationer och det civila samhället, har regelbundna möten i Bryssel. Arbetsgruppen uppmuntrar och främjar dialog gällande frågor som rör FN:s säkerhetsråds resolutioner 1325 och 1820 och diskuterar de nationella handlingsplanerna ([2]).

Den övergripande strategin säger att ett öppet utbyte mellan EU-länder angående genomförandet av FN:s resolution 1325 kommer att anordnas varje år för att dela de bästa metoderna och hitta gemensamma intressen. Under det första mötet år 2009 behandlades utarbetandet och genomförandet av FN:s säkerhetsråds resolution 1325. Under mötet 2013 behandlades övergångsrättvisa och jämställdhet; att minska straffrihet.

Inom ramen för G8-partnerskapet har vice ordföranden/den höga representanten hela tiden förespråkat och uppmuntrat G8-länderna utan nationella handlingsplaner att utforma sådana ([3]).

([1]) I enlighet med dokumentet "Övergripande strategi för EU:s genomförande av FN:s säkerhetsråds resolutioner 1325 och 1820 om kvinnor, fred och säkerhet".
([2]) Frågor som behandlas: De nationella handlingsplanernas utveckling, inriktning, revideringar och det civila samhällets deltagande.
([3]) För närvarande har 16 EU-länder nationella handlingsplaner.

2009 års koncept angående förstärkning av EU:s medlings- och dialogkapacitet främjar kvinnors representation och tillgång till tillräckliga resurser för särskild medling via fackkunskap på jämställdhetsområdet i medlingsförfaranden. EU bidrar till att främja kvinnors fulla och likvärdiga deltagande i alla aspekter av begreppet fredsskapande ([4]).

([4]) Främjandeåtgärderna inkluderar: ge resurser till särskild medling via fackkunskap på jämställdhetsområdet, utbildning och kapacitetsuppbyggnad för både EU-länder och partnerländer om jämställdhet och inkluderande fredsprocesser samt upplysnings- och informationsverksamhet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004967/13
to the Commission
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(6 May 2013)

Subject: UN Resolution 1325

A large number of those killed in armed conflicts are civilians; it is no longer just soldiers' lives that are lost. Both women and men are affected by war, yet women are excluded from peace negotiations. A survey conducted by UN Women in 2010 shows that 92.4% of those involved in peace negotiations and 97.5% of the signatories to peace agreements are men.

In order to achieve peace and stability, it is important that the whole population — with its full range of experience — is represented during peace negotiations. New social constitutions are formed when a peace agreement is concluded. If women are not involved in the process, then women's rights are neglected when shaping the future society. This leads to further restrictions in human rights and the strengthening and consolidation of inequality. Inequality creates the conditions for future conflicts. Building a sustainable peace in societies following a conflict requires equality in the peace process and a peace agreement that also take the needs of women and girls into account.

It was on the basis of this knowledge that the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The discrimination against women in peace processes was also noticed at European level, and in 2008 the European Council adopted a strategy to ensure that the Member States implement the UN resolution. The EU has also adopted an action plan on gender equality and women's empowerment in conflict resolution.

At present, the majority of EU Member States have still not adopted an action plan to implement Resolution 1325. The involvement of women in crisis management remains low.

What steps are currently being taken to promote the involvement of women in peace processes?

What is the Commission doing to ensure that all Member States implement the UN resolution as soon as possible?

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

The EU is active on the issue of women, peace and security in over 70 countries. Its support amounts to about EUR 200 million a year for, among others, the development and implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs).

Exchange of information between actors should be encouraged ([1]). A Women, Peace and Security Task Force, composed of staff working on gender and security issues across the services and open to EU Member States, international organisations and civil society, is regularly meeting in Brussels. It encourages and promotes dialogue on issues relating to UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 and discusses NAPs ([2]).

The Comprehensive Approach says that an open exchange among EU Member States on the implementation of UN SCR 1325 will be organised annually to share best practices and identify joint interests. The first meeting in 2009 dealt with the elaboration and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The 2013 meeting dealt with 'Transitional Justice and gender; reducing impunity'.

In the framework of the G8 partnership, the HR/VP has consistently proposed and encouraged G8 countries without NAPs to develop them ([3]).

The 2009 Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities promotes the representation of women and the availability of adequate resources for dedicated mediation gender expertise in mediation processes. The EU contributes to promoting women's full and equal participation in all facets of peace-building ([4]).

([1]) As stated in the 'Comprehensive approach to the EU's implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security'.
([2]) Issues discussed include: NAPs development, focus, revisions and the involvement of civil society.
([3]) Currently 16 EU Member States have NAPs.
([4]) Promotion methods include: providing resources for dedicated mediation gender expertise, training and capacity building of both EU and EU's partners on gender and inclusive peace processes and advocacy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005205/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Situação dos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo

Tem sido atribulada a vida dos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo (ENVC) e dos seus mais de 600 trabalhadores. Isto apesar de os ENVC contarem com uma importante carteira de encomendas e com uma sólida experiência e capacidade técnica (de engenharia e projeto), assentes em muitos anos de atividade e na qualidade e no saber-fazer dos seus trabalhadores.

Recentemente, o governo português invocou a realização de um procedimento de investigação por parte da Comissão Europeia para decidir o encerramento da empresa, destruindo assim este importante pilar do desenvolvimento da região e lançando no desemprego mais umas centenas de trabalhadores.

Todavia, nada no procedimento referido determina este desfecho. Ou até mesmo a obrigatoriedade de devolução dos cerca de 181 milhões de euros que a empresa terá alegadamente recebido como ajudas de Estado.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Recebeu, até à data, alguma resposta do governo português ao procedimento de investigação referido?

2. Confirma que os referidos 181 milhões de euros poderão ainda não ser considerados «ajuda estatal»?

3. Confirma que, mesmo que venham a ser considerados «ajuda estatal», pode não existir a obrigatoriedade da sua devolução, tendo em conta a legislação pertinente e nomeadamente o «enquadramento dos auxílios estatais à construção naval» existente?

4. Está disponível para apoiar um plano de viabilização dos ENVC, que permita a manutenção de todos os postos de trabalho e a concretização da atual carteira de encomendas, no quadro da manutenção do caráter público da empresa?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(19 de junho de 2013)

Em 23 de janeiro de 2013, a Comissão decidiu dar início ao procedimento formal de investigação em relação a um certo número de medidas alegadamente concedidas no passado por Portugal aos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo. Portugal apresentou as suas observações relativas a esta decisão por carta, em 12 de março de 2013.

A Comissão está atualmente a avaliar as observações e as informações adicionais apresentadas por Portugal. Assim que a Comissão tiver concluído a sua avaliação das medidas, tomará uma decisão final. Por conseguinte, a Comissão não pode, nesta fase, tomar uma posição sobre o fato de as medidas em análise constituírem ou não um auxílio estatal.

Pelos mesmos motivos indicados na resposta à pergunta 2, a Comissão não pode ainda decidir se as medidas, caso sejam um auxílio estatal, são compatíveis ou incompatíveis com o mercado interno, com base nas regras da UE relativas aos auxílios estatais.

Na sua avaliação da compatibilidade das medidas, caso sejam um auxílio estatal, a Comissão terá em conta todas as regras da EU aplicáveis aos auxílios estatais, incluindo, se for caso disso, as orientações relativas aos auxílios estatais de emergência e à reestruturação. Contudo, pelas mesmas razões referidas na resposta à pergunta 3, a Comissão não pode ainda decidir se as medidas, caso sejam um auxílio estatal, são compatíveis ou incompatíveis com o mercado interno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005205/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Situation of the Viana do Castelo Shipyard

The Viana do Castelo Shipyard (ENVC) and its 600-plus workers have been through some tough times. This despite ENVC having a substantial number of orders and a wealth of experience and technical skills (in engineering and design), based on many years of activity and the quality and know-how of its employees.

The Portuguese Government recently called on an investigation procedure by the Commission to decide on the company's closure, therefore destroying this important pillar of development in the region and plunging hundreds more workers into unemployment.

However, nothing in this procedure determines this outcome, or even whether the company will be forced to return around EUR 181 million that it has allegedly received in the form of state aid.

1. Has the Commission received a response thus far from the Portuguese Government regarding this investigation procedure?

2. Will it confirm that the aforementioned EUR 181 million may yet not be regarded as 'State aid'?

3. Will it confirm that, even if this amount is regarded as 'State aid', the company may not be forced to return it, given the relevant legislation and in particular the current 'Framework on state aid for shipbuilding'?

4. Is it prepared to support a rescue plan for ENVC, enabling all jobs to be retained and current orders to be fulfilled, so that it remains a state-owned company?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

On 23 January 2013, the Commission decided to initiate the formal investigation procedure in relation to a number of measures allegedly granted by Portugal to Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo in the past. Portugal provided its comments to this decision by letter of 12 March 2013.

The Commission is currently assessing the comments and the additional information submitted by Portugal. Once the Commission has finalised its assessment of the measures, it will take a final decision. Therefore, the Commission cannot at this stage take a view on whether the measures under assessment constitute state aid or not.

For the same reasons indicated in the reply to question 2, the Commission cannot yet take a view on whether the measures, were they to constitute state aid, would be compatible or incompatible with the internal market on the basis of the applicable EU State aid rules.

In its assessment of the compatibility of the measures, were they to constitute state aid, the Commission will have regard to all applicable EU State aid rules, including if appropriate the Rescue and Restructuring Guidelines. However, for the same reasons stated in the reply to question 3, the Commission cannot yet take a view on whether the measures, were they to constitute state aid, would be compatible or incompatible with the internal market.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005206/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Conclusões do inquérito levado a cabo no âmbito do processo a que é feita referência na pergunta E-3018/2003

Tendo em conta o desenrolar do processo a que é feita referência na pergunta E-3018/2003, da Deputada Ilda Figueiredo, pode a Comissão informa-nos sobre o ponto da situação deste processo?

Em particular, pode a Comissão informar-nos sobre quais as conclusões do inquérito levado a cabo no âmbito deste processo?

Resposta dada por Maroš Šefčovič em nome da Comissão
(23 de julho de 2013)

As regras de proteção de dados obrigam a Comissão a abster-se de fornecer informações pormenorizadas sobre a situação de membros do seu pessoal.

Contudo, em termos gerais e no interesse da pessoa em causa, a Comissão pode declarar que o inquérito foi encerrado, sem seguimento, com informação ao interessado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005206/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Conclusions of the inquiry conducted as part of the process referred to in Question E-3018/2003

In view of the progress of the process referred to in Question E-3018/2003, submitted by Ms Figueiredo, can the Commission say what stage has been reached in this process?

In particular, can the Commission say what the conclusions are of the inquiry conducted as part of this process?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2013)

The Commission must refrain, under data protection rules, from giving details about the situation of individual staff members.

However, in general terms and in the interest of the person concerned, the Commission can state that the inquiry referred to was closed without follow-up and that the official concerned has been informed of this.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005207/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(13 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Protekcjonizm w krajach Mercosuru

UE jest głównym partnerem handlowym Mercosuru, z czego region ten czerpie z kolei znaczne korzyści. Po przerwaniu w 2004 r. negocjacji w sprawie zawarcia umowy o wolnym handlu między Unią Europejską i Mercosurem, w 2010 r. zostały one wznowione przez prezydencję hiszpańską.

Choć Unia Europejska wzywa do zakończenia negocjacji z regionem Mercosur, wciąż nie osiągnięto porozumienia, a ponadto nasilają się tendencje protekcjonistyczne, zwłaszcza w Brazylii i Argentynie. Według sprawozdania UE w sprawie barier w handlu i inwestycjach za 2013 r., w 2012 r. nie udało się wprowadzić zakazu takich barier dla handlu.

Mimo zaskarżenia niektórych wprowadzonych przez Argentynę działań protekcjonistycznych w WTO, UE podkreśla, że kilka innych barier nadal jest stosowanych. Ograniczenia występują w transporcie morskim, eksporcie surowców, usługach reasekuracyjnych oraz wprowadzono je do nowego brazylijskiego systemu podatkowego, a ponadto w coraz większym zakresie wprowadza się także ogólne bariery celne.

Takie posunięcia utrudniają kontakty UE z tymi krajami i zmniejszają szanse na zawarcie umowy o wolnym handlu, która mogłaby pomóc poprawić aktualną sytuację gospodarczą obu partnerów handlowych.

Czy Komisja może opisać, biorąc pod uwagę sprawozdanie w sprawie barier w handlu i inwestycjach za 2013 r. i wynik szczytu w Santiago w styczniu 2013 r., kolejne kroki, jakie zostaną podjęte w celu zawarcia układu o stowarzyszeniu?

Czy Komisja może wyjaśnić także ewentualne skutki podniesienia takich barier handlowych po zawarciu układu o stowarzyszeniu i przedstawić swe stanowisko w sprawie pomijania Paragwaju w bieżących negocjacjach oraz o wpływie, jaki to na nie wywiera?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Karela De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(3 lipca 2013 r.)

Od wznowienia w 2010 r. negocjacji dotyczących układu o stowarzyszeniu UE-Mercosur, dokonano znaczącego postępu w negocjacjach rozdziałów odnoszących się do polityki i współpracy. Jedynie kilka artykułów podlega jeszcze dyskusji.

Negocjacje w sprawie rozdziału dotyczącego handlu skupiają się na kwestiach należących do innych dziedzin niż koncesje dotyczące dostępu do rynku. Mimo dobrych postępów w negocjacjach, UE podkreślała, że do prawdziwego przełomu w negocjacjach niezbędna jest wymiana ofert w zakresie dostępu do rynków. Wzajemne zobowiązanie UE i Mercosuru do wymiany ofert w zakresie dostępu do rynków nie później niż w ostatnim kwartale 2013 r. napawa optymizmem. Pomimo naszych obaw dotyczących środków protekcjonistycznych przyjętych w tym regionie, oczekuje się, że Mercosur będzie przestrzegał tego zobowiązania. Urzędnicy po obu stronach prowadzą prace przygotowawcze niezbędne do wejścia w życie wspomnianej wymiany ofert w zakresie dostępu do rynków.

Zawarcie układu o stowarzyszeniu UE-Mercosur przyniesie niewątpliwie ogromne korzyści polityczne i gospodarcze obu stronom. Wnioski zawarte w analizie oceny skutków gospodarczych ([1]) potwierdzają wymierne korzyści gospodarcze. Ponadto układ o stowarzyszeniu zapewniłby bardziej szczegółowe obszary współpracy i bardziej precyzyjne narzędzia służące przezwyciężeniu barier utrudniających handel i inwestycje w krajach Mercosur w przyszłości, w tym wyspecjalizowane komitety i przepisy dotyczące rozwiązywania sporów.

W odniesieniu do Paragwaju, UE zaobserwowała prawidłowy przebieg niedawnych wyborów parlamentarnych, stanowiący zdecydowany krok do przodu w procesie normalizacji stosunków w tym regionie. Oczekuje się, że dalsze kroki w tym kierunku zostaną podjęte po zaprzysiężeniu w dniu 15 sierpnia 2013 r. prezydenta elekta Horacia Cartesa, który złożył wizytę w Brukseli w dniach 25 i 26 czerwca 2013 r.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2011/november/tradoc_148370.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005207/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Protectionism in Mercosur countries

The EU is Mercosur's principal trading partner, from which it in turn derives considerable benefit. After negotiations on the conclusion of a free trade agreement between the European Union and Mercosur were interrupted in 2004, talks were re-launched in 2010 by the Spanish Presidency.

Although the European Union has been calling for the completion of negotiations with the Mercosur region, no agreement has yet been reached; moreover, protectionist tendencies are currently on the increase, particularly in Brazil and Argentina. According to the EU's Trade and Investment Barriers report of 2013, no abolition of such obstacles to trade was achieved in 2012.

Although it has taken some of the Argentinean protectionism cases to the WTO, the EU points out that several other barriers remain in place. Not only are there restrictions in maritime transport, export of raw-materials, reinsurance service measures and the new Brazilian tax system, but general import barriers are also on the increase.

Such features impede the approach of the EU to those countries and mitigate against the establishment of the free trade agreement, which would help improve the current economic situation of both trade partners.

Bearing in mind the Trade and Investment Barriers report of 2013 and the outcome of the Santiago Summit in January 2013, will the Commission please describe the next steps to be taken in order to complete the Association Agreement?

Will the Commission also clarify the probable effects of the raising of such trade barriers on the establishment of the Association Agreement and present its view on the current exclusion of Paraguay and the impact this has on the negotiations?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

Since the resumption of the negotiations of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement in 2010, negotiations of the political and cooperation chapters have greatly progressed and only a few articles still remain open for discussion.

Negotiations of the trade chapter have focused on disciplines in the different areas rather than market access concessions. Despite the good progress made, the EU had insisted that an exchange of offers for market access was necessary for a real breakthrough. The mutual EU and Mercosur commitment to exchange market access offers not later than the last quarter of 2013 is encouraging. Despite our concerns on the protectionist measures adopted in the region, it is expected that Mercosur will respect this commitment. Officials on both sides are engaged in the preparatory work necessary for that exchange of market access offers to materialise.

Indeed, the conclusion of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement would be of great political and economic benefit to both sides. The conclusions of the economic impact assessment study ([1]) confirm the sizeable economic gains. Furthermore, the Association Agreement would provide with more precise disciplines and tools to address barriers to trade and investment in Mercosur countries in the future, including specific committees and dispute settlement provisions.

With respect to Paraguay, the orderly conduct of the recent General Elections, observed by the EU, was a decisive step forward in the process of normalisation of regional relations. It is expected that further steps in this direction will be taken once President elect Horacio Cartes, who visited Brussels on 25 and 26 June 2013, is sworn in on 15 August 2013.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2011/november/tradoc_148370.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005208/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(13 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Przejrzystość cen na stronach internetowych tanich linii lotniczych

Popularność tanich linii lotniczych zdecydowanie wzrosła w kilku ostatnich latach. Zwłaszcza w przypadku lotów na krótkich trasach między europejskimi miastami linie te zapewniają pasażerom tanie przeloty i dzięki temu sprzyjają mobilności na europejskim jednolitym rynku.

Jednak konsumenci nadal napotykają przeszkody w postaci rozbieżności między reklamowanymi cenami a opłatami, które pasażerowie faktycznie ponoszą. Dyrektywa dotycząca nieuczciwych praktyk handlowych (dyrektywa 2005/29/WE) stanowi, że konsumenci muszą uzyskiwać prawdziwe i pełne informacje o cenie usługi. Zgodnie z tą dyrektywą rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1008/2008 w sprawie przewozów lotniczych stanowi, że ceny powinny obejmować wszystkie właściwe podatki, należności i dodatkowe opłaty.

Mimo że Komisja rozpatrzyła już tę kwestię, tanie linie nadal starają się przyciągnąć konsumentów za wszelką cenę. W niektórych przypadkach główne strony portali internetowych takich linii lotniczych przyciągają uwagę konsumentów „niskimi cenami", które nie obejmują wszystkich dodatkowych opłat. Dopiero na dalszym etapie rezerwacji pojawiają się dodatkowe koszty, takie jak opłaty administracyjne czy dodatkowe opłaty, i są dodawane do podawanej ceny biletu. Aby uzyskać informacje o ewentualnych dodatkowych kosztach, np. opłatach za bagaż, konsumenci muszą przebrnąć przez spisy opłat opcjonalnych. Poza tym projekt stron internetowych niektórych tanich linii lotniczych odwraca zazwyczaj uwagę konsumenta ofertami tanich hoteli, czy wypożyczalni samochodów, umieszczonymi w najróżniejszych miejscach na stronie, przez co zawarte tam informacje są bardzo mylące.

We wcześniejszych pytaniach parlamentarnych zwrócono uwagę Komisji na ten problem. Czy Komisja jest jednak świadoma, że zjawisko to jest formą wprowadzania konsumenta w błąd, a tym samym narusza interesy konsumenta na tym obszarze jednolitego rynku europejskiego?

Czy Komisja mogłaby również poinformować, czy zamierza przyjąć dalsze środki lub podjąć jakiekolwiek kroki, by zapewnić dokładność podawanych cen biletów?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(28 czerwca 2013 r.)

W rozporządzeniu w sprawie przewozów lotniczych (WE) 1008/2008 ([1]) przewiduje się swobodę ustalania cen w UE przez przewoźników lotniczych Wspólnoty. Określono w nim jednak również między innymi, że ostateczną cenę należy wskazać w sposób przejrzysty i niedyskryminacyjny na początku i w trakcie trwania procesu rezerwacji. Informacje o opcjonalnych dopłatach do ceny powinny być podane w sposób wyraźny, przejrzysty i jednoznaczny na początku każdego procesu rezerwacji. Państwa członkowskie ponoszą główną odpowiedzialność za egzekwowanie tych zasad, pod kontrolą Komisji.

Służby Komisji zakończyły obecnie kontrolę obowiązujących przepisów UE, która skupiła się na rynku transportu lotniczego ([2]). Stwierdzono, że rozporządzenie w sprawie przewozów lotniczych jest odpowiednie do realizacji zamierzonego celu, ale konieczne jest lepsze egzekwowanie zasad przejrzystości.

Wiceprzewodniczący Kallas skierował pismo do poszczególnych ministrów transportu w tej właśnie sprawie w dniu 14 kwietnia 2013 r. Podkreślił w nim potrzebę lepszej współpracy między organami egzekwującymi prawo w celu zapewnienia przestrzegania zasad przejrzystości cenowej. Służby Komisji prowadzą obecnie wraz z państwami członkowskimi ocenę sposobów poprawy sytuacji w praktyce.

([1]) Dz.U. L 293 z 31.10.2008.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/fitness_check_en.htm

Dyrektywa o nieuczciwych praktykach handlowych 2005/29/WE (UCPD) ([3]) zakazuje przedsiębiorcom wprowadzania w błąd konsumentów poprzez przedstawianie fałszywych lub w inny sposób mylących informacji na temat wielu różnych elementów, w tym ceny brutto produktu oferowanego do sprzedaży. Zgodnie z programem na rzecz konsumentów ([4]) podróże i transport lotniczy są jednym z kluczowych obszarów wskazanych w sprawozdaniu w sprawie stosowania dyrektywy o nieuczciwych praktykach handlowych ([5]), w którym należy wzmocnić egzekwowanie prawa.

([3]) Dz.U. L 149 z 11.6.2005.
([4]) COM (2012) 225.
([5]) COM (2013)139.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005208/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Transparency of prices on websites of low-cost airlines

The popularity of low-cost airlines has increased greatly in the last few years. Especially in the case of short-haul flights between European cities, those airlines provide passengers with cheap flights and therefore promote the mobility of people in the European single market.

However, consumers still face obstacles related to the matching of the fares advertised with what the passenger actually pays. The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (Directive 2005/29/EC) states that consumers must be provided with truthful and complete information concerning the price of the service. In accordance with this directive, Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 on air services states that prices should include all applicable taxes, fees and additional charges.

Although the Commission has already considered this issue, low-cost airlines continue to try to attract customers at all costs. In some cases, the home pages of such airlines' websites attract the visitor with 'cheap fares' which do not include all additional fees. It is only in the course of the booking process that further costs, such as administrative fees or surcharges, appear and are added to the upfront ticket price. Consumers have to click their way through lists of possible optional charge in order to obtain information on possible additional costs such as baggage fees. Furthermore, the design of some low-cost airlines' websites tends to distract the consumer with cheap hotels or rent-a-car offers in every corner of the site, thus being highly misleading.

The Commission's attention has been drawn to this problem in previous parliamentary questions. However, is the Commission aware of the fact that this remains a form of misleading the consumer and therefore undermines consumer wellbeing in this area of the single European market?

Could the Commission please additionally state whether it intends to adopt further measures or take any steps to ensure the accuracy of upfront ticket prices?

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

Air Services Regulation (EC) 1008/2008 ([1]) provides for pricing freedom within the EU for Community air carriers. However, it also stipulates among others that the final price should be indicated in a transparent and non-discriminatory way at the beginning and during the booking process. Optional price supplements shall be indicated in clear, transparent and unambiguous at the start of any booking process. Member States have the primary responsibility to enforce these rules, under the control of the Commission.

The Commission's services have now concluded an EU legislation fitness check exercise which focused on the air transport market ([2]). It found that the Air Services Regulation was fit for purpose, but that better enforcement of price transparency rules was necessary.

Vice-President Kallas has addressed individual letters to Transport Ministers on this very subject on 14 April 2013. He has stressed the need for better cooperation between enforcement authorities to ensure that price transparency rules are respected. Commission services are currently assessing together with Member States how to improve the situation in practice.

Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29/EC (UCPD) ([3]) requires traders not to mislead consumers by providing false or otherwise deceiving information on a wide range of elements, including the price inclusive of taxes of the product offered for sale. In line with the Consumer Agenda ([4]), travel and air transport is one of the key areas identified by the UCPD Report ([5]), where enforcement should be stepped up.

([1]) OJ L 293, 31.10.2008.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/fitness_check_en.htm
([3]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([4]) COM(2012)225.
([5]) COM(2013)139.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-005209/13
aan de Commissie
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(13 mei 2013)

Betreft: EU-regeling voor de handel in emissierechten (ETS) — „koolstoflekkagelijst"

Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat zij de „koolstoflekkagelijst" van de ETS-regeling zal bijwerken met een prijs van ongeveer 3 euro (de huidige prijs) voor de EU-emissierechten, een meer realistische prijsinschatting dan de 30 euro zoals die is opgenomen in de effectbeoordeling van 2009?

Is de Commissie voornemens voor eind 2013 een voorstel te publiceren voor een herziene „koolstoflekkagelijst"?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(6 juni 2013)

Op grond van artikel 10 bis, lid 13, van de ETS-richtlijn ([1]) stelt de Commissie een nieuwe lijst vast van bedrijfstakken waar een risico op het weglekeffect bestaat. Deze lijst zal aan de hand van de in deze richtlijn vastgestelde criteria worden gebruikt bij de kosteloze toewijzing van emissierechten voor de periode 2015-2019. De bijwerking is bedoeld om ervoor te zorgen dat de EU beschikt over een regeling voor het weglekeffect die goed is afgestemd op de werkelijke situatie van de betrokken sectoren.

De criteria voor de vaststelling van de lijst, die zijn vastgelegd in de ETS-richtlijn, veranderen niet ten opzichte van de huidige lijst. Wel zal de Commissie nagaan welke parameters kunnen worden aangepast om beter rekening te houden met recente gegevens. Deze beoordeling wordt momenteel voorbereid. Het is in dit stadium echter nog te vroeg om de precieze cijfers te geven die bij de beoordeling zullen worden gebruikt. Er zal een effectbeoordeling plaatsvinden en als onderdeel daarvan kunnen belanghebbenden gedurende drie maanden in een onlineraadpleging hun mening geven over deze en andere kwesties.

Het nieuwe besluit met een lijst van bedrijfstakken waarvan wordt vastgesteld dat het weglekeffect een significante risicofactor vormt, zal op tijd voor de toewijzing van 2015 in werking treden en naar verwachting dus in 2014 formeel worden goedgekeurd.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:275:0032:0032:NL:PDF .

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005209/13
to the Commission
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) — 'carbon leakage list'

Can the Commission confirm that it will update the EU ETS 'carbon leakage list' with a more realistic price estimate for EU emission allowances of around EUR 3 (today's price), rather than the estimate of EUR 30 used in the 2009 Impact Assessment?

Will a proposal for a revised 'carbon leakage list' be published before the end of 2013?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The ETS Directive, Article 10a13 ([1]), mandates the Commission to determine a new carbon leakage list to be used for the free allocation of allowances, for the period 2015-2019, based on criteria laid down in that directive. The objective of the update is to ensure that the EU has a carbon leakage regime that is closely aligned to the real situation of the concerned sectors.

The criteria to determine the carbon leakage list laid down in the ETS Directive remain unchanged compared to the existing list, but the Commission will consider which parameters might be adjusted to better take into account recent data. The preparatory work for this assessment is ongoing. However, it is premature at this stage to confirm any exact numbers that will be used in the course of the assessment. An impact assessment will be made, and in this context a three-month online consultation will allow stakeholders to provide views on this and other issues.

The new decision containing a list of sectors deemed to be exposed to a significant risk of carbon leakage will be in place in time for 2015 allocation, and is therefore intended to be formally adopted during 2014.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:275:0032:0032:EN:PDF .

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005210/13
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Deficit reduction targets

On 3 May 2013, the Commission signalled its intention to relax the deficit reduction targets for three of the eurozone's largest economies — France, Spain and the Netherlands.

This is a more sensible approach, giving these economies more room to recover. The simultaneous consolidating of budgets across Europe is having the terrible effect of countries dragging each other's economies down, dampening demand and so worsening economic growth.

Ireland must bring about control of its public finances, but the current path of sharp reductions at the same time as other EU budget consolidation is dragging back economic growth and hurting the labour market needlessly.

Given the already huge efforts and sacrifices made to correct the Irish budget, and the massive pressure being placed on the citizens of Ireland, why were the deficit reduction targets for Ireland not also reduced? Did the Irish Government request any relaxing of those targets?

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

The Irish government is firmly committed to observe the nominal general government deficit ceilings set under the EU-IMF financial assistance programme and the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP). The deficit ceilings are well recognised nominal anchors, against which progress of the fiscal adjustment is measured by EU-IMF programme partners. In the case of Ireland, financial market participants also carefully monitor public finances developments.

Ireland has consistently delivered the necessary adjustment so far and over-achieved the nominal deficit ceilings in 2011 and 2012. This good track record is one of the reasons why (since the second half of 2012) market confidence has returned and the Irish sovereign is again borrowing at favourable rates. Therefore, maintaining the momentum of the fiscal adjustment and delivering on well anchored expectations is essential for a durable return to market funding and for the overall success of the programme.

Ireland's deadline to bring down the general government deficit below 3% of GDP by 2015 is already one of the most generous timelines to correct the excessive deficit situation in the EU. Moreover, the fiscal deficit is still high at projected 7.5% of GDP in 2013 as compared to other Member States, despite the significant adjustment put in place so far. The economic recovery on Ireland is continuing at a steady pace. Output is growing above the euro area average and employment had started rising.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005211/13
to the Commission
Geoffrey Van Orden (ECR)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: European Court of Auditors — consequences of refusal to sign off the EU budget

For 18 consecutive years, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) has found serious errors in payments from the EU's accounts — amounting to over EUR 5 billion — meaning it has been unable to sign off the EU budget. For payments made in 2011, the ECA has cited a 3.9% error rate for the EU budget as a whole. Furthermore, the overall error rate has increased in recent years. The UK, Dutch and Swedish Governments also refused to grant discharge of the most recent accounts.

If auditors refused to sign off the accounts for a private company, this would have serious consequences for that company.

— What have been the practical consequences of the refusal by governments and auditors to sign off the EU accounts?

— If, year on year, there have been no practical consequences and the budget process continues regardless, what point is there to the audit procedure?

— Which Member State audit authorities were assessed by the Court of Auditors, and which of these were considered ineffective? What steps have been taken to reduce or terminate EU funding to those Member States until such time as their audit authorities are considered effective?

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

1 and 2. Article 287 of the TFEU stipulates that the European Court of Auditors has to provide the Budgetary Authority 'with a statement of assurance as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions (…)'. While the Court positively signed off the EU accounts since 2007, it has still qualified the payments underlying the accounts. In its latest annual report, which concerns the 2011 budgetary year, the Court's estimate for the most likely error rate for payments underlying the accounts is 3.9%. It is worth noticing that the Court does not find fraud but errors at the different stages of the financial procedure, particularly at the level of the final beneficiary. Both, the opinion on the accounts and on the underlying payments are considered by the European Parliament when giving its discharge to the Commission, on the basis of a recommendation from the Council of Ministers.

3. The Honourable Member will find the information on the Audit Authorities (AAs) in Annex 5.2 of the 2011 Court's annual Report, available at the following address:
http://eca.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/publications/auditreportsandopinions/annualreports

The Commission has carried out an extensive review of the work of the AAs and has formulated recommendations, if necessary, to remedy to detected deficiencies. If the deficiencies persisted, the Commission has resorted to interruption and suspension of payments to the concerned Member States. Exhaustive information on corrective measures is disclosed in note 6 to the 2011 EU consolidated accounts available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/publications/2011/eu_annual_accounts_2011_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005213/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: 30 millions de citoyens sans compte bancaire de base

Il est urgent de rendre plus difficiles les refus d'ouverture d'un compte bancaire permettant d'effectuer des opérations de base (retraits d'argent, transactions au moyen d'une carte de paiement). Pour rappel, 30 millions de personnes, au sein de l'Union européenne, ne bénéficieraient toujours pas d'un compte bancaire de base.

Quelles sont les mesures que la Commission compte proposer?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(4 juillet 2013)

Le 8 mai 2013, la Commission a adopté une proposition de directive sur les comptes de paiement ([1]), dont l'un des principaux objectifs est de garantir l'accès de chaque citoyen de l'Union européenne aux services liés à l'ouverture d'un compte de paiement de base.

La proposition instaure le droit, pour tous les consommateurs résidant légalement dans un État membre de l'Union, quelle que soit leur situation financière, de posséder un compte de paiement garantissant la fourniture de services de base. Les services afférents aux comptes de paiement de base incluent le retrait d'espèces, les virements et les prélèvements, ainsi que l'utilisation d'une carte de crédit. Les services bancaires en ligne doivent également figurer parmi les prestations proposées, le cas échéant. La directive proposée délègue aux États membres la responsabilité de désigner au moins une banque établie sur leur territoire, qui sera tenue d'offrir aux consommateurs la possibilité d'ouvrir un compte de paiement assorti de prestations de base. En outre, la proposition prévoit que la détention d'un tel compte soit proposée gratuitement ou à un coût raisonnable.

La proposition adoptée fait suite à la recommandation sur l'accès à un compte de paiement de base ([2]) et aux conclusions du rapport sur les mesures et pratiques nationales en matière d'accès à un compte de paiement de base (*National measures and practices as regards access to basic payment accounts*) ([3]), qui ont montré que le respect des dispositions de la recommandation laissait encore à désirer, puisque seuls quelques États membres ont adopté des mesures législatives intégrant le principe de la recommandation et que onze États membres n'ont mis en place aucun type de mesure allant dans ce sens.

La Commission estime que les mesures proposées contribueront à réduire le nombre de citoyens de l'Union n'ayant pas accès aux services bancaires et garantiront que tous les consommateurs pourront participer pleinement à l'économie de leur pays, ainsi qu'au marché unique de l'UE.

([1]) Proposition de directive sur la comparabilité des frais liés aux comptes de paiement, le changement de compte de paiement et l'accès à un compte de paiement assorti de prestations de base, voir: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013PC0266:FR:NOT

([2]) 2011/442/UE: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32011H0442:FR:NOT

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/swd_2012_249_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005213/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: 30 million citizens without a basic bank account

There is an urgent need to make it harder for banks to refuse to open accounts which allow people to carry out basic operations such as withdrawing money and performing transactions using a payment card. There are 30 million people within the European Union who still do not have a basic bank account.

What measures does the Commission intend to propose?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

On 8 May 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on payment accounts ([1]). One of the key objectives of the proposal is guaranteeing access to basic payment account services for all EU citizens.

The proposal establishes a right for all consumers legally resident in an EU Member State, irrespective of their financial situation, to access payment accounts which guarantee basic services. The services that must be offered with basic accounts include cash withdrawals, credit transfers and direct debits as well as the use of a payment card. Also, online banking services must be offered where these are available. The proposed Directive delegates Member States to identify at least one bank in their territory that must offer payment accounts with basic features to consumers. Moreover, the proposal establishes that payment accounts with basic features must be offered either free of charge or at a reasonable fee.

The adopted proposal follows-up on the recommendation on access to a basic payment account ([2]) and the results of the report on 'National measures and practices as regards access to basic payment accounts' ([3]), which highlighted that compliance with the provisions of the recommendations has so far been unsatisfactory, given that only few Member States adopted legislative measures which integrate the principle of the recommendation, and eleven Member States did not put in place any type of measure.

The Commission believes that the proposed measures will help reduce the number of unbanked citizens in the EU and will ensure that all consumers are allowed to fully participate in the economy of their country as well as the EU Single Market.

([1]) Directive on the comparability of fees related to payment accounts, payment account switching and access to payment accounts with basic features , see http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/20130506-proposal_en.pdf
([2]) 2011/442/EU: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32011H0442:EN:NOT
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/swd_2012_249_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005214/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Élection présidentielle à Madagascar en grand danger

Quatre ans après la prise du pouvoir par Andry Rajoelina et à moins de trois mois du premier tour prévu de l'élection présidentielle (24 juillet), la médiation inter-malgache qui s'est achevée dimanche 5 mai recommande une nouvelle période de transition, ce qui implique le report du scrutin présidentiel prévu en juillet. C'est là une proposition forte dont la mise en œuvre demeure incertaine. Menée par les chefs des quatre églises chrétiennes, l'initiative pour la réconciliation nationale revendique la participation de 673 personnes appartenant à 231 organisations issues de la société civile, de partis politiques ou d'autorités militaires. Après 15 jours de discussions, la conclusion est ambitieuse.

La nouvelle période de transition ne devra pas excéder 18 mois. L'objectif est de proposer par référendum une nouvelle Constitution, élaborée par une Assemblée constituante. Le schéma comprend également un premier ministre aux pleins pouvoirs et une présidence à quatre têtes.

Le chemin vers la sortie de crise semble donc s'obscurcir à Madagascar, alors que la présidentielle n'a jamais été aussi près de se tenir. La plupart des 41 candidats affirment souhaiter le maintien du scrutin, mais celui-ci est désormais très contesté.

1. Quel rôle la Commission compte-t-elle jouer aujourd'hui (c'est à dire avant la période de scrutin)?

2. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission face au rapport du médiateur en chef de la SADC, la communauté de développement d'Afrique australe, qui déplore de nombreuses irrégularités?

3. La Commission, qui s'était à l'époque prononcée, à juste titre, pour le maintien du processus électoral va-t-elle tolérer/soutenir une période de transition, telle que la voudrait une large coalition hétéroclite, mais dépourvue de force exécutoire?

4. Que pense la Commission du fait que le Président ainsi que son premier ministre aient tous deux refusé d'assister à la médiation ayant pour objet l'avenir électoral du pays?

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

La Commission suit de près la situation politique à Madagascar et elle prend pleinement la mesure de la proposition émanant de la plateforme de dialogue inter-malgache dont vous faites état.

Le rôle de la Commission est d'encourager les parties prenantes malgaches dans la mise en œuvre du processus électoral en cours, mais uniquement dans le cadre d'une coopération étroite avec les acteurs clés de la scène internationale et notamment les Nations unies qui, par le soutien qu'elles apportent à la CENIT (commission électorale nationale), jouent un rôle essentiel en la matière.

La Commission prend note des positions exprimées par le médiateur de la SADC dans son rapport présenté lors du sommet de la Troïka de l'organe de défense et de sécurité de la SADC de mai 2013, et elle partage les craintes de ce dernier en ce qui concerne, notamment, la décision de la Cour électorale spéciale de valider les candidatures du président Andry Rajoelina, de Lalao Ravalomanana et de l'ancien président Didier Ratsiraka au mépris des dispositions électorales.

La Commission a toujours affirmé qu'elle maintiendrait son soutien politique et financier au processus électoral actuel, dans la mesure où les conditions se trouvent réunies pour la tenue d'élections crédibles.

Pour la Commission, la mise en œuvre de cette période de transition et de ce scrutin électoral à partir de la feuille de route signée par les parties prenantes malgaches en septembre 2011 est l'unique voie pour faire cesser l'interminable crise politique à Madagascar. Cette démarche a l'entier assentiment de la communauté internationale, avec à sa tête la SADC, l'UA (Union africaine) et les Nations unies. Par conséquent, et dans les circonstances actuelles, l'action de la Commission se bornera à soutenir le processus de transition en l'état.

La Commission a toujours encouragé le dialogue inter-malgache quel qu'il soit, mais n'a jamais envisagé d'intervenir concrètement ni de prendre part à ce dialogue.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005214/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Question mark over the presidential elections in Madagascar

Four years after Andry Rajoelina came to power and less than three months before the date on which the first round of the presidential elections was due to start (24 July), an inter-Madagascan dialogue ended on Sunday 5 May with a recommendation for a new transition period, which would involve postponing the presidential elections planned for July. This is a strong proposal, but there is no certainty that it will be implemented. The initiative for national reconciliation, led by the heads of the four Christian churches, calls for the participation of 673 people belonging to 231 organisations including civil society bodies, political parties and military authorities. The outcome of the debates, which lasted 15 days, is an ambitious one.

The aim is for the new transition period not to exceed 18 months, and for a referendum to be held on a new constitution drafted by a constituent assembly. The plan also provides for full powers to be granted to the prime minister, and for a four-man presidency.

The path out of the Madagascan crisis thus appears to be increasingly unclear, even though the country has never been closer to holding presidential elections. Most of the 41 candidates claim to be in favour of holding the vote, but it is still hotly debated.

1. What role does the Commission intend to play in the current run-up to the election?

2. What is the Commission's response to the report by the head mediator of SADC, the South African Development Community, which criticises many irregularities?

3. The Commission has rightly spoken out in the past in favour of keeping the electoral process in place. Will it tolerate or support a transition period as requested by a coalition which is large and diverse, but which lacks any power to enforce its decisions?

4. What does the Commission think of the fact that the President and his Prime Minister both refused to participate in the dialogue aimed at securing the electoral future of the country?

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

The Commission follows closely the political situation in Madagascar and is fully aware of the proposal made by the inter-Madagascar dialogue platform you mention.

The Commission's role is to support Malagasy stakeholders in the implementation of the current electoral process but only in strong cooperation with key international stakeholders notably the UN, which has a relevant role in supporting the CENIT (National electoral Commission).

The Commission takes note of the views expressed by SADC's mediator in his briefing to the SADC Troika of the Organ Summit in May 2013 and shares his concern notably on the decision of the Special Electoral Court validating the candidatures of President Rajoelina, Lalao Ravalomanana and former President Ratsiraka presented in violation of electoral provisions.

The Commission has always stated that it will maintain its political and financial support to the current electoral process far as conditions for credible elections are in place.

For the Commission the implementation of the current transitional and electoral process, based on the Roadmap signed by Malagasy stakeholders in September 2011, is the only way for ending the long lasting Malagasy political crisis. This approach is fully supported by the international community, led by SADC, AU and UN. Therefore, and in the current circumstances, the Commission will only continue to support the current transitional process as it stands.

The Commission has been always in favour of any inter-Malagasy dialogue and has not intended to interfere on the concrete terms or participation to the dialogue.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005215/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Guerre des brevets: Motorola

Motorola Mobility, concepteur de téléphones intelligents et de tablettes, détient des brevets essentiels liés à des normes. Il s'agit de brevets incontournables pour faire fonctionner des technologies largement répandues. La société s'était engagée à concéder des licences pour ces brevets essentiels à des conditions équitables, raisonnables et non discriminatoires.

1. Motorola Mobility, filiale du géant d'Internet Google, a-t-il abusé de sa position dominante en déposant des injonctions contre Apple pour le viol de ses brevets dans la téléphonie mobile?

2. Dans l'affirmative, quels sont les griefs de la Commission?

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

Le 6 mai 2013, la Commission européenne a informé Motorola Mobility, à titre préliminaire, que sa demande d'injonctions à l'encontre d'Apple en Allemagne sur la base de ses brevets essentiels liés à une norme (BEN) de téléphonie mobile constituait un abus de position dominante interdit par les règles de l'UE en la matière.

La communication des griefs expose la conclusion préliminaire de la Commission selon laquelle, dans les circonstances précises de cette affaire (engagement antérieur de Motorola à concéder des licences à des conditions équitables, raisonnables et non discriminatoires [*Fair, Reasonable and Non-Discriminatory terms* ou «conditions FRAND»] et acceptation par Apple qu'une tierce partie fixe de manière contraignante les modalités d'octroi d'une licence FRAND pour les BEN), le recours à des injonctions nuit à la concurrence. La Commission craint que la menace d'injonctions ne puisse fausser les négociations d'octroi de licences et aboutir à la fixation de modalités de concession de licences que le preneur de licence pour le BEN n'aurait pas acceptées dans le cadre de négociations libres, en l'absence de cette menace. Cette situation aurait pour effet de réduire le choix des consommateurs.

L'envoi d'une communication des griefs ne préjuge pas de l'issue finale de l'enquête. Motorola pourra répondre par écrit et demander à être entendue afin de présenter ses observations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005215/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Patent war: Motorola

Motorola Mobility designs smartphones and tablets and holds key standard-essential patents. The patents are essential for the functioning of various widely used technologies, and the company undertook to grant licences for these essential patents on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms.

1. Has Motorola Mobility, a subsidiary of the Internet giant Google, abused its dominant position by seeking injunctions against Apple for infringement of its mobile telephony patents?

2. If so, what are the Commission's objections?

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

On 6 May 2013 the Commission informed Motorola Mobility of its preliminary view that the company's seeking and enforcing of an injunction against Apple in Germany on the basis of its mobile phone standard-essential patents ('SEPs') amounted to an abuse of a dominant position prohibited by EU antitrust rules.

The Statement of Objections sets out the Commission's preliminary view that under the specific circumstances of that case — Motorola's previous commitment to license SEPs on Fair, Reasonable and Non-Discriminatory (so-called 'FRAND') terms and the agreement of Apple, to accept a binding determination of the terms of a FRAND licence by a third party — recourse to injunctions harms competition. The Commission is concerned that the threat of injunctions can distort licensing negotiations and lead to licensing terms that a SEP licensee would not have accepted in free licensing negotiations, absent the threat of an injunction. This would lead to less consumer choice.

The sending of a Statement of Objections does not prejudge the final outcome of the investigation. Motorola will be able to reply in writing and request an oral hearing to present comments.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005217/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Opacité tarifaire des banques

Les frais bancaires sont bien trop opaques et très peu compréhensibles.

1. Que pense la Commission d'une obligation incombant aux banques de communiquer selon un cadre précis fixé par l'Union européenne?

2. Que pense la Commission d'une obligation incombant aux États membres d'assurer la création et la mise à jour systématique de sites Internet pour permettre la comparaison des tarifs proposés?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(4 juillet 2013)

L'un des objectifs de la proposition de la Commission quant à une directive sur les comptes de paiement ([1]), proposition adoptée le 8 mai 2013, est d'améliorer la transparence et la comparabilité des frais liés aux comptes de paiement pour les consommateurs.

La proposition établit que les prestataires de services de paiement doivent fournir aux consommateurs une série de documents visant à leur permettre de comparer les comptes de paiement et les frais facturés. Les prestataires seront tenus de mettre à la disposition des consommateurs à tout moment et, en particulier, avant la signature d'un contrat un document type d'information sur le montant des charges. Ce document énumérera les services les plus couramment proposés sur un compte, y compris les frais attenants, et il utilisera une terminologie normalisée coordonnée au niveau de l'UE. Cela permettra aux consommateurs de comparer plus facilement les offres. Par ailleurs, les consommateurs pourront consulter un glossaire de termes et définitions leur permettant de comprendre les caractéristiques des services énumérés dans le document d'information.

En outre, les consommateurs qui possèdent déjà un compte recevront un relevé détaillé des frais qui leur ont été facturés au cours de l'exercice précédent. Ce relevé utilisera aussi la terminologie normalisée et les banques pourront choisir de fournir ce relevé plus d'une fois par an.

La directive prévoit qu'il devrait y avoir au moins un site *web* comparateur des comptes de paiement dans chaque État membre. La directive définit des critères de qualité essentiels pour les sites *web* comparateurs par un système d'accréditation volontaire, comme l'exigence d'être indépendant, sur le plan opérationnel, de tout prestataire de services de paiement et de veiller à ce que les informations fournies aux consommateurs soient exactes et à jour. Il appartient aux États membres de décider s'ils entendent ou non mettre en place un site internet public et s'ils ne le feront qu'au cas où aucun opérateur privé ne serait accrédité.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52007DC0285:FR:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005217/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Lack of transparency of bank charges

Bank charges are far too abstruse and difficult to understand.

1. Does the Commission think that banks should be obliged to communicate these charges using a clear framework laid down by the European Union?

2. Does the Commission think that the Member States should be obliged to ensure that bank charge comparison websites are created and kept up-to-date?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

One of the objectives of the Commission proposal for a directive on Payment Accounts ([1]), adopted on 8 May 2013, is to improve the transparency and comparability of fees related to payment accounts for consumers.

The proposal establishes that payment service providers must provide consumers with a set of documents to allow them to compare payment account services and the fees charged. Providers will be required to make available to consumers at any time and in particular, before a contract is signed, a standardised fee information document. It will list the services most commonly offered on an account, including their respective fees, and it will make use of standardised terminology coordinated at EU level. This will allow consumers to compare offers more easily. In addition, consumers will be able to consult a glossary of terms and definitions explaining the features of the services listed in the fee information document.

Furthermore, consumers who already have an account will be provided with a statement of fees detailing the fees they paid during the previous year. The statement of fees will also make use of the standardised terminology and banks may choose to provide it more often than once a year.

The directive foresees that there should be at least one comparison website for payment accounts in each Member State. It establishes essential quality criteria for comparison websites via a voluntary accreditation scheme, such as a requirement to be operationally independent of any payment service provider and to ensure that the information provided to consumers is up-to-date and accurate. It is left to Member States to decide whether or not they will establish a public website and they will only have to do this if no private operator is accredited.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013PC0266:EN:NOT.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005218/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Mobilité bancaire pour le citoyen

Les banques devraient assurer aux clients qui le demandent le changement de leurs comptes bancaires vers un autre établissement financier de n'importe quel État de l'Union européenne. Les tarifs appliqués devraient «être appropriés et en ligne avec les coûts occasionnés».

1. Quelles sont les règles préconisées par la Commission?

2. Que faut-il entendre, précisément, par «tarif approprié»?

3. Les banques qui manqueraient à leurs obligations, prendraient du retard ou commettraient des erreurs ne devraient-elles pas assumer les pertes financières des clients et ce spontanément, sans que le client ne doive se lancer dans une procédure qui pourrait le dissuader de jouer la carte de la mobilité bancaire?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(9 juillet 2013)

Le 8 mai 2013, la Commission a adopté une proposition de directive sur la comparabilité des frais liés aux comptes de paiement, le changement de compte de paiement et l'accès à un compte de paiement assorti de prestations de base. L'un des objectifs de la proposition est de faciliter le transfert de comptes bancaires entre prestataires de services financiers situés aussi bien dans un même État membre que dans des État membre distincts.

Les consommateurs désireux de changer de compte bancaire se verront proposer un service de changement de compte, qui permettra de réaliser cette opération de manière simple, rapide et efficace. Il suffira aux consommateurs de prendre contact avec le nouveau prestataire de services de paiement, qui contactera à son tour le prestataire de services financiers auprès duquel le consommateur détient le compte qu'il souhaite transférer. Le nouveau prestataire de services de paiement doit également veiller à ce que les prélèvements soient transférés vers le nouveau compte et que les tiers, par exemple l'employeur du consommateur et les différents fournisseurs de services d'utilité publique, soient informés de l'existence du nouveau compte.

La directive proposée vise à garantir que les consommateurs ne se verront pas infliger de sanctions ni ne subiront aucun autre préjudice financier occasionné par des retards ou le mauvais acheminement de paiements en cas de changement de compte. Par conséquent, toute perte financière qu'un consommateur essuiera en raison du non-respect des obligations incombant à un prestataire de services de paiement intervenant dans le processus de changement de compte sera remboursée par ce prestataire. En ce qui concerne la rémunération du service de changement, il sera laissé aux prestataires de services de paiement le soin de décider si les consommateurs doivent ou non payer pour ce service. En tout état de cause, la proposition de directive indique que tous les frais potentiels doivent correspondre aux coûts réels supportés par le prestataire de services financiers concerné.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005218/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Banking mobility for citizens

Banks should ensure that customers who ask to switch their bank account to another financial institution in any of the EU Member States are able to do so. Any charges should be 'appropriate and in line with the costs incurred'.

1. What rules does the Commission recommend?

2. What exactly does it mean by 'appropriate charges'?

3. Should banks which fail to meet their obligations or which cause delays or errors not be held automatically liable for the financial losses suffered by their customers, without customers having to embark on proceedings which could put them off exercising their right to banking mobility?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

On 8 May 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on the comparability of fees related to payment accounts, payment account switching and access to payment accounts with basic features. One of the objectives of the proposal is to facilitate switching of bank accounts between financial service providers both within one Member State and cross-border.

Consumers wishing to switch accounts will be offered the switching service in order to make the switch simple, fast and efficient. Consumers will only need to be in contact with the new payment services provider, who will in turn contact the financial service provider, from which the consumer wishes to transfer his account. The new payment services provider also has to make sure that direct debits are transferred to the new account and that third parties, as for example the consumer's employer and different utility providers, are informed about the new account.

The proposed directive aims to ensure that consumers will not be subject to penalties or any other financial detriment caused by delays or the misdirection of payments in the case of switching. Therefore, any financial loss incurred by the consumer resulting from the non-compliance of a payment service provider involved in the switching process with its obligations will be refunded by that payment service provider. As regards the fees for the switching service, it will be left to payment services providers to decide whether or not to charge consumers for this service. However, in any event, the proposed Directive states that all potential fees have to be in line with the real costs occurred by the financial services provider concerned.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005219/13
do Komisji
Rafał Trzaskowski (PPE)
(13 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Dostępność internetowego narzędzia Komisji do interaktywnego kształtowania polityki

Komisja regularnie przeprowadza konsultacje obywatelskie za pośrednictwem opracowanego specjalnie na jej potrzeby internetowego narzędzia do interaktywnego kształtowania polityki. Niestety narzędzie to nie jest zgodne z drugą wersją Wytycznych dotyczących dostępności treści internetowych, poziom AA (WCAG 2.0 AA), w związku z czym jest niedostępne dla osób z niepełnosprawnością sensoryczną lub motoryczną korzystających z technologii wspomagających. W związku z tym osoby niepełnosprawne nie mają zapewnionego równego dostępu do preferowanego internetowego narzędzia konsultacyjnego używanego przez Komisję. Konsultacje są utrudnione, ponieważ załączone pliki .pdf są często niezgodne z normami dostępności. Dobrym rozwiązaniem byłoby korzystanie z innych dostępnych formatów powszechnie używanych przez osoby niepełnosprawne.

Po ratyfikowaniu Konwencji ONZ o prawach osób niepełnosprawnych (UNCRPD) UE musi wypełnić nowe zobowiązania w zakresie zapewnienia osobom niepełnosprawnym równego dostępu do informacji i komunikacji (zob. art. 9 i 21 UNCRPD). Niespełnienie tych wymogów dotyka osoby niepełnosprawne w nieproporcjonalnym stopniu.

1. Czy Komisja mogłaby ustalić jasny harmonogram wyszczególniający wszelkie plany związane z aktualizacją lub zastąpieniem obecnego oprogramowania do interaktywnego kształtowania polityki, tak aby zagwarantować, by jedyne istniejące narzędzie pozwalające konsultować się z obywatelami UE w sprawie kształtowania polityki było w pełni dostępne dla osób korzystających z technologii wspomagających?

2. Czy Komisja może potwierdzić, że dla każdej konsultacji będzie regularnie zamieszczać możliwe do pobrania, dostępne dla osób niepełnosprawnych pliki zawierające dokument konsultacyjny i kwestionariusz przez cały okres stosowania obecnego, niedostępnego narzędzia do interaktywnego kształtowania polityki?

3. Czy Komisja może zapewnić, że wszelkie nowe oprogramowanie zostanie przed wdrożeniem przetestowane przez osoby niepełnosprawne?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Maroša Šefčoviča w imieniu Komisji
(20 czerwca 2013 r.)

1) Interaktywne kształtowanie polityki (IPM) to aplikacja internetowa zaprojektowana w celu tworzenia i prowadzenia badań internetowych. Została opracowana tak, aby była łatwo dostępna dla wszystkich obywateli i jest stale dostosowywana, by spełnić dodatkowe potrzeby osób niepełnosprawnych.

W 2008 r. przeprowadzono badanie w celu sprawdzenia poziomu zgodności IPM z zaleceniami inicjatywy dostępności sieci (WAI). Wyniki wykazały, że w IPM wdrożono wiele zaleceń WAI. Ponieważ jednak IPM nie była w pełni zgodna z wytycznymi dotyczącymi dostępności treści internetowych (WCAG) 1.0 (poziomy A i AA) Komisja dopilnowała, aby większość brakujących funkcji uzupełniono w kolejnych wersjach. IPM jest obecnie prawie całkowicie zgodna z WCAG 1.0.

Obecnie trwają prace nad nowym interfejsem użytkownika, który planuje się uruchomić w ostatnim kwartale 2013 r. Uwzględni on kwestie związane z dostępnością stron internetowych. Plan realizacji projektu obejmuje również ocenę skutków dotyczącą zgodności IPM z WCAG 2.0.

2) Sugestia ta jest zgodna z założeniem projektu i jest planowana dla nowej wersji. Zespół projektowy oceni możliwość zastosowania szerszego i bardziej efektywnego zakresu dostępnych formatów powszechnie stosowanych przez osoby niepełnosprawne.

3) Testowanie aplikacji w celu zapewnienia ich jakości jest kosztownym procesem wymagającym udziału wybranych użytkowników i stosowania zautomatyzowanych narzędzi. Komisja może rozważyć zaangażowanie testerów z różnych grup użytkowników (w tym osób niepełnosprawnych), gdy jest to możliwe. Komisja przyjęła ewolucyjne podejście do polityki rozwojowej, norm i wytycznych, dzięki któremu zapewnia ona uświadomienie właścicieli projektów i wydawców oprogramowania na kwestie dostępności stron internetowych dla różnych grup użytkowników.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005219/13
to the Commission
Rafał Trzaskowski (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Accessibility of Commission's online 'Interactive Policy Making' tool

The Commission regularly consults citizens via its bespoke online 'Interactive Policy Making' (IPM) software tool. Unfortunately, this tool is not compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 level AA (WCAG 2.0 AA), and is therefore inaccessible to people suffering from sensory and motor impairments using assistive technology. As a result, disabled people are not given equal access to the preferred online consultation tool used by the Commission. Consultations are hampered because the .pdf files supplied are often not compliant with accessibility standards. Using a range of accessible alternative formats commonly used by disabled people would be good practice.

Following its ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the EU has new obligations in terms of providing equal access to information and communication for disabled people (see Articles 9 and 21 of the UNCRPD). Lack of compliance with these obligations disproportionately affects disabled citizens.

1. Could the Commission provide a clear timetable outlining any plans it has to upgrade or replace its current IPM software, in order to ensure that the sole existing means of consulting EU citizens on policy development is fully accessible to disabled people using assistive technology?

2. Could the Commission confirm that it will systematically provide a downloadable accessible file of the consultation document and questionnaire alongside each consultation as long as the current inaccessible IPM tool continues to be used?

3. Could the Commission ensure that any new software developed is appropriately tested by disabled people before launch?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2013)

1. Interactive Policy Making (IPM) is a web application designed for creating and executing online surveys. It was designed to be easily accessible for all citizens and has constantly been adapted to additional requirements specific to disabled people.

A study was performed in 2008 to check the level of IPM conformance to the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) recommendations. The results showed that many WAI recommendations were implemented in IPM. However, since IPM was not fully compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 1.0 (levels A and AA), the Commission ensured that most of the missing features were integrated in subsequent versions. In fact, IPM is currently almost fully WCAG 1.0 compatible.

A new user interface is under development with a target release date the last quarter of 2013. This will address issues related to web accessibility. The project plan also includes an impact assessment on the conformance of IPM with WCAG 2.0.

2. This suggestion is in line with the project orientations and is already planned for the new version. The project team will assess the possibility to use a broader and more efficient range of accessible alternative formats commonly used by disabled people.

3. Testing applications in order to assure their quality is a costly process requiring the participation of selected users and the use of automated tools. The Commission may consider the involvement of testers from different user groups (including disabled persons) whenever feasible. Indeed, it has an evolutionary approach on development policies, standards and guidelines through which it ensures the awareness of project owners and software editors to web accessibility for various user groups.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005220/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Συμπληρωματική ερώτηση για τη δημιουργία ευκολονόητων, προσιτών στους πολίτες, κειμένων της ΕΕ (E-8970/2010)

Σε συνέχεια της απάντησής της στην ερώτηση E-8970/2010 για τη δημιουργία ευκολονόητων και προσιτών στους πολίτες κειμένων της ΕΕ, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή τα ακόλουθα:

— Στην απάντησή της αναφέρει ότι θα εξετάσει τη δυνατότητα να πράξει σχετική μελέτη/σφυγμομέτρηση στο μέλλον, καθώς μέχρι στιγμής δεν έχει πραγματοποιηθεί κάτι ανάλογο. Έχει πραγματοποιηθεί κάποια σχετική μελέτη; Τι σχετικές δράσεις διατίθεται να αναλάβει;

— Αναφέρει, επίσης, ότι στη ΓΔ Μετάφρασης της Επιτροπής έχει συσταθεί μονάδα «Γλωσσικής ποιότητας» η οποία αξιολογεί τη γλωσσική σαφήνεια ευρωπαϊκών κειμένων, εφόσον της ζητηθεί. Ποιος μπορεί να απευθυνθεί στη μονάδα αυτή; Είναι ανοιχτή σε όλα τα όργανα της ΕΕ; Ποιοι έχουν ήδη χρησιμοποιήσει τη συγκεκριμένη δυνατότητα; Τι αποτελέσματα βελτίωσης κειμένων υπάρχουν;

— Τέλος, στην απάντησή της, κάνει λόγο για την εκστρατεία «Πώς να γράφετε με σαφήνεια» και την προθυμία της να συνεργαστεί με τα άλλα θεσμικά όργανα της ΕΕ.

Πώς επιτυγχάνεται αυτή η συνεργασία; Ποια είναι τα μέχρι τώρα συμπεράσματα της Επιτροπής από τη συγκεκριμένη εκστρατεία; Μπορεί να αναφέρει παραδείγματα σχετικής συνεργασίας με το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Ιουνίου 2013)

1. Μέχρι σήμερα δεν έχει πραγματοποιηθεί καμία τέτοια μελέτη ή δημοσκόπηση. Εντούτοις, η Επιτροπή επιφυλάσσεται εν προκειμένω να την πραγματοποιήσει στο μέλλον.

2. Κάθε μέλος του προσωπικού της Επιτροπής που συντάσσει επίσημα έγγραφα δύναται να ζητήσει την επιμέλειά τους από την ειδικευμένη μονάδα που έχει συγκροτηθεί εδώ και αρκετά έτη στη Γενική Διεύθυνση Μετάφρασης (DGT). Η μονάδα επιμελείται κυρίως τα έγγραφα που εντάσσονται το πρόγραμμα εργασίας της Επιτροπής, τα οποία αφορούν τον πυρήνα δραστηριοτήτων της Επιτροπής και τα οποία στη συνέχεια προορίζονται να μεταφραστούν από την DGT ή προορίζονται για δημοσίευση. Αν και η επιμέλεια των εγγράφων δεν είναι υποχρεωτική, οι περισσότερες γενικές διευθύνσεις της Επιτροπής κάνουν χρήση της εν λόγω υπηρεσίας τουλάχιστον για ορισμένα από τα έγγραφά τους. Όπως και άλλα θεσμικά όργανα της ΕΕ, το Κοινοβούλιο έχει τη δική του μονάδα επιμέλειας από το 2011. Μια εσωτερική δημοσκόπηση που πραγματοποιήθηκε το 2012 επιβεβαίωσε ότι οι συντάκτες εγγράφων της Επιτροπής πιστεύουν ότι η επιμέλεια εγγράφων είχε ως αποτέλεσμα την εξοικονόμηση χρόνου των αναγνωστών τους, τη βελτίωσή της αναγνωσιμότητας και τη μείωση της χρήσης της «ευρωγλώσσας».

3. Η εκστρατεία με τίτλο «Πώς να γράφετε με σαφήνεια» σαφώς συνέβαλε στη συνειδητοποίηση, από μέρους του προσωπικού της Επιτροπής, της ανάγκης για καλύτερο ποιοτικό έλεγχο και επιμέλεια των εγγράφων. Αυτό αντικατοπτρίζεται στο αίτημα για περισσότερη σχετικά με τη σύνταξη εγγράφων με σαφήνεια, ειδικά δε για κατάρτιση προσαρμοσμένη στις συγκεκριμένες ανάγκες των επιμέρους γενικών διευθύνσεων. Υπήρξαν επίσης ορισμένα σχέδια για βελτίωση της ποιότητας συγκεκριμένων τύπων εγγράφων. Πρόσφατο παράδειγμα αποτελεί το εγχείρημα που αναλήφθηκε από την DGT σε συνεργασία με την υπηρεσία εκπροσώπου Τύπου, στο οποίο συνδυαζόταν η στοχευμένη κατάρτιση με την ανάπτυξη ενός νέου μορφοτύπου και νέων κατευθυντηρίων γραμμών για τη σύνταξη των δελτίων Τύπου. Όσον αφορά τη διοργανική συνεργασία, ο προϊστάμενος της μονάδας επιμέλειας της DGT πραγματοποιεί τακτικές συνεδριάσεις με τους προϊσταμένους των ομάδων επιμέλειας του Κοινοβουλίου και των άλλων θεσμικών οργάνων της ΕΕ με σκοπό την ανταλλαγή ιδεών και την κοινή χρήση των βέλτιστων πρακτικών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005220/13
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Supplementary question on drafting easily understandable EU texts accessible to citizens (E-8970/2010)

Following its answer to question E-8970/2010 on drafting easily understandable EU texts accessible to citizens, will the European Commission answer the following:

— In its answer it states that it will consider undertaking a relevant study/opinion poll in the future as something similar has not yet been carried out. Has a relevant study been undertaken? What actions does it intend to take?

— It also states that an editing unit has been established in the Commission's Department for Translation which, by request, assesses the linguistic quality of its texts. Who can contact this unit? Is it open to all EU institutions? Who has already used this option? What are the results of the improvements made to texts?

— Lastly, in its answer, the Commission refers to the Clear Writing campaign and its willingness to cooperate with the other EU institutions.

How is this cooperation working? What conclusions has the Commission drawn to date from the campaign in question? Can it give examples of cooperation with the European Parliament?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

1. Such a study or opinion poll has not been carried out to date, however the Commission still keeps open the option for doing this in the future.

2. Any member of the Commission's staff who drafts official documents may request editing from the specialised unit set up several years ago by the Directorate-General for Translation (DGT). The unit mainly edits documents that come under the Commission's Work Programme, concern the Commission's core business, are to be subsequently translated by DGT, or are intended for publication. Although editing is not compulsory, most Commission Directorates-General make use of the service for at least some of their documents. Like other EU institutions, the Parliament has had its own editing unit since 2011. An in-house survey conducted in 2012 confirmed that Commission authors felt that the effect of editing saved their readers time, improved readability and reduced Euro-jargon.

3. The Clear Writing campaign has certainly raised awareness among Commission staff of the need for better document quality control and editing. This is reflected in the demand for more training in clear writing, especially training tailored to the specific needs of individual Directorates-General. There have also been some projects to improve the quality of specific types of document. A recent example of this is the project carried out by DGT in cooperation with the Spokesperson's Service, combining targeted training with the development of a new template and new guidelines for drafting press releases. Regarding interinstitutional cooperation, the head of DGT's editing unit has regular meetings with the heads of editing teams in the Parliament and other EU institutions to exchange ideas and share best practices.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005221/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Pericolo di diffusione dell'influenza aviaria H7N9 in Europa

Le ricerche condotte dagli esperti del Centro olandese per il controllo delle malattie hanno dimostrato un legame di parentela tra il virus H7N9 e altri due virus dell'aviaria, H7N7 e H7N1, circolanti in Europa nel decennio scorso. Evidenziata la capacità di mutazione del virus, si presenta il rischio che esso possa nuovamente modificarsi con la possibilità di trasmettersi anche tra esseri umani, così come affermato dall'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità (OMS). Il crescente numero di decessi dovuti all'influenza aviaria H7N9 in Cina mostra il pericolo della sua diffusione: 31 decessi e 129 casi di contagio sono stati attualmente rilevati. Nonostante le autorità locali cinesi tendano a smentire le cifre, il pericolo resta effettivo.

La Commissione è al corrente degli eventi sopra descritti?

Ritiene che le autorità locali cinesi sottovalutino la gravità della situazione?

Considerando i rischi attuali per i cittadini europei, ritiene la Commissione opportuno effettuare una valutazione d'impatto nel caso si verificasse un'epidemia?

A fronte di un potenziale contagio per i cittadini europei, ritiene la Commissione necessari un aumento dei controlli da parte degli Stati membri e un'adeguata preparazione per la rilevazione e la diagnosi di eventuali casi?

Ritiene che lo screening negli aeroporti sia una soluzione efficace per fermare la diffusione dell'influenza?

Quali ulteriori misure in materia intende far adottare agli Stati membri?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2013)

1. La Commissione è consapevole del verificarsi di alcuni casi d'influenza da virus A (H7N9) in Cina e sta monitorando attentamente la situazione.

2. La Cina ha reagito con rapidità e notificato senza indugio tali casi a norma delle disposizioni del regolamento sanitario internazionale. Dal 18 al 24 aprile 2013 si è tenuta inoltre una missione congiunta delle autorità sanitarie cinesi e dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità i cui risultati sono stati pubblicati sul web ([1]).

3. Per quanto riguarda la valutazione dell'impatto di questi casi sulla salute pubblica la Commissione ha invitato il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie a effettuare regolari valutazioni. L'ultimo aggiornamento (8 maggio 2013) ha confermato che non esiste prova evidente della trasmissione della malattia tra esseri umani e che, nel prossimo futuro, il rischio di propagazione del virus tra le popolazioni europee è piuttosto basso. Tali valutazioni sono state condivise con le autorità pubbliche sanitarie degli Stati membri e pubblicate sul sito web ([2]).

4. Si è provveduto ad intensificare ed uniformare tra gli Stati membri i controlli volti a identificare eventuali casi provenienti dalle aree della Cina colpite dalla malattia. Si è convenuta una definizione unica a livello europeo del caso di influenza A (H7N9) e si è attivata una rete comunitaria di laboratori di riferimento per offrire un supporto diagnostico rapido ed adeguato ([3]).

5. L'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità, il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie e le autorità sanitarie pubbliche degli Stati membri attualmente non ritengono che controlli di sicurezza presso gli aeroporti possano risultare utili per contenere la diffusione dell'epidemia.

6. La Commissione valuterà in base ai futuri sviluppi la necessità di ulteriori sforzi coordinati, in stretta collaborazione con il comitato per la sicurezza sanitaria e le autorità di sanità pubblica degli Stati membri responsabili in caso di pandemia negli Stati membri.

([1]) http://www.who.int/influenza/human_animal_interface/influenza_h7n9/ChinaH7N9JointMissionReport2013u.pdf
([2]) Http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/publications/influenza-a(h7n9)-china-rapid-risk-assessment-8-may-2013.pdf
([3]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/avian-influenza-H7N9-microbiology-diagnostic-preparedness-for-detection.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005221/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Risk of H7N9 avian influenza spreading in Europe

Research by experts from the Dutch disease control centre has shown a link between the H7N9 virus and another two avian viruses, H7N7 and H7N1, which have spread around Europe in the last decade. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), as the virus has a proven ability to mutate, there is a risk of it possibly mutating again so it could be passed on from person to person. The rising number of deaths caused by H7N9 avian influenza in China shows how dangerous it is when it spreads: 31 deaths and 129 cases of infection have been reported to date. Although local authorities in China tend to deny the figures, the risk remains very real.

Is the Commission aware of the above facts?

Does it think that local authorities in China underestimate the seriousness of the situation?

In view of the current risks to EU citizens, does the Commission think it should carry out an impact assessment of what would happen were an epidemic to break out?

In view of the potential infection of EU citizens, does the Commission think that the Member States should carry out more checks and make suitable preparations for detecting and diagnosing potential cases?

Does it think that screening at airports is an effective solution for halting the spread of influenza?

What other steps does the Commission plan to have the Member States take on the issue?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the outbreak of by Influenza A (H7N9) virus in China and is monitoring closely the situation.

2. China responded quickly, and notified the outbreak without delay, under the provisions of the International Health Regulations. In addition, a joint mission of the Chinese health authorities and the World Health Organisation took place from 18-24 April 2013; results have been published on the web ([1]).

3. Concerning the assessment of the impact of the outbreak, the Commission has asked the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control to assess the situation regularly. The most recent update (8 May 2013) confirms that there is no evidence of any human-to-human transmission and that the risk of the disease spreading to Europe via humans in the near future is considered low. The assessments have been shared with public health authorities in Members States and are published on the web ([2]).

4. Surveillance to identify possible cases coming from China's affected areas has been reinforced and aligned among the Member States. A common influenza A(H7N9) case definition has been agreed at Union level and a network of reference laboratories has been activated in order to allow quick and appropriate diagnostic support at Union level ([3]).

5. The World Health Organisation, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the public health authorities in the Member States do not currently consider that screening measures in airports would be useful to control the spread of the outbreak.

6. The Commission will consider the need for additional coordinated efforts on the basis of developments, in close contact with the Health Security Committee and the Public Health Authorities responsible for response to pandemics in the Member States.

([1]) http://www.who.int/influenza/human_animal_interface/influenza_h7n9/ChinaH7N9JointMissionReport2013u.pdf
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/influenza-A(H7N9)-China-rapid-risk-assessment-8-may-2013.pdf
([3]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/avian-influenza-H7N9-microbiology-diagnostic-preparedness-for-detection.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005222/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Fair spread of broadband technologies and maximising broadband technologies

A major concern of small business owners in Scotland is the need to access broadband of a speed that allows their businesses to remain competitive. Given that the UK Government strategy for broadband encourages the development of the most modern broadband capabilities in London and the surrounding area only, what measures is the Commission considering to enable a fairer spread of broadband technology within the Member States, and, furthermore, what are the Commission's current plans to maximise broadband technologies at the European level so that the EU remains competitive with major technology regions such as those in North America and Asia?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2013)

The Commission agrees wholeheartedly that access to broadband technologies is a key factor in the competitiveness of SMEs in Scotland as indeed for all enterprises of Europe. In view of this, it has set ambitious targets for broadband deployment in the Digital Agenda ([1]) for Europe, a flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 strategy. These targets include achieving broadband for all, so particular attention has to be paid to rural and less-densely populated areas.

Improving broadband connections requires investment by both the private and public sectors. The Commission's role in enhancing private investment is to ensure that a predictable regulatory framework is in place that encourages investment while promoting competition. For example, in March this year, the Commission proposed a draft Regulation ([2]) which is expected to cut the cost of rolling out high speed Internet by up to 30%. Furthermore, in response to the Spring European Council, the Commission is working on concrete proposals to complete the Single Market in telecoms, with the objective of securing high speed networks and services across all of the EU.

In areas where the business case is not strong enough, public support needs to step in with structural funds to finance broadband investment in less-developed regions. The Commission recently adopted revised guidelines on state aid rules ([3]) to ensure these are up to date with the latest technological developments in broadband connectivity.

It is also relevant to note, with respect to the UK, that the Commission recently approved a state aid notification ([4]) to support projects in rural and remote areas of the UK where such networks would unlikely be developed on commercial terms.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/digital-agenda-europe.
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/proposal-regulation-european-parliament-and-council-measures-reduce-cost-deploying-high-speed.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/legislation/specific_rules.html#broadband.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/243212/243212_1387832_172_1.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005223/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Improving literacy and numeracy skills for business readiness

Members of the Forum of Private Business, an organisation which represents SMEs based in Scotland, consider that one of their major concerns is that candidates for employment should have better literacy and numeracy skills.

Does the Commission share the concerns of the business community and does the Commission have any strategies to provide better support for teaching literacy and numeracy skills, adding value to efforts within the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concerns that individuals should be equipped with the right skills in order to increase their employability and to provide businesses with highly-skilled human resources. These include literacy and numeracy skills. This concern underpins the 'Europe 2020 strategy' flagship initiative 'An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs' ([1]).The Commission Communication 'Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes' ([2]) also stressed that basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy skills, are key foundations for further learning through the life cycle. In the 2013 country-specific recommendations the Commission has recommended the UK to reduce the number of young people 18-24 who have very poor basic skills, including through effectively implementing the Traineeships programme.

In the context of the Strategic Framework for cooperation in education and training ('ET2020') in which literacy and numeracy are recognised as fundamental elements of key competences, the Member States agreed to a benchmark of reducing low achievement in reading literacy, mathematics and science to 15% by 2020 ([3]). In the light of this, a High Level Expert Group on Literacy was established in February 2011 to examine how to support literacy throughout lifelong learning and to identify common success factors in literacy programmes and policy initiatives. Its final report contained proposals on improving literacy among both school students and adults ([4]). As a follow up, the Commission aims to present a report on policy cooperation on basic skills by 2014, outlining effective policies for reducing the share of low achievers in literacy, mathematics and science across the entire lifelong learning spectrum.

([1]) COM(2010) 682 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0682:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) COM(2012) 669 final, http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/com669_en.pdf
([3]) OJ C, 119 of 28.5.2009, p.2.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/literacy/what-eu/high-level-group/documents/literacy-report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005224/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Descending scale doses of electronic cigarettes

One of the main reasons for consumers using electronic cigarettes is that they believe the Electronic Nicotine Delivery System to be a tool that can help them completely stop smoking conventional cigarettes, many of them having been prolonged users of traditional cigarettes. Furthermore, DG SANCO has suggested that it views electronic cigarettes as cessation devices.

Does the Commission therefore believe that electronic cigarettes should be targeted at long-term smokers who wish to quit smoking, and would the Commission propose that electronic cigarettes be dosed on a descending scale in an effort to encourage smoking cessation and reduce nicotine addiction?

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

As illustrated by the Commission's Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive, ([1]) some studies highlight electronic cigarettes' potential as smoking cessation aid, and, according to the Commission's information, these are indeed often used as cessation aid by consumers.

The Commission, in its proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive, foresees that electronic cigarettes exceeding a certain threshold of nicotine will be subject to the medicinal products legislation. One of the effects of this proposal will be to encourage the potential of electronic cigarettes as a smoking cessation aid. The Commission proposal starts from the observation that in many Member States electronic cigarettes are considered to fall under the pharmaceutical legislation as medicinal products by function.

Their availability to other people than long-term smokers who wish to quit smoking will however depend on the national regimes for the selling of medicinal products, i.e. whether they would require a prescription or could be sold 'over the counter'. As an element of the market authorisation under the medicinal products regime, electronic cigarettes would have to comply with the conditions for the placing on the market of medicinal products in the respective Member States, which are likely to include rules on appropriate dosage to achieve the cessation objective.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final, pp. 15-17.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005225/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Οι άδικες αποφάσεις του Eurogroup

Έγκριτοι αναλυτές αναφέρουν ότι διαπράχθηκε ένα οικονομικό έγκλημα σε βάρος της Κύπρου. Επιπλέον, δημιουργήθηκε μεγάλη αναστάτωση στην Ευρωζώνη, καθώς με την συνταγή (bail in) που εφαρμόστηκε, καταστρέφεται η οικονομία της χώρας και οδηγείται ο λαός στην ανεργία, τη φτώχεια και την κοινωνική εξαθλίωση. Σημαντική ήταν η δήλωση του τέως επικεφαλής του Eurogroup ότι το τελευταίο αντιμετώπισε τους Κυπρίους σαν να ήταν γκάγκστερς. Ουσιαστικά, τους χρησιμοποίησε ως πειραματόζωα.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Για ποιο λόγο επιβλήθηκε μια τέτοια πρωτοφανής οικονομική πολιτική «divide et impera» στην Κύπρο;

2. Πως αντέδρασε το Συμβούλιο στην αδικαιολόγητη εκστρατεία που προηγήθηκε με στόχο να κατηγορηθεί η Κύπρος για «ξέπλυμα βρώμικου χρήματος» και ως «φορολογικός παράδεισος», για να απομονωθεί από τους εταίρους της και να της επιβληθεί ένα άδικο κούρεμα που έπληξε, κυρίως, ανθρώπους βιοπαλαιστές που πάλεψαν μια ζωή τίμια, για να μπορέσουν να επαναδραστηριοποιηθούν μετά την τουρκική εισβολή του 1974;

3. Ποιοι θα πληρώσουν για τις συνέπειες τέτοιων εγκληματικά λανθασμένων αποφάσεων;

4. Τι θα πράξει το Συμβούλιο ώστε να καταπολεμηθεί έμπρακτα στην Κύπρο η αυξανόμενη φτώχεια και η ανεργία;

5. Πως σκέφτεται να πατάξει τον αυξανόμενο ευρωσκεπτικισμό, ιδιαίτερα ενόψει των προσεχών ευρωεκλογών;

Απάντηση
(11 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Όπως αναφέρεται στη δήλωση της 16ης Μαρτίου 2013 και επιβεβαιώθηκε στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα θεωρεί ότι, κατ' αρχήν, η οικονομική βοήθεια στην Κύπρο δικαιολογείται προκειμένου να διασφαλιστεί μέσω της παροχής οικονομικής βοήθειας ύψους 10 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα τόσο στην Κύπρο όσο και στο σύνολο της ευρωζώνης. Η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση για τα σχέδια πολιτικής που παρουσίασαν οι κυπριακές αρχές και συμφώνησε με τα μέτρα αναδιάρθρωσης του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα ως διευκρινίζονται στο Παράρτημα της δήλωσης της Ευρωομάδας της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013. Τα μέτρα αυτά θέτουν τη βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, διασφαλίζουν όλες τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Επιπλέον, στις 25 Απριλίου 2013, το Συμβούλιο εξέδωσε απόφαση, η οποία απευθύνεται στην Κύπρο, όπου περιγράφονται τα στοιχεία ενός τριετούς προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής που αποσκοπεί στην αποκατάσταση της ευρωστίας της τραπεζικής βιομηχανίας της, συνεχίζοντας τη διαδικασία δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και στηρίζοντας την ανταγωνιστικότητα καθώς και τη βιώσιμη και ισορροπημένη ανάπτυξη.

Η απόφαση αυτή, που βασίζεται στα άρθρα 136 παράγραφος 1 και 126 παράγραφος 6 της Συνθήκης για τη Λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, περιλαμβάνει τα κυριότερα στοιχεία των πολιτικών προϋποθέσεων για την παροχή οικονομικής βοήθειας στην Κύπρο από τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας, όπως συμφωνήθηκαν από την Ευρωομάδα στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013.

Επιπλέον, κατόπιν της ολοκλήρωσης των ανεξάρτητων αξιολογήσεων συμμόρφωσης με το πλαίσιο καταπολέμησης της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες στη Κύπρο, τα όργανα της Τρόικας υπέβαλαν τις βασικές διαπιστώσεις στην Ευρωομάδα στις 13 Μαΐου 2013, ενώ συστάσεις για την αποκατάσταση ελλείψεων θα ενσωματωθούν στο σχέδιο δράσης για την καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες που θα συμφωνηθεί μεταξύ των οργάνων της Τρόικας και των κυπριακών αρχών κατά τη χρονική στιγμή της πρώτης επισκόπησης. Το σχέδιο δράσης πρέπει να στοχεύει τομείς που άπτονται της εφαρμογής του οικονομικού ελέγχου των πελατών από τις τράπεζες, επίσης μέσω επαρκούς επιτήρησης, και της λειτουργίας του μητρώου επιχειρήσεων, μεταξύ άλλων.

Είναι πολύ σημαντικό να εξελιχθεί η εφαρμογή του προγράμματος προσαρμογής με σταθερό ρυθμό, προκειμένου να αποκατασταθεί η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα στην Κύπρο και να τεθούν τα θεμέλια για μια βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005225/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Unfair Eurogroup decisions

According to distinguished analysts, an economic crime has been committed against Cyprus. Moreover, there has been uproar in the euro area as the bail-in recipe applied is destroying the country's economy and pushing its people into unemployment and economic and social poverty. The former president of the Eurogroup made an important statement to the effect that the Eurogroup had treated Cypriots like gangsters. Basically, it used them as guinea pigs.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Why was such an unprecedented economic policy of divide and rule imposed on Cyprus?

2. How did the Council react to the unjustified campaign which preceded it in a bid to accuse Cyprus of money laundering and of being a tax haven, in order to isolate it from its partners and impose an unfair haircut on it, which has mainly harmed the people who have struggled honestly all their life to get back on their feet following the Turkish invasion in 1974?

3. Who will pay the price for such criminally misguided decisions?

4. What action will the Council take on the ground to combat increasing poverty and unemployment in Cyprus?

5. How does it intend to stamp out rising euroscepticism, especially in the run-up to the forthcoming European elections?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

As indicated in the statement of 16 March 2013 and reconfirmed on 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup considered that, in principle, financial assistance to Cyprus was warranted to safeguard financial stability in Cyprus and the euro area as a whole by providing financial assistance for an amount up to EUR 10 billion. The Eurogroup welcomed the policy plans presented by the Cyprus authorities and agreed to the measures for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to its statement of 25 March 2013. These measures will form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector. In particular, they safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

Furthermore, on 25 April 2013 the Council adopted a decision, addressed to Cyprus, setting out the elements of a three-year macroeconomic adjustment programme aimed at restoring the soundness of its banking industry, continuing the process of fiscal consolidation and supporting competitiveness and sustainable and balanced growth.

The decision, based on Articles 136(1) and 126(6) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, contains the main elements of policy conditionality for the granting of financial assistance to Cyprus by the European Stability Mechanism, as agreed by the Eurogroup on 25 March 2013.

Moreover, following the completion of the independent assessments of compliance with the anti-money laundering framework in Cyprus, the Troika institutions reported the key findings to the Eurogroup on 13 May 2013, and recommendations to rectify deficiencies will be integrated in the anti-money laundering action plan to be agreed between the Troika institutions and the Cypriot authorities at the time of the first review. The action plan will need to target areas covering implementation of customer due diligence by banks, including through adequate supervision, and the functioning of the company registry, among others.

It remains essential to proceed with the implementation of the adjustment programme in a steadfast manner in order to restore financial stability in Cyprus and to lay the foundations for a sustainable path of growth.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-005226/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(13 mai 2013)

Subiect: Serviciul de consultanță al producătorilor agricoli

La inițiativa Uniunii Europene, în anul 1998 s-a înființat și în România un serviciu național pentru a furniza consultanță producătorilor agricoli în mod gratuit. De asemenea, organizarea serviciului național de consultanță pentru agricultorii din România a fost asigurată de către experți din Uniunea Europeană, după modelele consacrate de funcționare din Germania și Anglia, adaptate la condițiile din România. Însă, în vederea eficientizării consultanței agricole și în sectorul public, având ca scop principal sprijinirea fermierilor privați, a fermelor familiale, dar în funcție de solicitări și a societăților, asociațiilor agricole existente sau în curs de înființare, acest sistem de consultanță trebuie menținut și consolidat.

În acest context, ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru a putea menține și consolida actualul serviciu de consultanță agricolă, astfel încât, atât fermierii cât și producătorii agricoli din România să beneficieze de avantajele oferite de acest serviciu de consultanță?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloş în numele Comisiei
(21 iunie 2013)

La 12 octombrie 2011, Comisia a prezentat propuneri legislative privind politica PAC, menite să favorizeze o agricultură competitivă și durabilă.

În ceea ce privește dezvoltarea rurală, pentru perioada 2014-2020, propunerea Comisiei ([1]) prevede o măsură de sprijin („*Servicii de consiliere, servicii de gestionare a exploatației și servicii de înlocuire în cadrul exploatației*"). Obiectivul acestei măsuri este de a ajuta fermierii, deținătorii de păduri și IMM-urile din zonele rurale să beneficieze de servicii de consiliere. Măsura prevede acordarea unui sprijin atât pentru utilizarea serviciilor de consiliere, cât și pentru înființarea acestora. Serviciile de consiliere agricolă în cauză pot fi furnizate fie de organisme publice, inclusiv cele naționale, cum ar fi Agenția Națională de Consultanță Agricolă (ANCA) din România, la care se pare că se referă întrebarea distinsului membru, fie de organisme private.

Măsura promovează utilizarea serviciilor de consiliere pentru a îmbunătăți gestionarea durabilă și performanțele economice și de mediu ale exploatațiilor agricole și forestiere și ale IMM-urilor din zonele rurale. De asemenea, aceasta prevede formarea profesională a consultanților pentru a ameliora calitatea și eficiența serviciilor de consiliere oferite și pentru a garanta că persoanele care furnizează aceste servicii sunt în permanență la curent cu ultimele informații din domeniu.

Beneficiarii vor fi furnizorii de servicii, care vor fi aleși prin intermediul unor cereri de propuneri. Scopul sprijinului acordat în cadrul acestei măsuri este, în principal, de a asigura accesul producătorilor agricoli și al altor beneficiari din mediul rural la servicii de consiliere de bună calitate și asimilarea de către aceștia a informațiilor primite, mai degrabă decât de a menține sau de a consolida serviciile oferite de un anumit furnizor de servicii.

([1]) Propunere de regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind sprijinul pentru dezvoltare rurală acordat din Fondul european agricol pentru dezvoltare rurală (FEADR), COM(2011) 627/3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005226/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Consultancy services for agricultural producers

In 1998, upon the initiative of the European Union, a national service was established in Romania to provide consultancy services to agricultural producers free of charge. Furthermore, the organisation of this national consultancy service for farmers in Romania was undertaken by experts in the European Union, based on established models in operation in Germany and England and adapted to conditions in Romania. However, in order to make agricultural consultancy more efficient in the public sector too, its key aim being to support private farmers, family farms and upon request companies and existing agricultural associations or those in the process of being set up, this consultancy system must be maintained and consolidated.

In view of the above, what measures does the Commission envisage in order to maintain and consolidate the existing agricultural consultancy service, in such a way that farmers and agricultural producers in Romania benefit from the advantages offered by this consultancy service?

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

On 12 October 2011 the Commission presented legal proposals designed to make the CAP a more effective policy for delivering a competitive and sustainable agriculture.

As regards rural development, for 2014-2020, the Commission's proposal ([1]) includes a proposed support measure 'Advisory services, farm management services and farm relief services'. The aim of this measure is to help farmers, forest holders and SMEs in rural areas benefit from advisory services. The measure envisages support both for the use of advisory services and the setting up of such services. The farm advisory services in question can be provided either by public advisory service providers, including national level services like the National Agency for Agricultural Consulting (ANCA) in Romania to which the Honourable Member's question is understood to refer, or by private service providers.

The measure promotes the use of advisory services in order to improve the sustainable management and the economic and environmental performance of farm and forest holdings and SMEs in rural areas. It also provides for the training of advisors in order to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the advice offered and ensures the updated capacity of advisers.

The beneficiary will be the service providers, who are to be chosen through open calls for proposals. The aim of the European support under this measure is primarily to ensure access to and uptake of good quality advisory services by agricultural producers and other rural beneficiaries, rather than to maintain or consolidate the services provided by one particular service provider.

([1]) Commission's proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), COM(2011) 627/3.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005227/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Polígono de tiro en las Bárdenas Reales de Navarra

Las Bárdenas Reales de Navarra son un paraje natural semidesértico situado al sur de la Comunidad Autónoma de Navarra. Dicho paraje, de unas 42 500 hectáreas de extensión, es un espacio de una importancia biológica excepcional que alcanza las figuras más altas de protección ambiental al tratarse de un Parque Natural y una Reserva Mundial de la Biosfera.

No obstante, pese a tener estos altísimos grados de protección ambiental, las Bárdenas Reales albergan en su interior desde 1951 el mayor polígono de tiro y bombardeo de la OTAN en Europa. Pese a tratarse de una zona con una escasa densidad de población, en las Bárdenas existen 19 municipios, dos valles y un monasterio, todos ellos núcleos habitacionales de carácter rural de los cuales el mayor es Tudela, una ciudad con 30 000 habitantes. Esta población debe coexistir con las 2 222 hectáreas que ocupa el campo de tiro y bombardeo, pero en la práctica la OTAN emplea todo el espacio aéreo en un radio superior a los 50 kilómetros a la redonda alrededor del campo.

La citada población de las Bárdenas nunca ha sido preguntada directamente sobre si querían o no querían dicho polígono de tiro y bombardeo; la decisión fue tomada por el Gobierno franquista y esta población ha tenido que convivir con este polígono. El rechazo a este campo de tiro y bombardeo se ha plasmado en la Asamblea Antipolígono que aglutina a la sociedad civil afectada que se opone a la existencia del mismo. Durante 2008 los diferentes grupos políticos que han gobernado los diferentes ayuntamientos afectados por el polígono, UPN y PSN, cambiaron sus posiciones tradicionales de oposición al mismo a la hora de votar su continuidad por veinte años más. Así, los consejos municipales han optado por continuar soportando las molestias y los riesgos, con unos treinta accidentes graves a lo largo de estos sesenta años, que supone el convivir con un polígono de tiro de la OTAN. La OTAN no aporta información sobre los tipos de armas empleadas ni el impacto que estas pueden llegar a causar entre la flora y la fauna del Parque Natural.

— ¿Considera la Comisión que España está cumpliendo la Directiva 2011/92/UE sobre la evaluación de impacto ambiental pese a la carencia de información sobre el impacto para los ciudadanos de la zona?

— ¿Considera que España cumple la Directiva 2009/147/CE sobre la conservación de aves en el caso expuesto?

— ¿Considera que España cumple la Directiva 92/43/CEE sobre hábitats? En caso negativo, ¿qué medidas piensa desarrollar para que se cumplan las citadas Directivas?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de julio de 2013)

Los parajes ES0000292 Loma la Negra-Bárdenas y ES0000171 El Plano-Blanca Alta han sido declarados Zonas Especiales de Protección para las Aves con arreglo a la Directiva de Aves ([1]). Bárdenas Reales (ES2200037) es, además, un Lugar de Importancia Comunitaria en el marco de la Directiva de Hábitats ([2]). La Comisión sabe de la práctica en ese lugar de actividades militares, porque así consta en el Formulario Normalizado de Datos ([3]).

No hay, *a priori*, ninguna presunción en contra de la realización de actividades militares en el interior de un lugar Natura 2000, sobre todo si se trata de actividades que históricamente han tenido lugar en él. Corresponde a las autoridades nacionales pertinentes garantizar que todo plan o proyecto (incluidas las actividades militares) que pueda afectar de forma apreciable a un espacio Natura 2000 se someta a una evaluación en el marco del artículo 6, apartado 3, de la Directiva de Hábitats. Si la evaluación es negativa, y a falta de soluciones alternativas, el proyecto solo puede ser autorizado por razones imperiosas de interés público de primer orden, como dispone el apartado 4 de ese mismo artículo, y si se adoptan las medidas compensatorias adecuadas.

([1]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 20 de 26.1.2010, p. 7).
([2]) 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).
([3]) Disponible en el sitio web de Natura 2000 Map Viewer: http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu

Por lo que se refiere a la Directiva 2011/92/UE ([4]) (conocida como Directiva de Evaluación de Impacto Ambiental o Directiva EIA), hay que señalar que, según la información disponible, esas actividades militares empezaron antes de que se adoptara la Directiva 85/337/CEE y que, además, no entrarían en el ámbito de aplicación de la Directiva EIA, que solo regula los proyectos incluidos en los anexos I y II. Por otra parte, su artículo 1, apartado 3, prevé la posible exclusión de los proyectos que respondan a las necesidades de la defensa nacional.

La Comisión estudiará la información disponible y, si resulta necesario, se pondrá en contacto con las autoridades españolas para comprobar si ese polígono de tiro y bombardeo es conforme con la Directiva de Hábitats.

([4]) DO L 26 de 28.1.2012, p. 1 (versión codificada de la Directiva 85/337/CEE, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, en su versión modificada).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005227/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Firing range in Bardenas Reales, Navarra

Bardenas Reales is a semiarid nature reserve situated in the south of the Autonomous Region of Navarra. The reserve, which covers an area of 42 500 hectares, is an area of exceptional biological importance which enjoys the highest levels of environmental protection due to its classification as a Nature Reserve and a World Biosphere Reserve.

However, in spite of these very high levels of environmental protection, since 1951, Bardenas Reales has been home to the largest NATO firing and bombing range in Europe. Despite the area's low population density, there are 19 municipalities, two valleys and a monastery, all of them rural settlements, the biggest being Tudela, a town of 30 000 inhabitants. These people have to coexist with the 2 222 hectares occupied by the firing and bombing range, although in practice NATO uses all of the air space within a radius of more than 50 kilometres of the range.

The people of Bardenas were never directly consulted about whether or not they wanted this firing and bombing range; the decision was taken by the Franco Government and these people have had to live with the range. Opponents of the firing and bombing range have come together in the Asamblea Antipolígono (Anti-Firing Range Assembly). In 2008, the different political groups governing the towns affected by the range, UPN (Navarra People's Union) and PSN (Socialist Party of Navarra), switched from their traditional opposition to the range when a vote was held on whether it should remain in operation for a further 20 years. The municipal councils therefore chose to continue to put up with the nuisance and risks (there have been around 30 serious accidents in the last 60 years) associated with living with a NATO firing range. NATO does not provide information about the kinds of arms used or the impact they might have on the flora and fauna in the Nature Reserve.

— Does the Commission believe that Spain is complying with Directive 2011/92/EU on environmental impact assessment, despite the lack of information regarding the impact on citizens in the area?

— Does it believe that Spain is complying with Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds in this case?

— Does it believe that Spain is complying with Directive 92/43/EEC on habitats? If not, what measures does it intend to take in order to ensure compliance with these Directives?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The sites ES0000292 Loma la Negra-Bárdenas and ES0000171 El Plano-Blanca Alta were designated as Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive ([1]). Furthermore, Bárdenas Reales (ES2200037) is a site of Community importance under the Habitats Directive ([2]). The Commission is aware of the existence of military activities in this site, as specified in its Standard Data Form ([3]).

There is no a priori presumption against military activities inside a Natura 2000 site, especially if these activities are consistent with the activities which have historically been undertaken there. It is the responsibility of the relevant national authorities to ensure that any plan or project (including military activities) likely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites is subject to an assessment under Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive. In case of a negative assessment and in the absence of alternative solutions, the project can be authorised only for imperative reasons of overriding public interest under Art.6.4 and if adequate compensatory measures are adopted.

In relation to Directive 2011/92/EU ([4]) (known as the Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA Directive) it should be noted that, according to the available information, these military activities started before the adoption of Directive 85/337/EEC. Moreover, it seems that these activities would not fall under the scope of the EIA Directive, which is only applicable to projects covered by Annexes I and II. Furthermore, Article 1(3) foresees the possible exclusion of projects serving national defence purpose.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010).
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).
([3]) Available on Natura 2000 Map Viewer at http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu.
([4]) OJ L 26, 28.01.2012, p.1-16 (codified version of Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended).

The Commission will examine the information available and if necessary it will contact the Spanish authorities to verify the compliance of this firing range with the Habitats Directive.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005229/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Empréstimos financiam bolsas do Programa Erasmus

A proposta da Comissão Europeia de criar um mecanismo de garantia de empréstimos para os estudantes de mestrados no Programa «Yes Europe — Erasmus para todos» tem levantado diversas dúvidas, uma vez que a proposta implica o endividamento do estudante e da sua família ainda antes de este terminar o curso e começar a trabalhar. Esta situação é ainda agravada pelo momento em que muitos Estados-Membros se encontram, em profunda crise económica e social e com taxas de desemprego com níveis históricos, principalmente entre as camadas mais jovens.

Assim solicito à Comissão que me informe do seguinte:

1. Não considera que o programa Erasmus deveria ser democratizado ao ponto de não excluir do seu âmbito estudantes com frágeis condições financeiras, dando portanto a possibilidade desta experiência a qualquer aluno?

2. As bolsas atribuídas são por norma insuficientes, tendo em conta as viagens, a habitação e o nível de vida nos países de acolhimento. Não seria lógico aumentar os valores disponibilizados em vez de tomar a opção de endividar os estudantes e famílias com empréstimos?

3. Quais as medidas previstas para auxiliar os alunos que no final dos estudos não encontram emprego e, portanto, não têm os meios financeiros e a estabilidade necessários para iniciar o pagamento da dívida contraída?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(21 de junho de 2013)

A proposta da Comissão relativa a um mecanismo de garantia de empréstimo a estudantes está concebida para ser particularmente relevante para os estudantes provenientes de meios desfavorecidos que, de outra forma, não poderiam estudar num programa completo de mestrado no estrangeiro por razões económicas. As garantias sociais incluem taxas de juro reduzidas, sem cauções ou garantias parentais e a possibilidade de adiar ou congelar os reembolsos. Os diplomados dispõem de um prazo máximo de dois anos para encontrar trabalho antes do início do reembolso dos seus empréstimos.

As bolsas Erasmus para a mobilidade de crédito apoiam o financiamento dos custos adicionais das estadias no estrangeiro e os Estados-Membros podem ter em conta diferentes custos de vida entre os países quanto ao nível de bolsas. A Comissão prevê aumentar o número e a dimensão das bolsas Erasmus durante o próximo período de financiamento de sete anos. No entanto, as bolsas concebidas para a mobilidade de crédito nunca serão suficientes para cobrir todas as despesas decorrentes de estudos nem para financiar a mobilidade total, para a qual há uma crescente procura económica e social. Uma garantia de empréstimo oferece o melhor modelo para o acesso a possibilidades de financiamento favoráveis em condições equitativas para o grupo de estudantes que enfrenta o maior défice de financiamento: os estudantes de um programa completo de mestrado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005229/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Loans to fund grants under the Erasmus programme

The Commission's proposal to establish a loan guarantee facility for Master's students under the 'Yes Europe — Erasmus for all' programme is questionable in several respects, since the proposal involves the student and their family getting into debt even before the student finishes the course and starts work. This state of affairs is exacerbated by the situation many Member States are in, namely a deep economic and social crisis with unemployment at record levels, predominantly affecting young people.

1. Does the Commission not believe that the Erasmus programme should be democratic to the point that it does not exclude students in a precarious financial situation, thus allowing any student to experience it?

2. The grants awarded are normally not enough, when travel, accommodation and the standard of living in host countries are taken into account. Would it not make sense to increase the amounts made available instead of opting to give students loans, thus saddling them and their families with debt?

3. What measures is the Commission planning to help students who, on completing their studies, do not find work and therefore do not have the financial wherewithal and stability required to start paying off their debt?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

The Commission proposal for a Student Loan Guarantee Facility is designed to be particularly relevant for students from disadvantaged backgrounds who would otherwise be unable financially to study for a full master programme abroad. Social safeguards include reduced interest rates, no collateral or parental guarantees, and the possibility to defer or freeze repayments. Graduates have up to two years to get a job before starting to repay their loans.

Erasmus grants for credit mobility help finance the extra costs of going abroad and Member States are able to take account of different living costs between countries in the level of grants. The Commission foresees to increase both the number and size of Erasmus grants during the next seven year funding period. However, the grants designed for credit mobility will never be sufficient to cover all study costs nor to finance full degree mobility for which there is increasing economic and social demand. A loan guarantee offers the best model to open up access to affordable finance on equitable terms for the student group facing the widest financing gap: full programme masters students.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005230/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Volume de juros a pagar num quadro de alargamento dos prazos de maturidade do empréstimo da troika

A troika informou recentemente que está disponível para alargar em 7 anos os prazos de maturidade do empréstimo concedido no quadro do «memorando de entendimento» assinado pelo governo português e pela troika.

Sendo a Comissão parte da troika (FMI-CE-BCE), solicitamos que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

Tendo em conta que a extensão dos prazos de maturidade do empréstimo implicará o aumento do volume de juros a pagar por Portugal à troika, qual o diferencial entre o montante global previsto a pagar em juros com as maturidades revistas e o montante global previsto a pagar em juros com as maturidades anteriormente estipuladas (a preços constantes)?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(17 de junho de 2013)

O alargamento dos prazos de vencimento dos empréstimos a Portugal e à Irlanda destinam-se a facilitar a readmissão no mercado dos dois países e proporcionar financiamento, a baixo custo, por um período mais longo. O alargamento é aplicável aos empréstimos concedidos pelo Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilização Financeira (MEEF) e o Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira (FEEF); não haverá alterações nas condições do empréstimo do FMI.

No que diz respeito aos empréstimos do MEEF, devido à sua natureza «*back-to-back*», os empréstimos do MEEF a vencer serão refinanciados pela Comissão antes de chegarem ao seu termo, desde que tenha acesso aos mercados. Os empréstimos serão refinanciados à taxa de juro disponível para o MEEF nessa altura, em função das condições de mercado para a contração de empréstimos do MEEF. A taxa de juro dos empréstimos do FEEF depende dos custos de financiamento do FEEF e é flexível. Considerando que a evolução das taxas de juro não é previsível, é impossível fazer uma estimativa da diferença dos custos dos juros. É de notar, contudo, que tanto as taxas de juros do MEEF como do FEEF são atualmente inferiores às taxas de juro que a maioria dos Estados-Membros estão a pagar pelos seus empréstimos e, por conseguinte, o financiamento pelo FEEF e o MEEF, por um período mais longo, é vantajoso para ambos os países.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005230/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Amount of interest to be paid in the light of the extended maturity of the loan from the Troika

The Troika recently stated that it was prepared to extend by seven years the maturity of the loan granted under the 'memorandum of understanding', signed by the Portuguese Government and the Troika.

The Commission is part of the Troika (International Monetary Fund-Commission-European Central Bank).

Considering that extending the maturity of the loan will mean that Portugal will have to pay more interest to the Troika, what is the difference between the total amount expected to be paid in interest under the revised maturity, and the total amount expected to be paid in interest under the previously agreed maturity (at constant prices)?

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

The extension of the official loan maturities to Portugal and Ireland is intended to facilitate market re-entry for both countries and to provide financing for a longer period at low cost. The extension applies to the loans granted by the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM) and the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) only; there will be no change in the IMF loan terms.

As regards the EFSM loans, due to their back-to-back nature, the maturing EFSM loans will be re-financed by the Commission prior to the maturity, subject to having access to the markets. The loans will be refinanced at the interest rate available for the EFSM at that point in time, depending on market conditions for the EFSM borrowing. The interest rate on EFSF loans depends on the EFSF funding cost and is flexible. Since future interest rates are not predictable, it is impossible to estimate the difference in interest costs. It should be noted however that both the EFSM and EFSF interest rates are currently below the interest rates that most Member States are paying on their debt and hence funding by the EFSF/EFSM for a longer period is advantageous for both countries.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-005231/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Subiect: Modificarea Regulamentului (UE) nr. 1129/2011 al Comisiei

Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1129/2011 al Comisiei, de modificare a anexei II la Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului prin stabilirea unei liste a Uniunii a aditivilor alimentari, prevede doar ca anumiți aditivi să poată fi folosiți în compoziția produselor din carne. Printre aceștia nu se numără și bicarbonatul de sodiu (E500), a cărui utilizare în produsele din carne ar urma să fie interzisă începând cu luna iunie 2013.

Totuși, există anumite preparate, care ar putea fi considerate tradiționale (precum „micii", în cazul României), în compoziția cărora intră bicarbonatul de sodiu.

Are în vedere Comisia modificarea Anexei II la Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008, pentru a include bicarbonatul de sodiu între aditivii a căror utilizare este permisă în compoziția produselor din carne?

Dacă da, când va fi efectuată această modificare?

În caz contrar, cum intenționează să procedeze Comisia pe viitor pentru a evita ca producția anumitor produse considerate tradiționale să nu fie pusă în pericol prin interzicerea utilizării unor aditivi?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(4 iulie 2013)

Noua listă a aditivilor alimentari („lista Uniunii") a fost instituită prin Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1129/2011 al Comisiei în noiembrie 2011 și se aplică de la 1 iunie 2013.

În această listă a Uniunii au fost transferați în mod corect din vechile directive toți aditivii autorizați și condițiile lor de utilizare. Aditivii sunt enumerați în funcție de categoria de produse alimentare la care pot fi adăugați. Noua listă este mult mai transparentă și menționează în mod clar aditivii care pot fi utilizați în anumite produse alimentare. Stabilirea acestei liste a fost precedată de discuții ample cu statele membre și de consultări intensive cu organizațiile părților interesate.

Legislația UE privind aditivii alimentari nu a autorizat utilizarea bicarbonatului de sodiu (E500) în produsul tradițional românesc menționat („mititei").

Serviciile Comisiei au primit recent o cerere de autorizare a aditivului respectiv pentru utilizare în „mititei", care este în prezent procesată în conformitate cu dispozițiile Regulamentului (CE) nr. 1331/2008 de instituire a unei proceduri comune de autorizare pentru aditivii alimentari, enzimele alimentare și aromele alimentare ([1]).

([1]) JO L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005231/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Amendment to Commission Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011, amending Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council through the establishment of a Union list of food additives, only stipulates that certain additives can be used in the composition of meat products. This list does not include sodium bicarbonate (E500), whose use in meat products is to be prohibited as of June 2013.

However, there are certain products, which could be considered traditional (and 'small' in the case of Romania), in which sodium bicarbonate is used as an ingredient.

Does the European Commission envisage amending Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 to include sodium bicarbonate amongst the additives whose use is permitted in the composition of meat products?

If so, when will this amendment be implemented?

Otherwise, what does the Commission intend to do going forward to prevent the production of certain products that are considered traditional from being jeopardised by the ban on the use of some additives?

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

The new list of food additives ('Union list') was established by Commission Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011, in November 2011 and applies as of 1 June 2013.

For this Union list all authorised additives and their conditions of use have been correctly transferred from the old Directives and are now listed according to the food category to which they may be added. The new list is much more transparent and clearly lists which additives may be used in a certain food. The establishment of this list was preceded by lengthy discussions with Member States and intensive consultations with stakeholder organisations.

The EU legislation of food additives has never authorised the use of sodium bicarbonate (E500), in the traditional Romanian product referred to ('mititei').

The Commission services have recently received a request for the authorisation of that additive for the use in 'mititei', which is currently being dealth with in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1331/2008, establishing a common authorisation procedure for food additives, food enzymes and food flavourings ([1]).

([1]) OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p.1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005232/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Sacs plastiques non biodégradables dans l'Union européenne

Alors que l'Union européenne met l'accent sur la protection de l'environnement, qui fait partie des objectifs du programme Horizon 2020, il est étonnant que les sacs en plastique non biodégradable contenant du polyéthylène ne soient toujours pas interdits dans l'Union.

La France avait interdit en 2005 l'utilisation de ces sacs, mais la loi a été abrogée parce que non conforme au droit européen.

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas qu'il serait bon d'interdire l'utilisation de sacs en plastique non biodégradable pour aller dans le sens d'une réduction des déchets plastiques et, partant, d'une amélioration du traitement des déchets, points noirs de certains États membres?

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

La Commission convient qu'il est nécessaire de réduire la consommation non-durable de sacs en plastique au sein de l'Union européenne, et examine les options envisageables en vue d'une éventuelle action au niveau de l'Union, puisque cela a également été demandé par les ministères chargés de l'environnement des États membres ([1]).

Une étude sur les conséquences des modes de production et de consommation de sacs en plastique et sur les répercussions de diverses options stratégiques mises en œuvre pour réduire leur utilisation (y compris la possibilité d'interdire les sacs en plastique non biodégradables) a été publiée en 2011. Une autre étude évaluant de manière plus approfondie les incidences socioéconomiques de différentes options stratégiques a été publiée en 2012 ([2]).

Dans le cadre d'une consultation publique à ce sujet réalisée en 2011, la Commission a reçu plus de 15 500 réponses, ce qui montre le grand intérêt manifesté par l'opinion publique à l'égard de la consommation non-durable de sacs en plastique et les grandes attentes vis-à-vis d'une action de l'Union visant à réduire les incidences environnementales liées à l'utilisation de ces sacs. Les avis divergent quant aux meilleurs instruments à utiliser, avec une légère préférence pour une prévention ciblée sur l'utilisation de sacs en plastique.

Les résultats de ces études et consultations fourniront des informations et des orientations à toute proposition de la Commission pour traiter cette question. Conformément aux pratiques habituelles de la Commission, tous les coûts et avantages potentiels de ces options stratégiques (c'est-à-dire d'un point de vue environnemental, économique et social) seront pris en considération.

L'Honorable Parlementaire sera peut-être intéressé d'apprendre que la Commission a récemment clôturé une consultation publique reposant sur son livre vert du 7 mars 2013 sur «une stratégie européenne en matière de déchets plastiques dans l'environnement» ([3]). La réponse au livre vert sera prise en considération lors de la révision plus générale de la politique et de la législation de l'Union en matière de déchets qui est prévue pour 2014.

([1]) Lors des Conseils «Environnement» du 14 mars et du 19 décembre 2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/plastic_waste.htm
([3]) COM(2013)123 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005232/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Non-biodegradable plastic bags in the European Union

At a time when the European Union is stressing the need to protect the environment — one of the Horizon 2020 policy objectives — it is astonishing that non-biodegradable plastic bags containing polyethylene should still not have been banned in the EU.

France banned the use of these bags in 2005, but the act was revoked for breaching EC law.

Does the Commission not think it would be a good idea to ban the use of non-biodegradable plastic bags with a view to reducing plastic waste and improving waste management, areas in which some Member States have a lot of progress to make?

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

The Commission agrees on the need to reduce the unsustainable consumption of plastic bags in the EU and is assessing the options available for possible action at EU level, having also been asked to do so by Member States' Environment Ministers ([1]).

A study on the impacts of production and consumption patterns of plastic carrier bags, and the impacts incurred by various policy options to reduce their use (including a possible ban of non-biodegradable plastic bags) was published in 2011. A further study assessing in more detail the socioeconomic impacts of different policy options was published in 2012 ([2]).

The Commission received more than 15 500 responses to a public consultation on the issue in 2011 indicating a high level of public concern about the unsustainable consumption of plastic carrier bags and high expectations for EU action to reduce the environmental impacts of their use. Opinions were divergent on the best instruments, with a slight preference for a prevention target on the use of plastic carrier bags.

The results of these studies and consultations will inform and guide any proposals made by the Commission to deal with the issue. In accordance with standard Commission practice, all potential costs and benefits of policy options (i.e. environmental, economic and social) will be taken into account.

The Honourable Member may be interested to learn that the Commission recently closed a public consultation on the basis of its Green Paper of 7 March 2013 on 'a European Strategy on Plastic Waste in the Environment' ([3]). The response to the Green Paper will feed into the wider review of EU waste policy and legislation that is planned for 2014.

([1]) In the Environment Councils of 14 March and 19 December 2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/plastic_waste.htm
([3]) COM(2013)123 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005233/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Mise en place d'une base de données européenne des personnes disparues et non identifiées

Aux États-Unis, il existe une base de données qui centralise toutes les personnes disparues et non identifiées, système qui n'existe pas pour le moment en Europe. À ce jour, au niveau européen, il n'existe qu'un numéro d'urgence pour signaler les enfants disparus et le programme FASTID d'Interpol.

Alors que la Commission s'est engagée à continuer les efforts de ses services sur la question des personnes disparues (en réponse à la question parlementaire E-008273/2011), l'hypothèse d'un registre central européen n'a pas été envisagée.

La Commission envisage-t-elle de mettre en place une base de données européenne des personnes disparues et non identifiées pour faciliter les recherches de personnes disparues?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(16 juillet 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à prendre connaissance de sa réponse à la question parlementaire E-008273/2011.

Le système d'information Schengen de deuxième génération (SIS II) comprend les signalements concernant des personnes disparues, conformément aux dispositions du chapitre VI de la décision 2007/533/JAI du Conseil du 12 juin 2007 sur l'établissement, le fonctionnement et l'utilisation du SIS II. Ce système contient des données relatives aux personnes disparues qui doivent être placées sous protection et/ou dont il convient d'établir la localisation. Dans le cas d'une personne disparue, et notamment d'un enfant, l'autorité communique le lieu où elle se trouve et la mesure prise à la demande des autorités signalantes.

En outre, les Pays-Bas ont lancé l'initiative «AMBER Alert Europe», un projet pilote visant à mettre en place un système d'alerte transfrontière pour les enlèvements d'enfants à l'échelle de l'Union européenne. Ce projet est financé en partie par un programme national de subvention qui est financé, quant à lui, par le programme européen de recherche en matière sécurité dans le cadre du 7e programme-cadre pour la recherche.

La Commission n'a pas l'intention d'élaborer des propositions visant à créer d'autres bases de données concernant les personnes disparues/non identifiées.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005233/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Establishing a European database of missing and unidentified persons

The United States has a centralised database of all missing and unidentified persons, for which there is currently no European equivalent. The only European-wide arrangements currently in place are the emergency number for reporting missing children and Interpol's FASTID programme.

Whilst the Commission has signalled its ongoing commitment to addressing the issue of missing persons (answer to parliamentary Question E-008273/2011), a centralised European database has not been considered.

Does the Commission plan to create a European database of missing and unidentified persons to help find missing individuals?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to parliamentary Question E-008273/2011.

In the recently launched second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) alerts on missing persons are included,as stipulated in Chapter VI, Council Decision 2007/533/JHA of 12 June 2007 on the establishment, operation and use of SIS II. The system includes data on missing persons who need to be placed under police protection and/or whose whereabouts need to be ascertained. In the case of a missing person, including a child, the authority will report when that person has been located and the action taken as requested by the authorities creating the alert.

In addition, the Netherlands has undertaken the so called AMBER Alert Europe Initiative which is a pilot project with the aim to establish a EU-wide cross-border alert system for abducted children. This project is partially funded by a national subvention programme which in turn is supported by the Security Research Programme of the 7th Framework Programme for Research.

The Commission does not intend making proposals to establish further databases on missing/unidentified persons.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005234/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Droit néerlandais des recours collectifs et droit communautaire

Les recours collectifs sont inexistants en droit français. Jusqu'à présent, les actionnaires français ne pouvaient donc demander réparation en vertu de ce système. En Europe, une quinzaine de pays autorisent les recours collectifs, mais les Pays-Bas offrent une procédure extraordinairement accueillante et autorisent des sociétés non néerlandaises à obtenir des indemnisations considérables.

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que les Pays-Bas, en autorisant des entreprises non-néerlandaises à bénéficier d'un droit non reconnu par certains États membres comme la France, enfreint le droit communautaire en matière de concurrence?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(21 août 2013)

Le droit à une réparation des dommages causés par une infraction de droit commun est reconnu dans tous les États membres. Les actions en justice, y compris les actions collectives, ne sont qu'un moyen procédural permettant d'exercer ce droit dans la pratique. Le recours à ces actions ne peut généralement pas être contesté si les règles nationales sur les recours collectifs sont conçues dans le but de faciliter l'application de droits à réparation justifiés, de garantir l'indemnisation des personnes lésées et d'assurer une procédure équitable pour toutes les parties ([1]).

En ce qui concerne les cas de préjudices de masse causés par une violation des droits conférés par la législation européenne, la Commission a adopté, le 11 juin, une recommandation ([2]) invitant les États membres à disposer, pour les actions en réparation, de mécanismes nationaux de recours collectif. Ces mécanismes devraient faire en sorte que les procédures soient objectives, équitables et rapides sans que leur coût soit prohibitif et qu'elles respectent les principes fondamentaux énoncés dans la recommandation. Celle-ci couvre tous les domaines d'intervention, y compris le droit de la concurrence. Elle traite également des litiges transnationaux et invite les États membres à veiller à ce que les règles nationales en matière de recevabilité ou de qualité pour agir des groupes de demandeurs ou des entités représentatives provenant d'autres États membres n'empêchent pas l'introduction d'une action collective unique devant une seule et même juridiction.

Par conséquent, les raisons pour lesquelles les règles néerlandaises en matière de recours collectif devraient être considérées comme une violation de la législation européenne en général et des règles de concurrence de l'Union en particulier n'apparaissent pas clairement. Ces dernières règles ne s'appliquent qu'aux pratiques anticoncurrentielles des entreprises ou à la distorsion de concurrence causée par les subventions des États membres. La compétence des tribunaux quant aux litiges transnationaux en matière civile et commerciale est déterminée par le règlement (CE) n° 44/2001 et, dans une certaine mesure, par les règles de compétence relevant du droit national ou du droit international.

([1]) Quel que soit leur État membre d'établissement ou leur nationalité.
([2]) Recommandation de la Commission relative à des principes communs applicables aux mécanismes de recours collectif en cessation et en réparation dans les États membres en cas de violation de droits conférés par le droit de l'Union, C(2013) 3539/3, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/civil/files/c_2013_3539_fr.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005234/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Dutch law on class actions, and EC law

French law makes no provision for class actions. Until now, French shareholders have not been able to seek legal redress in this way. Class actions can be brought in more than a dozen European countries, but the Netherlands has introduced extraordinarily liberal arrangements that make it possible even for foreign companies to secure significant amounts in compensation.

Does the Commission not think that by affording companies from outside the Netherlands a right that is not recognised by certain Member States, such as France, the Netherlands is in breach of EU competition law?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The right to compensation for harm caused by a breach of law is recognised in all Member States. Court actions, including collective actions, are merely a procedural means to enforce that right in practice. As long as national rules on collective actions are designed to facilitate the enforcement of meritorious compensation claims and ensure compensation for injured parties and guarantee fair proceedings for all parties ([1]), there can generally be no objections against the availability of such actions.

As regards mass harm situations caused by violations of rights granted under Union law, the Commission adopted on 11 June a recommendation ([2]) which invites Member States to have at national level compensatory collective redress mechanisms. Such mechanisms should ensure fair, equitable, timely and not prohibitively expensive procedures and should respect basic principles set out in the recommendation. The recommendation covers all policy fields, including competition law. It covers also cross-border disputes and invites Member States to ensure that a single collective action in a single forum is not prevented by national rules on admissibility or standing of groups of claimants or representative entities from other Member States.

It is therefore not obvious why the Dutch rules on collective redress should be considered to breach Union law in general or Union competition rules in particular. The latter only apply to anticompetitive conduct of undertakings or competition-distorting aid granted by Member States. The jurisdiction of courts with regard to cross-border disputes in civil and commercial matters is determined by Regulation 44/2001 and to some extent by jurisdictional rules under national or international law.

([1]) Irrespective of their Member State of establishment or nationality.
([2]) Commission Recommendation on common principles for injunctive and compensatory collective redress mechanisms in the Member States concerning violations of rights granted under Union Law, C(2013) 3539/3, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/civil/files/c_2013_3539_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005235/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Introduction des recours collectifs («class actions») en droit européen

En 2011, la Commission a ouvert une consultation publique ayant pour objet l'élaboration d'une approche cohérente des recours collectifs (les «class actions») dans l'Union Européenne.

La législation européenne en vigueur prévoit déjà la possibilité d'intenter des actions collectives en cessation dans le domaine du droit de la consommation, mais les États restent compétents en matière de marchés financiers, de droit de la concurrence et de protection de l'environnement. Le projet de la Commission était donc de recenser les principes juridiques communs de l'Union pour élargir les possibilités d'utilisation des «class actions».

Alors que la consultation publique a pris fin en avril 2011, la Commission ne semble plus communiquer sur ce projet. La Commission pourrait-elle donc expliquer où en est le projet de recours collectifs en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(15 juillet 2013)

Le 11 juin 2013, la Commission a adopté la recommandation C(2013)3539 relative à des principes communs applicables aux mécanismes de recours collectif en cessation et en réparation dans les États membres en cas de violation de droits conférés par le droit de l'Union, accompagnée par la communication de la Commission COM(2013) 401 intitulée «Vers un cadre horizontal européen pour les recours collectifs». La Commission a recommandé aux États membres d'instaurer des mécanismes de recours collectif pour les plaintes motivées par la violation des droits conférés par le droit de l'Union. La recommandation est de nature horizontale et les principes qui y sont posés s'appliquent donc à tous les domaines de la politique de l'Union, y compris les marchés financiers, le droit de la concurrence et la protection de l'environnement. Les États membres devraient appliquer les principes posés dans la recommandation aux systèmes nationaux de recours collectif dans les 2 ans suivant la publication de la recommandation. La Commission devrait ensuite, dans les 4 ans suivant la publication de la recommandation, évaluer la mise en œuvre de cette dernière ainsi que ses effets, et déterminer si d'autres mesures sont nécessaires.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005235/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Incorporation of the concept of collective redress (class actions) into European law

In 2011, the Commission launched a public consultation with the aim of developing a coherent approach to the concept of collective redress (class actions) in the European Union.

EC law already provides for the possibility of pursuing injunctive collective actions in the field of consumer law, but Member States retain jurisdiction in matters concerning financial markets, competition law and environmental protection. The Commission's idea was therefore to identify common legal principles in force in the EU with a view to broadening the scope for bringing class actions.

Although the public consultation ended in April 2011, the Commission seems to have decided not to release any more details about the outcome. Could it therefore shed light on the current status of the proposals to incorporate the concept of collective redress into EC law?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

On 11 June 2013 the Commission adopted the recommendation C(2013) 3539 on common principles for injunctive and compensatory collective redress mechanisms in the Member States concerning violations of rights granted under Union Law, accompanied by the Commission Communication COM(2013) 401 'Towards a European Horizontal Framework for Collective Redress'. The Commission recommended to the Member States to have collective redress mechanism for the claims that are grounded in infringements of the rights granted under the Union law. The recommendation is of horizontal character; therefore the principles set forth therein apply to all of the Union's policy fields, including financial markets, competition law and environmental protection. Member States should implement the principles set out in the recommendations in national collective redress systems within 2 years of its publication. The Commission should then, within 4 years of publication, assess the implementation and its effects, and will reflect whether further steps are needed.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005236/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Articulation des compétences des différents organes européens en matière de cybersécurité

Le Parlement européen a voté le renforcement de l'Agence pour la cybersécurité de l'Union européenne (ENISA). La nouvelle réglementation mise en place permettra à l'ENISA de soutenir pleinement la stratégie de l'Union européenne pour la cybersécurité.

D'autres organes, comme Europol, responsable des opérations de prévention de la cybercriminalité, et le Service européen pour l'action extérieure (SEAE), en charge de la cybersécurité à l'échelle mondiale, occupent déjà une place prépondérante dans la sécurité des réseaux et de l'information.

Comment la Commission conçoit-elle l'articulation entre ces différents organes pour éviter l'empiètement et le dédoublement des compétences en matière de cybersécurité?

Avoir tant d'organes en charge de la surveillance des réseaux et de l'information ne risque-t-il pas d'entraîner la dispersion des compétences et d'affaiblir la lutte contre la cybercriminalité?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(5 juillet 2013)

Dans l'économie et la société numériques interconnectées d'aujourd'hui, les cyberincidents ne s'arrêtent pas aux frontières et il est souvent difficile d'en déterminer l'origine. La prévention et le renforcement de la cybersécurité et, notamment, la riposte aux incidents à caractère criminel, ne seront possibles que si toutes les parties prenantes assument leurs responsabilités, au niveau des États membres et de l'Union européenne, et unissent leurs efforts.

La stratégie de cybersécurité de l'Union ([1]) précise le rôle des divers organes chargés de la cybersécurité à l'échelle de l'UE, les responsabilités respectives de ceux-ci et le degré de leur participation aux différentes actions proposées au titre de la stratégie. En particulier, l'ENISA, le Centre européen de lutte contre la cybercriminalité (EC3), créé au sein d'Europol, et l'AED sont trois agences qui œuvrent de façon active à la sécurité des réseaux et de l'information (SRI), au maintien de l'ordre et à la défense. Ces trois agences sont encouragées à collaborer tout en préservant leurs spécificités, et ce dans les limites de leur mandat.

La stratégie présente les divers canaux, formels et informels, de coordination et de coopération existant entre ces trois agences. Le comité de direction d'EC3 réunit, entre autres, Eurojust, l'ENISA, le CEPOL, les États membres et la Commission; il garantit que les actions de l'EC3 sont menées en partenariat, eu égard à l'expertise additionnelle et aux mandats de toutes les parties prenantes. Le nouveau mandat de l'ENISA lui permet de resserrer ses liens avec Europol. Dans une perspective plus ambitieuse encore, le projet de directive de la Commission sur la SRI ([2]) instaurerait un cadre de coopération entre les autorités compétentes en la matière et le partage des informations entre ces dernières et les autorités chargées du maintien de l'ordre à l'échelon national des États membres et à celui de l'Union.

([1]) Stratégie de cybersécurité de l'Union européenne: un cyberespace ouvert, sûr et sécurisé [JOIN(2013) 1 final — 7/2/2013].
([2]) Proposition de directive du Parlement européen et du Conseil concernant des mesures destinées à assurer un niveau élevé commun de sécurité des réseaux et de l'information dans l'Union [COM(2013) 48-2013/0027 (COD)].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005236/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Delineation of competencies held by various European bodies in the field of cybersecurity

The European Parliament has voted to strengthen the role of the EU's cybersecurity agency (ENISA). The new regulation which has been adopted will allow ENISA to lend its full support to the European Union's cybersecurity strategy.

Other bodies such as Europol, which is responsible for cybercrime prevention operations, and the European External Action Service (EEAS), which is in charge of cybersecurity at global level, already play a leading role in the field of network and information security.

How does the Commission believe that the competencies held by these various bodies in the field of cybersecurity should be delineated in order to avoid overlapping and duplication?

With so many bodies in charge of monitoring networks and information, is there not a risk that competencies will be fragmented and the fight against cybercrime will be weakened?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

Cyber incidents do not stop at borders in the interconnected digital economy and society and it is often difficult to ascertain their origin from the outset. Preventing and strengthening cybersecurity, and in particular tackling incidents that are of criminal nature, requires that all actors take responsibility both nationally and at EU level and work together.

The EU Cybersecurity Strategy ([1]) clarifies the roles of the various bodies dealing with cybersecurity at EU level, their respective responsibilities and degree of involvement in the various actions foreseen under the strategy. In particular, ENISA, the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) within Europol and the EDA are three agencies active from the perspective of network and information security (NIS), law enforcement and defence respectively. These three agencies are encouraged to collaborate while preserving their specificities, and within their respective mandates.

The strategy outlines the various channels for coordination and cooperation that exist between these three agencies — both at formal and informal level. The Programme Board of EC3 brings together among others EUROJUST, ENISA, CEPOL, the Member States and the Commission, and ensures that EC3's actions are carried out in partnership, recognising the added expertise and respecting the mandates of all stakeholders. The new mandate of ENISA makes it possible to increase links with Europol. Going further, the Commission's draft Directive on NIS ([2]) would establish a cooperation framework between NIS competent authorities and address information sharing between NIS and law enforcement authorities, both at national and EU level.

([1]) Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union: An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace — JOIN(2013) 1 final — 7/2/2013.
([2]) COM(2013) 48-2013/0027 (COD): Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005237/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Chasse des oiseaux migrateurs

En 2009, l'Union européenne a adopté la «directive Oiseaux» afin de promouvoir la protection et la gestion des populations d'espèces d'oiseaux sauvages sur le territoire européen.

Cette directive reconnait le droit de chasse sur les espèces pour autant que des limites soient établies et respectées pour maintenir la population de ces espèces à un niveau satisfaisant. La liste des espèces autorisées figure dans une annexe de la directive, mais une très grande souplesse est laissée aux États membres en termes de dates d'ouverture et de fermeture de la chasse en fonction des mouvements migratoires des oiseaux.

Ainsi, à Chypre, 1,4 million d'oiseaux migrateurs ont été abattus en 2010 pendant la période des mouvements migratoires.

La Commission estime-t-elle que les règles en matière de chasse d'oiseaux migrateurs sont suffisantes?

Afin de veiller à la préservation de la nature et de la biodiversité, des règles plus strictes ne devraient-elles pas être établies pour veiller à l'interdiction de la chasse aux oiseaux migrateurs en période de mouvements migratoires?

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

La Commission estime que les règles régissant la chasse des oiseaux sauvages dans l'Union européenne, telles qu'énoncées dans la directive «Oiseaux» ([1]), sont suffisantes pour assurer leur conservation et leur exploitation durable. La directive limite la pratique de la chasse aux espèces d'oiseaux énumérées à l'annexe II qui peuvent faire l'objet d'actes de chasse dans le cadre de la législation nationale. L'article 7 de la directive définit les conditions dans lesquelles la chasse doit être pratiquée pour garantir le respect des principes d'utilisation raisonnée et de régulation équilibrée du point de vue écologique. Les espèces susceptibles d'être chassées ne peuvent l'être pendant les périodes de migration et de reproduction, lorsqu'elles sont le plus vulnérables. Le régime dérogatoire prévu par la directive ne peut être appliqué dans le cas de la chasse que dans un nombre très limité de circonstances, lorsque cela est pleinement justifié, et en l'absence d'autre solution satisfaisante. Les États membres peuvent prendre des mesures plus restrictives que celles prévues au titre de la directive «Oiseaux». La Commission continue de travailler en étroite collaboration avec les États membres afin d'assurer la bonne application de cette législation et de prendre les mesures répressives nécessaires lorsqu'elle constate des manquements évidents.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 30 novembre 2009 concernant la conservation des oiseaux sauvages (version codifiée), JO L 20 du 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005237/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Hunting of migratory birds

In 2009, the European Union adopted the Birds Directive in order to promote the protection and management of populations of wild bird species within the EU.

The directive recognises the right to hunt different bird species provided that limits are set and complied with in order to ensure that populations of these species remain at satisfactory levels. Authorised species are listed in an annex to the directive, but Member States are given a great deal of flexibility in terms of the opening and closing dates for hunting seasons, depending on the birds' migratory movements.

In Cyprus, for instance, 1.4 million migratory birds were killed in 2010 during the migratory period.

Does the Commission believe that the rules governing the hunting of migratory birds are adequate?

With a view to promoting nature and biodiversity conservation, should more stringent rules not be imposed in order to ensure that the hunting of migratory birds is banned during their migratory period?

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

The Commission considers that the rules governing the hunting of wild birds in the EU, as set out in the Birds Directive ([1]), are adequate to ensure their conservation and sustainable use. The directive restricts the practice of hunting to bird species listed in its Annex II which may be hunted under national legislation. Article 7 of the directive sets out the conditions for hunting so that this is carried out in accordance with principles of wise use and ecologically balanced control. Huntable species may not be hunted during the migration and reproduction periods when they are most vulnerable. The derogation scheme under the directive may only be applied to hunting in very limited circumstances where it is fully justified in the absence of alternative solutions. Member States may take more restrictive measures than those provided for under the Birds Directive. The Commission continues to work closely with Member States to ensure proper implementation of the legislation and where there are clear failures of compliance takes the necessary enforcement action.

([1]) Council Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version), OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005238/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Poisson pangasius dans nos assiettes

Le pangasius est un nouveau poisson importé en masse dans l'Union européenne. Il provient du delta du Mékong au Vietnam, l'un des fleuves les plus pollués de la planète. Le panga est un poisson d'élevage industriel intensif, par conséquent hautement infecté par des bactéries (résidus industriels toxiques), et son alimentation est effectuée en dehors de tout contrôle sanitaire. Devant l'importante quantité disponible et le faible coût de production de ce poisson, il est largement importé et consommé en Europe.

Compte tenu des risques indéniables pour la santé que représente la consommation de pangas, la Commission estime-t-elle que des contrôles sanitaires renforcés devraient être opérés sur ces poissons avant de les servir dans les assiettes des Européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(9 juillet 2013)

Les produits de l'aquaculture importés de pays tiers doivent être conformes aux conditions sanitaires à l'importation fixées par la législation de l'Union européenne.

Les États membres procèdent à des contrôles sur ces produits aux postes d'inspection frontaliers afin de garantir le respect du droit de l'Union. Ces contrôles peuvent comprendre, entre autres, des prélèvements d'échantillons servant à déterminer si les exigences de l'UE en matière de microbiologie sont remplies ou à déceler la présence éventuelle de résidus de substances chimiques.

En outre, l'Office alimentaire et vétérinaire (OAV) de la direction générale Santé et consommateurs de la Commission effectue des audits sur place pour s'assurer de l'application des dispositions susmentionnées.

Étant donné que, depuis janvier 2011, le pangasius n'a fait l'objet que de vingt notifications, la Commission n'a pour l'instant pas l'intention de renforcer les contrôles sanitaires qui le concernent.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005238/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: The appearance of Pangasius on our dinner plates

Pangasius is a new type of fish to be imported in massive quantities into the European Union. It comes from the Mekong Delta in Vietnam, one of the most polluted rivers on earth. Pangasius are raised in intensive industrial fish farms and are therefore infected with high levels of bacteria (toxic industrial waste), and there are no sanitary controls on what they are fed. The fact that this fish is available in such large quantities and its low production costs mean that is imported into Europe and consumed on a huge scale.

Given that the consumption of pangasius is associated with indisputable health risks, does the Commission believe that more stringent sanitary controls should be carried out on these fish before they are served up on Europeans' plates?

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

In accordance with EU legislation, aquaculture products imported from third countries shall comply with the relevant EU sanitary import requirements.

Member States carry out checks on these products at border inspection posts to ensure compliance with EC law. These checks may include, *inter alia*, samples to check compliance with EU microbiological requirements or residues of chemical substances.

In addition, the Food and Veterinary office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) conducts audits on the spot to verify the implementation of the abovementioned provisions.

For the moment, considering that since January 2011 only 20 notifications were reported on this fishery products, the Commission does not intend to take more stringent sanitary controls on this fish.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005239/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Le parti néo-nazi grec Hrysi Avgi

En Grèce, le parti néo-nazi «Aube dorée» a été créé en 1992, réactivé en 2007 et est entré au Parlement grec en 2012. Vantant des valeurs comme la politique de la main de fer, l'élimination des traîtres et le négationnisme du génocide juif lors de la seconde guerre mondiale, il est en parfaite opposition aux valeurs que prône l'Union européenne.

Comment la Commission compte-t-elle concilier les valeurs fondamentales qu'elle défend et qu'elle prône avec le principe de liberté d'association et de formation de partis politiques de l'article 12, paragraphe 2, de la charte des droits fondamentaux?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(15 juillet 2013)

La Commission européenne a rejeté et condamné à maintes reprises toutes les manifestations de racisme, de xénophobie et d'antisémitisme, ces phénomènes étant incompatibles avec les valeurs et les principes sur lesquels repose l'UE.

La Commission utilise tous les instruments à sa disposition, dans le respect des pouvoirs conférés à l'Union par les traités, pour lutter contre le racisme, la xénophobie et l'antisémitisme. Elle contrôle le respect, par les États membres, de la législation européenne contre les discours et les crimes de haine ([1]), en ce compris la décision-cadre sur le racisme et la xénophobie, qui interdit ce genre de discours et les crimes fondés sur la religion ([2]).

Les principes de liberté d'expression et de liberté d'association, consacrés aux articles 11 et 12 de la charte des droits fondamentaux de l'UE et aux articles 10 et 11 de la convention européenne des Droits de l'homme, constituent deux piliers essentiels des sociétés démocratiques. Il ne s'agit cependant pas de droits absolus. Il est mentionné explicitement dans la jurisprudence de la Cour européenne des Droits de l'homme qu'il peut s'avérer nécessaire, dans les sociétés démocratiques, de sanctionner toute forme d'expression destinée à propager, inciter à, promouvoir ou justifier la haine fondée sur l'intolérance, ainsi que de restreindre la liberté de réunion et d'association afin de préserver la sécurité nationale et la sûreté publique.

C'est aux autorités nationales qu'il incombe d'enquêter sur les cas individuels, y compris en ce qui concerne les partis politiques, afin de déterminer s'ils incitent à la violence ou à la haine et de prendre les mesures qui s'imposent en vertu du droit pénal.

La Commission européenne et, en dernier recours, la Cour européenne de justice, sont quant à elles chargées de contrôler l'application correcte de la décision-cadre, conformément aux pouvoirs qui leur sont conférés par les traités.

([1]) Pour en savoir plus, voir par exemple: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/framework-decision/index_en.htm et http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/law/index_en.htm (en anglais).

([2]) 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.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005239/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Greek neo-Nazi party 'Chrysi Avgi'

The Greek neo-Nazi party 'Golden Dawn' was founded in 1992, revived in 2007 and entered the Greek Parliament in 2012. The values it extols include the 'iron fist' policy, the elimination of traitors and denial of the genocide of Jews during the Second World War, or in other words the complete opposite of the values advocated by the European Union.

How does the Commission intend to reconcile the fundamental values it defends and advocates with the principle of freedom of association and the freedom to establish political parties as enshrined in Article 12(2) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The European Commission has repeatedly rejected and condemned all manifestations of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism as these phenomena are incompatible with the values and principles the EU is founded on.

The Commission uses all the instruments at its disposal, in line with the powers conferred to the Union by the Treaties, to fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. It is monitoring Member States' compliance with EU legislation banning hate speech and hate crime ([1]), including the framework Decision on racism and xenophobia prohibiting hate speech and crime based on religion ([2]).

Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Association constitute two of the essential foundations of democratic societies, as enshrined in Articles 11 and 12 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention of Human Rights. However these are not absolute rights. It is specifically stated in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights that it may be considered necessary in democratic societies to sanction all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred based on intolerance, and to limit assembly and association in the interest of national security and public safety.

It is for national authorities to investigate individual cases, including in relation to political parties, to determine whether they represent incitement to violence or hatred, and to draw the necessary consequences under criminal law.

The Commission and ultimately the European Court of Justice are monitoring the correct application of the framework Decision, under the powers afforded to them under the Treaties.

([1]) For further information, see for instance: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/framework-decision/index_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/law/index_en.htm

([2]) 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.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005240/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(13 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Sicurezza dei siti industriali a rischio

Sin dal 1982, a seguito dell'incidente di Seveso, l'Unione europea si è dotata di una direttiva comune sulla sicurezza industriale degli impianti a rischio. La direttiva europea detta «direttiva Seveso» (82/501/CEE, recepita in Italia con il DPR 17 maggio 1988, n. 175) impone agli Stati membri di identificare i propri siti a rischio. Tale direttiva si è evoluta nel corso del tempo: dal 3 febbraio 1999 è in vigore la direttiva 96/82/CE («Seveso II»), concernente il controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti che coinvolgano sostanze pericolose. Dopo l'incidente di una fabbrica di fertilizzanti a Tolosa, che ha causato uno sversamento di nitrato di ammonio nell'ambiente circostante, e lo scoppio di un'azienda di materiale pirotecnico in Olanda, si è sentita l'esigenza di attuare delle modifiche alla Seveso II con la direttiva 2003/105/CE, meglio conosciuta come Seveso III (o «Seveso ter»). In questa normativa si sono introdotti nuovi limiti per le aziende che detengono nitrato di ammonio o materiale pirotecnico e per le aziende minerarie, oltre all'abbassamento dei valori limite per le sostanze tossiche e l'innalzamento dei limiti per le sostanze ritenute cancerogene.

Considerato che dall'entrata in vigore della direttiva Seveso III si sono verificati prima l'incidente ferroviario di Viareggio del giugno 2009 e in questi giorni quello alla fabbrica di fertilizzanti in Texas, e considerato che la direttiva Seveso III non si applica allo stoccaggio di fertilizzanti né al trasporto di sostanze pericolose e al loro deposito temporaneo intermedio su strada, per ferrovia, per idrovia interna o marittima o per via aerea, comprese le attività di carico e scarico e il trasferimento da e verso un altro modo di trasporto alle banchine, ai moli o agli scali ferroviari di smistamento,

tutto ciò premesso, voglia la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— reputa che sia auspicabile una revisione della direttiva vigente per scongiurare e prevenire l'avvento di altri incidenti mortali?

— reputa che tale direttiva debba essere estesa anche ai siti industriali a rischio dislocati nei paesi vicini all'Unione, attraverso la stipula di accordi bilaterali con i paesi terzi, per prevenire il ricadere sul territorio dell'Unione degli effetti catastrofici di eventuali incidenti industriali ad ampio raggio?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(27 giugno 2013)

La direttiva 96/82/CE «Seveso II» sul controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti connessi con determinate sostanze pericolose ([1]), modificata dalla direttiva 2003/105/CE ([2]), si applica agli stabilimenti in cui sono presenti sostanze pericolose al di sopra di determinate soglie, stabilite nell'allegato I. Il 4 luglio 2012, il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio hanno adottato la direttiva Seveso III ([3]), che sostituirà la direttiva Seveso II a decorrere dal 1º giugno 2015.

La nuova direttiva Seveso III, proprio come la precedente, riguarda il deposito di sostanze pericolose, compresi i fertilizzanti, a meno che si tratti di un deposito temporaneo intermedio direttamente connesso ai trasporti. Il trasporto di sostanze pericolose è escluso dalla direttiva Seveso in quanto è coperto da altra normativa pertinente dell'UE, compresa la direttiva 2008/68/CE relativa al trasporto interno di merci pericolose ([4]). In considerazione di ciò, la Commissione non è del parere che sia necessaria una revisione della direttiva Seveso in un prossimo futuro.

Per quanto riguarda l'aspetto internazionale, l'UE è parte contraente della Convenzione UNECE sugli effetti transfrontalieri degli incidenti industriali, firmata a Helsinki nel 1992 nell'ambito della Commissione economica delle Nazioni Unite per l'Europa. Tale convenzione promuove un'attiva cooperazione internazionale tra i paesi, prima, durante e dopo eventuali incidenti industriali. Tutti i paesi limitrofi dell'Europa orientale hanno sottoscritto la convenzione e/o ricevono assistenza tecnica sulla sua base. ([5])

([1]) GU L 10 del 14 gennaio 1997.
([2]) GU L 345 del 31 dicembre 2003.
([3]) GU L 197 del 24 luglio 2012.
([4]) GU L 260 del 30 settembre 2008.
([5]) http://www.unece.org/env/teia.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005240/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Safety of hazardous industrial sites

Since 1982, following the Seveso accident, the European Union has had a joint directive on the industrial safety of hazardous facilities. The European directive known as the 'Seveso Directive' (82/501/EEC, transposed in Italy by means of Presidential Decree No 175 of 17 May 1988) requires the Member States to identify their hazardous sites. Over time, this directive has evolved: on 3 February 1999 Directive 96/82/EC (Seveso II) on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances entered into force. After the accident at a fertiliser plant in Toulouse, which caused a discharge of ammonium nitrate into the surrounding environment, and the blast at a pyrotechnic materials firm in the Netherlands, it was felt there was a need to amend Seveso II through Directive 2003/105/EC, better known as Seveso III. This measure introduced new limits for firms holding ammonium nitrate or pyrotechnic materials and for mining firms, and also lowered the limit values for toxic substances and raised the limits on substances considered carcinogenic.

Since the entry into force of the Seveso III Directive, we have seen, firstly, the Viareggio rail accident in June 2009 and, secondly, the recent accident at the fertiliser plant in Texas. Moreover, the Seveso III Directive does not apply to the storage of fertilisers or the transport of dangerous substances and intermediate temporary storage by road, rail, internal waterways, sea or air, including loading and unloading and transport to and from another means of transport at docks, wharves or marshalling yards.

— Does the Commission believe that the current directive should be reviewed in order to avoid and prevent further fatal accidents?

— Does it believe that the directive should also be extended to hazardous industrial sites located in countries close to the EU, through bilateral agreements with non-EU countries, in order to prevent the far-reaching catastrophic effects of possible industrial accidents being felt on EU territory?

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

The Seveso II Directive 96/82/EC on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances ([1]), as amended by Directive 2003/105/EC ([2]), applies to establishments where dangerous substances are present above certain thresholds, defined in its Annex I. On 4 July 2012, the European Parliament and the Council have adopted the Seveso III Directive ([3]), which will replace the Seveso II Directive as from 1 June 2015.

The Seveso III Directive, just like the Seveso II Directive, covers the storage of dangerous substances, including fertilisers, unless the storage is intermediate, temporary and directly related to transport. The transport of dangerous substances is excluded from Seveso because it is covered under other relevant EU legislation, including Directive 2008/68/EC on the inland transport of dangerous goods ([4]). Considering this, the Commission is not of the opinion that a review of the Seveso Directive is necessary in the near future.

Regarding the international aspect, the EU is a Party to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, signed in Helsinki in 1992 within the framework of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. This Convention promotes active international cooperation between countries, before, during and after an industrial accident. All Eastern European Neighbourhood Countries have signed the Convention and/or receive technical assistance under the Convention ([5]).

([1]) OJ L 10, 14 January 1997.
([2]) OJ L 345, 31 December 2003.
([3]) OJ L 197, 24 July 2012.
([4]) OJ L 260, 30 September 2008.
([5]) http://www.unece.org/env/teia.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005241/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(13 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Graduatorie ad esaurimento

In quasi tutti i Paesi dell'UE l'occupazione stabile e a tempo pieno si va sempre più riducendo, dando spazio all'occupazione precaria, fatta di lavori diversi, con tipologie contrattuali e statuti professionali fortemente differenziati, sia nell'area del lavoro dipendente (pubblico o privato) sia in quella del lavoro autonomo.

Considerato questo «scenario» generale, si può poi porre l'accento sul problema del precariato scolastico che, pur presentando aspetti differenti nei vari Stati membri, sta diventando una delle preoccupazioni più drammatiche dell'Italia di oggi: all'incirca 200.000 laureati lavoratori aspettano una stabilizzazione.

Le graduatorie ad esaurimento dei docenti italiani contengono migliaia di professionisti abilitati secondo il D.L. 240 del 28.8.2000, convertito in legge il 17.10.2000, che da anni aspettano di essere assunti a tempo indeterminato nel mondo scolastico. Si tratta di personale altamente qualificato con comprovata esperienza alle spalle e che, nella maggior parte dei casi, vanta plurimi incarichi annuali a tempo determinato conferiti dallo Stato.

Questa situazione blocca le speranze e gli accessi ai giovani universitari, non solo perché si alza l'età per l'entrata nei ruoli, ma soprattutto perché si genera un «corto circuito» tra le necessità della didattica e le esigenze dell'occupazione.

A tal riguardo, la legge 106/11 rende cronica la precarietà nella scuola decidendo di aggiornare le graduatorie ogni tre anni, quando una direttiva comunitaria afferma l'esatto contrario: dopo tre anni di contratto su posto vacante e disponibile si deve assumere a tempo indeterminato.

Tutto ciò premesso, voglia la Commissione rispondere al seguente quesito:

— come reputa si possa, in tempi celeri, intervenire per risolvere in maniera definitiva il problema suddetto sia a livello italiano sia nel più ampio contesto europeo?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2013)

La direttiva 1999/70/CE sul lavoro a tempo determinato fa obbligo agli Stati membri di prendere misure efficaci per contrastare gli abusi nel ricorso a contratti di lavoro successivi a tempo determinato da parte dello stesso datore di lavoro. La direttiva non prescrive però in modo specifico che, dopo essere stato occupato da un lavoratore con un contratto triennale, un posto di lavoro vacante debba essere colmato con personale ingaggiato a tempo indeterminato. Di fatto, gli Stati membri sono liberi di scegliere i metodi atti a fare rispettare le limitazioni adottate a condizione che tali metodi siano efficaci.

Per quanto concerne la situazione nel settore dell'istruzione in Italia e l'efficacia delle misure che l'Italia ha adottato per limitare il ricorso indebito a contratti successivi a tempo determinato, la Commissione ha già avviato un'indagine e ha inviato una lettera di costituzione in mora. Una lettera di costituzione in mora addizionale è stata inviata il 25 ottobre 2012. La risposta è attualmente in corso di valutazione e viene confrontata con le denunce e la documentazione presentate nell'ambito di un gran numero di reclami e petizioni. Una volta completata la valutazione si prenderanno le misure appropriate in linea con le competenze attribuite alla Commissione a garanzia della corretta applicazione della normativa dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005241/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Reserve lists for qualified staff

In almost all EU Member States permanent, full-time employment is continuing to fall and is being replaced by precarious employment, made up of miscellaneous jobs whose contract types and professional statutes vary greatly, in the fields of both paid employment (in the public or private sector) and self-employment.

Given this general picture, the problem of precarious employment in the education system should be highlighted. Although precarious employment varies from one Member State to another, it is becoming one of the most serious concerns in Italy today: approximately 200 000 graduate workers are looking for a permanent post.

The reserve lists of Italian teachers contain thousands of professionals who are licensed under Legislative Decree No 240 of 28 August 2000, converted into law on 17 October 2000. For years they have been waiting for a permanent job in the education system. These are highly qualified staff with proven experience who, in the majority of cases, have already completed multiple annual fixed-term contracts for the State.

This situation is destroying the hopes of young university students and is preventing them from finding a job, not only because the age for entry into employment is rising, but also because a disconnect is being created between education needs and employment requirements.

In this respect, Italian Law No 106/11 makes precarious employment in schools a chronic issue by decreeing that reserve lists must be updated every three years, while an EU directive states exactly the opposite: at the end of a three-year contract, a vacant post must be filled by a permanent member of staff.

— What immediate action does the Commission believe can be taken to permanently resolve the above problem, both in Italy and in the wider European context?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

Directive 1999/70/EC on fixed-term work requires Member States to take effective measures against abusive successions of fixed-term employment contracts by the same employer. However, the directive does not specifically require that after a three-year contract a vacant post must be filled by permanent staff. In fact, Member States are free to choose the method(s) to enforce the limit(s) adopted, as long as these are effective.

Regarding the situation in the Italian education sector and the effectiveness of the measures that Italy has taken to limit abusive successions of fixed-term employment there, the Commission has already launched an investigation and sent a Letter of Formal Notice. An additional Letter of Formal Notice was sent on 25 October 2012. The reply is currently being assessed and compared to the claims and materials submitted in a large number of complaints and petitions. Upon completion of the assessment, the appropriate action will be taken in line with the competence of the Commission in ensuring the correct application of EC law.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005242/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανάγκη ανακατασκευής του σχολικού συγκροτήματος Κολυμβαρίου Κρήτης

Η πολιτική της τρικομματικής κυβέρνησης ΝΔ-ΠΑΣΟΚ-ΔΗΜΑΡ, με τις ευλογίες της ΕΕ και της «Τρόικας», έχει προκαλέσει τεράστια προβλήματα στις σχολικές υποδομές, δραματική μείωση εκπαιδευτικών και τον υποσιτισμό χιλιάδων μαθητών.

Σε απαράδεκτες συνθήκες αναγκάζονται να κάνουν μάθημα εκατοντάδες μαθητές Γυμνασίου/Λυκείου του σχολικού συγκροτήματος Κολυμβαρίου του Νομού Χανίων, καθώς, εδώ και δύο χρόνια, κάθε φορά που βρέχει πλημμυρίζουν οι αίθουσες του σχολείου. Οι μαθητές και οι κάτοικοι της ενότητας Κολυμβαρίου ανέλαβαν την διαδικασία και το κόστος για εκπόνηση μελέτης για την ένταξη του σχολείου στο τρέχον ΕΣΠΑ με στόχο την ανακατασκευή του σχολικού συγκροτήματος.

Οι ελληνικές αρχές έδωσαν την υπόσχεση ότι η ανακατασκευή του σχολείου θα ενταχθεί σε συμπληρωματική χρηματοδότηση του προγράμματος, χωρίς να έχει γίνει τίποτα μέχρι στιγμής. Η έλλειψη κονδυλίων για τα σχολικά κτίρια είναι ολοφάνερη από το γεγονός ότι ο Νομός Χανίων δεν έχει εντάξει κανένα σχολείο στο ΕΣΠΑ, δηλαδή δεν έχει συντηρήσει, ανακατασκευάσει ή κατασκευάσει από την αρχή ούτε ένα σχολείο.

Όλα αυτά συμβαίνουν τη στιγμή που εκατοντάδες εκατομμύρια ευρώ από το ΕΣΠΑ τροφοδοτούν τα κέρδη ελληνικών και ξένων μονοπωλιακών συγκροτημάτων σε έργα αντίθετα με τις λαϊκές ανάγκες.

Ποια είναι η θέση της Επιτροπής για το δίκαιο αίτημα των κατοίκων του Κολυμβαρίου;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Ιουλίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τους κανονισμούς των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων, η βοήθεια στο πλαίσιο των εν λόγω ταμείων παρέχεται σύμφωνα με μια προσέγγιση συμπληρωματικότητας και σύμπραξης μεταξύ των κρατών μελών και της Επιτροπής, λαμβανομένων δεόντως υπόψη των αντίστοιχων αρμοδιοτήτων τους. Με βάση την αρχή της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης, ο σχεδιασμός, η προετοιμασία, η υλοποίηση, η παρακολούθηση, ο έλεγχος και η αξιολόγηση των συγχρηματοδοτούμενων παρεμβάσεων στο πλαίσιο των προγραμμάτων αποτελούν αρμοδιότητα των εθνικών αρχών, στο καταλληλότερο εδαφικό επίπεδο και σύμφωνα με το θεσμικό σύστημα κάθε κράτους μέλους.

Αυτό σημαίνει ότι η Επιτροπή δεν παρεμβαίνει στην επιλογή των έργων (με εξαίρεση τα μεγάλα έργα), δεδομένου ότι αυτή εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των εθνικών διαχειριστικών αρχών, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι οι επιλογές τους είναι σύμφωνες με τα έγγραφα προγραμματισμού που έχουν εγκριθεί σε διαβούλευση με την Επιτροπή, και ότι τηρούν την ισχύουσα νομοθεσία.

Ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή προτείνει στο αξιότιμο μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου να έρθει σε επαφή με την ενδιάμεση διαχειριστική αρχή της Κρήτης, η οποία είναι αρμόδια για την επιλογή και την παρακολούθηση των έργων σύμφωνα με τη στρατηγική και τους στόχους του προγράμματος «Κρήτη και Νήσοι Αιγαίου» 2007-2013:

Ενδιάμεση διαχειριστική αρχή της περιφέρειας Κρήτης
Δουκός Μποφώρ 7,
71202 Ηράκλειο Κρήτης
Τηλ.: 2813-404500, Φαξ: 2810-335040
Διεύθυνση ηλεκτρονικού ταχυδρομείου: Kriti@mou.gr

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005242/13
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Necessary reconstruction of the Kolymbari school in Crete

The tri-partite (ND-PASOK-DIMAR) government's policy, approved by the EU and the Troika, has caused major problems for school buildings, a sharp reduction in teaching and the malnutrition of thousands of students.

Hundreds of lower and upper secondary school pupils are forced to take lessons in unacceptable conditions at the Kolymbari School in the prefecture of Chania as, for two years, every time it rains the classrooms are flooded. The pupils and residents of Kolymbari have undertaken the procedure and the cost of preparing the study to include the school in the current NSRF with the aim of reconstructing the school.

The Greek authorities have promised that the reconstruction of the school will be fully funded by the programme; however, nothing has happened to date. The lack of funds for school buildings can be clearly seen by the fact that the Prefecture of Chania does not have any schools in the NSRF. In other words, not a single school has been maintained, is being reconstructed or constructed by the authority.

All this is happening at a time when hundreds of millions of euros from the NSRF are supporting the profits of Greek and foreign monopolies for projects that go against public needs.

What is the Commission's position on the fair demand made by the residents of Kolymbari.

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

In accordance with the Structural Fund regulations, assistance under these Funds is provided according to an approach of complementarity and partnership between the Member States and the Commission, with due respect for their respective responsibilities. On the basis of the shared management principle, the design, preparation, implementation, monitoring, audit and evaluation of co-funded interventions under the programmes is the responsibility of the national authorities, at the most appropriate territorial level and according to the institutional system of each Member State.

This means that the Commission does not intervene in the selection of projects (except for major projects) as this comes under the competence of the national managing authorities, provided that their choices are in line with the programming documents adopted in consultation with the Commission, and that they comply with current legislation.

Therefore, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact the intermediate managing authority of Crete, which is the competent authority for the selection and monitoring of projects in line with the strategy and objectives of the 2007-2013 'Crete and Aegean Islands' programme:

Intermediate Managing Authority of Crete
Doukos Bofor 7
71202 Herakleion Crete
Tel: 2813-404500, Fax: 2810-335040
email: kriti@mou.gr

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005243/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Execução do Proder

Solicito à Comissão que me comunique que autorizações orçamentais relativas ao programa de desenvolvimento rural português — o Proder — foram, até à data, anuladas, por não terem sido utilizadas para pré-financiamento ou pagamentos intermédios até ao final do segundo ano seguinte ao da autorização. Peço que me sejam indicados quais os montantes e os anos a que se referem (do atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual).

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(19 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de informar o Senhor Deputado de que, até dezembro de 2012, não foram perdidas dotações no que diz respeito aos eixos 1, 2 e 3 do Proder ou do 2.º pilar em geral.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005243/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the Portuguese Rural Development Programme

Can the Commission say what budgetary commitments relating to the Portuguese Rural Development Programme (Proder) have been decommitted to date because they had not been used for prefinancing or interim payments by the end of the second year following commitment? Can it state the relevant sums and years (under the current multiannual financial framework)?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that no appropriations were lost up to December 2012 as regards Proder axis 1, 2 and 3 or more generally in the 2nd pillar.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005244/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Rede Rural Nacional — níveis de execução

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre que autorizações orçamentais relativas à Rede Rural Nacional, em Portugal, foram, até à data, anuladas, por não terem sido utilizadas para pré-financiamento ou pagamentos intermédios até ao final do segundo ano seguinte ao da autorização. Peço que me sejam indicados quais os montantes e os anos a que se referem (do atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual).

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(27 de junho de 2013)

O Senhor Deputado poderá encontrar no quadro seguinte os montantes anulados até à data no que respeita ao programa da Rede Rural Nacional, por força da aplicação do artigo 29.°, n.° 1, do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1290/2005 ([1]) do Conselho (regra n +2):

(em EUR)

Parcela Ano	Anulação
2008	419 228
2009	2 033 200
Total	2 452 428

No que diz respeito aos montantes anuais de apoio a este programa, a dotação orçamental antes das anulações para o período 2007-2013 foi repartida do seguinte modo:

(em EUR)

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
0	1 687 472	2 496 916	2 520 380	1 695 424	1 695 572	1 692 211	11 787 975

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 1290/2005 do Conselho, de 21 de junho de 2005, relativo ao financiamento da política agrícola comum, JO L 209 de 11.8.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005244/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: National rural network — execution levels

Does the Commission have any information on what budget authorisations relating to the national rural network in Portugal have been cancelled thus far, due to them not being used for pre-financing or intermediate payments by the end of the second year following authorisation? Can it provide the figures for each year of the current multiannual financial framework?

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

The Honourable Member can find in the table below the amounts decommitted to date with regard to the programme National Rural Network due to the application of Article 29.1 of Regulation (EC) 1290/2005 ([1]) (N+2 rule):

(in euro)

Instalment year	Decommitment
2008	419 228
2009	2 033 200
Total	2 452 428

As regards the annual amounts of support to this programme, the budgetary allocation before decommitments for the period 2007-2013 was distributed as follows:

(in euro)

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
0	1 687 472	2 496 916	2 520 380	1 695 424	1 695 572	1 692 211	11 787 975

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005, of 21 June 2005, on the financing of the common agricultural policy, OJ L 209, 11.8.2005.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005245/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Diferencial entre pagamentos potenciais e reais do RPU (Portugal)

Poderia a Comissão prestar informações sobre o diferencial entre o nível de pagamentos potencial de que Portugal poderia beneficiar ao abrigo do Regime de Pagamento Único (RPU) da PAC e o que foi efetivamente pago? Poderá indicar quais os montantes e os anos a que se referem (do atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual)?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(26 de junho de 2013)

O Senhor Deputado poderá encontrar no quadro a seguir apresentado os pagamentos que Portugal recebeu abrigo do Regime de Pagamento Único (RPU) e o total das ajudas diretas relativas ao atual período financeiro (anos civis 2006-2011, exercícios financeiros 2007-2012).

Foi incluída uma coluna com os limites máximos líquidos (anexo IV do Regulamento (CE) n.° 73/2009 ([1])) acrescida dos pagamentos diretos no âmbito do POSEI, que correspondem aos pagamentos máximos que Portugal poderia potencialmente conceder ao abrigo do regime de ajudas diretas, a fim de permitir a comparação entre o total dos pagamentos no âmbito das ajudas diretas e o limite máximo. Estes dados demonstram que, ao longo dos anos, os pagamentos relativos a ajudas diretas têm vindo gradualmente a aproximar-se do limite máximo e que excederam o limite máximo líquido a partir do ano civil de 2010. Os pagamentos ao abrigo do RPU não podem ser diretamente comparados com o limite máximo líquido, dado que este é estabelecido a nível global para todas as ajudas diretas (exceto POSEI)

Ano civil	Exercício financeiro	Pagamentos RPU	Total dos pagamentos das ajudas diretas	Limites máximos líquidos + POSEI	Diferença entre os pagamentos das ajudas diretas e o limite máximo líquido
2006	2007	307,7	562,4	652,7	-90,2
2007	2008	343,3	570,2	630,9	-60,6
2008	2009	361,1	601,8	657,4	-55,6
2009	2010	391,4	636,6	668,1	-31,4
2010	2011	398,6	655,5	634,2	21,3
2011	2012	394,1	645,7	630,4	16,2
2012	2013			626,5	

([1]) JO L 30 de 31.1.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005245/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: The gap between potential and actual payments to Portugal under the single payment scheme

Can the Commission provide information on the gap between the payments that Portugal could potentially receive under the CAP single payment scheme and the amount actually paid? Can it provide the figures for each year of the current multiannual financial framework?

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

The Honourable Member can find in the table below both the payments that Portugal received under the single payment scheme (SPS) and the total direct aids for the current financial period (calendar years 2006-2011, financial years 2007-2012).

A column with the net ceilings (Annex IV of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([1])) plus POSEI direct payments, which correspond to the maximum payments that Portugal could potentially grant under the direct aids regime, has been included to allow the comparison between the total direct aids payments and the ceiling. The figures show that over the years the direct aids payments have gradually approached the ceiling and that they exceeded the net ceiling as from calendar year 2010. The SPS payments cannot be compared directly to the net ceiling, as it is established globally for all direct aids (except POSEI).

Calendar year	Financial year	SPS payments	Total direct aids payments	Net ceilings + POSEI	Difference Direct aids payments-net ceiling
2006	2007	307.7	562.4	652.7	-90.2
2007	2008	343.3	570.2	630.9	-60.6
2008	2009	361.1	601.8	657.4	-55.6
2009	2010	391.4	636.6	668.1	-31.4
2010	2011	398.6	655.5	634.2	21.3
2011	2012	394.1	645.7	630.4	16.2
2012	2013			626.5	

([1]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005246/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios comunitários à construção naval (II)

Relativamente aos apoios a estaleiros navais na UE, tendo em conta as conhecidas limitações impostas pela legislação da UE, mas sabendo que em países terceiros a concessão desses apoios é prática corrente (e. g. Coreia do Sul), o que acaba inevitavelmente por ter implicações na atividade de construção e reparação naval na Europa, pergunto à Comissão qual a avaliação que faz desta situação e, em especial, que medidas tomou ou pensa tomar perante a ocorrência de situações de dumping no setor?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(9 de julho de 2013)

Tal como referido na resposta à pergunta E-3501/2013 do Senhor Deputado, a construção naval da UE beneficia de apoio concedido pela UE à ID&I no âmbito do Sétimo Programa-Quadro de atividades em matéria de investigação, desenvolvimento tecnológico e demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007 a 2013).

Os Estados-Membros podem também dar apoio nacional recorrendo aos instrumentos horizontais em material de auxílios estatais ([1]), salvo indicação em contrário nesses instrumentos. Além desses instrumentos horizontais, a Comissão adotou, em 7 de dezembro de 2011, regras específicas revistas em matéria de auxílios estatais à construção naval ([2]) incluindo as condições em que podem ser concedidos auxílios para navios inovadores em comparação com a situação existente na UE ([3]). Essas regras em matéria de auxílios à inovação visam promover a especialização da indústria da UE.

Especialmente desde o início da crise financeira, o financiamento das exportações regulado pelo Memorando Setorial da OCDE (SSU) e as garantias reguladas pelas regras da UE em matéria de auxílios estatais ([4]) adquiriram grande importância no financiamento de contratos de construção naval.

Embora as informações disponíveis no «Inventário» da OCDE dedicado a medidas de apoio à construção naval confirmem o forte aumento do apoio ao financiamento no setor da construção naval, as estatísticas são bastante incompletas devido à indisponibilidade de dados relativos à China. No âmbito do grupo de trabalho da OCDE sobre a construção naval, a Comissão está a trabalhar no sentido de reforçar as disciplinas respeitantes a medidas de apoio e à prática de preços lesivos, uma vez que neste setor é difícil aplicar regras *anti-dumping*.

O grupo de trabalho internacional sobre o crédito à exportação é um novo fórum de discussão dos créditos à exportação. Entre os seus participantes contam-se a China e todos os demais grandes construtores navais. Chegou-se a acordo quanto ao facto de a construção naval ser um dos setores nos quais o grupo de trabalho iria começar a trabalhar.

([1]) Por exemplo, o Enquadramento comunitário dos auxílios estatais a favor do ambiente (JO C 82 de 1.4.2008, p. 1) estabelece as condições em que podem ser autorizados auxílios à construção naval para uma produção mais respeitadora do ambiente. Podem ainda ser concedidos aos armadores auxílios à aquisição de novos veículos de transporte que superem as normas comunitárias ou, na sua ausência, que melhorem o nível de proteção do ambiente.

([2]) JO C 364 de 14.12.2011, p. 9.

([3]) Ver as decisões recentemente adotadas pela Comissão relativas à aprovação de regimes de auxílio à inovação para França (SA.34293), Países Baixos (SA.34829), Alemanha (SA.34364), Espanha (SA.34583) e Finlândia (SA.34408).

([4]) Comunicação da Comissão relativa à aplicação dos artigos 87.° e 88.° do Tratado CE aos auxílios estatais sob forma de garantias (JO C 155 de 20.6.2008, p. 10). As garantias relacionadas com contratos no setor da construção naval devem ser isentas de auxílio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005246/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: EU support for shipbuilding (II)

What is the Commission's assessment of the support available to shipyards in the EU, taking account of the known limitations imposed by EU legislation, but being aware that in third countries (e.g. South Korea), such support is provided, which inevitably has implications for shipbuilding and ship repair in the EU? What measures has it taken, or intends taking, in order to address dumping in this sector?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

As laid out in the answer to Question E-3501/2013 of the Honourable Member, EU shipbuilding benefits from EU support to RD&I under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).

Member States may also provide national support the horizontal state aid instruments ([1]), unless otherwise provided for in those instruments. In addition to these horizontal instruments, the Commission adopted on 7 December 2011 revised specific state aid rules for shipbuilding ([2]) including the conditions under which aid can be granted for vessels that innovate by comparison to the state of the art in the EU ([3]). These rules on innovation aid aim to promote the specialization of the EU industry.

Especially since the outbreak of the financial crisis, export financing governed by the OECD Sectoral Understanding (SSU) and guarantees governed by EU State aid rules ([4]) have gained much importance for the financing of shipbuilding contracts.

While information available from the OECD 'Inventory' on support measures to shipbuilding confirm the strong increase of support for ship financing the statistics are grossly incomplete due to the non-availability of data from China. In the context of the OECD Working Party on Shipbuilding the Commission is working to strengthen the disciplines on support measures as well as on injurious pricing as anti-dumping rules are difficult to apply in this sector.

The International Working Group on Export Credits is a new forum to discuss export credits. Among its participants are China and all other major producers of ships. It has been agreed that ships are one of the sectors on which the Group should work first.

([1]) For instance, the Community Guidelines on state aid for environmental protection (OJ C 82, 1.4.2008, p. 1-33) lay down the conditions under which aid to shipyards for more environmentally friendly production may be authorised. Moreover, aid for the acquisition of new transport vehicles which go beyond Union standards or which increase the level of environmental protection in the absence of Union standards can be granted to ship owners, thus contributing overall to cleaner maritime transport.

([2]) OJ C 364, 14.12.2011, p. 9-13.

([3]) See the decisions recently adopted by the Commission approving innovation aid schemes for France (SA.34293), Netherlands (SA.34829), Germany (SA.34364), Spain (SA.34583) and Finland (SA.34408).

([4]) Commission Notice on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to state aid in the form of guarantees (OJ C 155, 20.6.2008, p. 10-22). Contract related guarantees in the area of shipbuilding must be free of aid.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005247/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Proposta de modificação dos instrumentos de defesa comercial

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre os objetivos e princípios orientadores das propostas de modificação dos instrumentos de defesa comercial, em preparação. Ademais, solicito que me informe sobre que entidades portuguesas foram auscultadas no âmbito deste processo.

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(26 de junho de 2013)

O objetivo da iniciativa de modernização é melhorar a transparência e a previsibilidade dos instrumentos de defesa comercial. A tónica é colocada no sentido de encontrar soluções práticas para os problemas reais de uma forma equilibrada.

A Comissão deseja enviar um sinal claro de que não irá tolerar práticas comerciais desleais e intervirá em apoio da indústria da UE quando confrontada com tais práticas. Assim, foi proposta não-aplicação da regra do direito inferior em caso de subvenções e distorções estruturais ao nível das matérias-primas, por exemplo, início de processo *ex officio* em caso de ameaça de retaliação, bem como a intenção de explorar formas de assegurar a instituição antecipada de medidas provisórias.

Ao mesmo tempo, a Comissão pretende garantir que os importadores e utilizadores das importações objeto de *dumping* não sejam indevidamente penalizados por direitos. Por conseguinte, a Comissão propôs uma cláusula de expedição de duas semanas e o reembolso de direitos em certos reexames da caducidade. Vários esforços visam igualmente pequenas e médias empresas (PME) quer sejam produtoras, importadoras ou comerciantes.

Por conseguinte, a proposta adotada pela Comissão em 10 de abril é equilibrada e justa e contém melhorias reais para benefício de todas as partes interessadas, sem alterar o equilíbrio entre os interesses de produção e importação.

Todas as partes interessadas e os Estados-Membros foram estreitamente associados ao processo. Em abril de 2012, o processo de modernização foi discutido no Conselho e num seminário realizado em Portugal. Além disso, o Ministério da Economia e do Emprego português e cerca de 20 produtores portugueses responderam à consulta pública.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005247/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Proposed modifications to the trade defence instruments

What are the Commission's objectives and guiding principles for the proposed modifications to the trade defence instruments currently under preparation? Which Portuguese bodies have been consulted as part of this process?

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

The objective of the modernisation initiative is to improve transparency and predictability of the trade defence instruments. The focus is to find practical solutions for real problems in a balanced way.

The Commission wishes to send a strong signal that it will not tolerate unfair trading practices and will act in support of the EU's industry when faced with such practices. Therefore, it has proposed the non-application of the lesser duty rule in cases of subsidisation and structural raw material distortions, ex-officio initiations for example in cases of threats of retaliation as well as the intention to explore ways to ensure the earlier imposition of provisional measures.

At the same time the Commission wants to make sure that importers and users of the dumped imports are not unduly penalised by duties. Therefore, the Commission has proposed a two weeks-shipping clause and the reimbursement of duties in certain expiry reviews. Several efforts are also aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) be they producers, importers or traders.

Therefore, the proposal adopted by the Commission on 10 April is balanced and fair and contains real improvements for the benefit of all stakeholders without changing the balance between producing and importing interests.

All stakeholders and Member States have been closely associated with the process. The modernisation process has been discussed in the Council and at a seminar held in Portugal in April 2012. Furthermore, the Portuguese Ministry of Economy and Employment and around 20 Portuguese producers replied to the public consultation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005248/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Quotas leiteiras e quotas do açúcar

Em resposta à pergunta escrita E-011170/2012, sobre «recuperação das quotas leiteiras», a Comissão justifica mais uma vez a decisão de acabar com as quotas leiteiras, referindo que os dois relatórios que elaborou sobre «a evolução da situação do mercado e as consequentes condições para a supressão faseada e harmoniosa do regime de quotas leiteiras» concluíram que «numa grande maioria dos Estados-Membros estava bem encaminhada uma "aterragem suave" e que não era necessária qualquer alteração do quadro existente».

Todavia, a Comissão não responde à questão sobre a comparação entre o setor do leite e o setor do açúcar, tendo em conta as decisões de sentido contrário tomadas em relação a um e a outro.

Assim sendo, reitero a seguinte pergunta à Comissão:

Como se pode justificar a recuperação de instrumentos de regulação e de distribuição da produção (quotas) no setor do açúcar e não no setor do leite? Que razões justificam, no entender da Comissão, a diferença de tratamento entre os dois setores?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(21 de junho de 2013)

Conforme afirmado na pergunta escrita E-011171/2012 ([1]), a Comissão não propôs a alteração, em 2015, do prazo estabelecido no Regulamento «OCM única» ([2]) para a supressão das quotas leiteiras e das quotas do açúcar.

Além disso, no quadro das negociações para a reforma da PAC, nem o Parlamento Europeu nem o Conselho propuseram a alteração desse prazo.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Parte II, título I, capítulo III, do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1234/2007 do Conselho, de 22 de outubro de 2007, que estabelece uma organização comum dos mercados agrícolas e disposições específicas para certos produtos agrícolas (Regulamento «OCM única»).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005248/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Milk and sugar quotas

In response to Written Question E-011170/2012 on restoring milk quotas, the Commission once again defended the decision to end milk quotas, referring to two reports it produced on 'the evolution of the market situation and the consequent conditions for a smooth phasing-out of the milk quota system', which concluded that 'the soft landing was on track in the vast majority of Member States and that no change to the existing framework was required'.

However, the Commission did not answer the question comparing the contrary decisions taken in connection with the milk and sugar sectors.

Accordingly, I once again ask the Commission how it can justify restoring regulatory and production distribution instruments (quotas) in the sugar sector and not in the milk sector? Why, in the Commission's understanding, might the two sectors be treated differently?

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

As replied in Written Question E-011171/2012 ([1]), the Commission has not proposed to change the deadline for the abolition of milk and sugar quotas in 2015, as it is currently stated in the single CMO regulation ([2]).

Furthermore, in the framework of the CAP reform negotiations neither the European Parliament nor the Council have proposed to change this deadline.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Part II, Title I, Chapter III of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 of 22 October 2007 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products (Single CMO Regulation).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005250/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Estratégia de Desenvolvimento para o Distrito de Setúbal

Na base de uma ampla e detalhada caracterização do distrito de Setúbal e das suas sub-regiões, tendo em conta os seus problemas, necessidades e potencialidades, ganha importância crescente a possibilidade de concretização de uma Estratégia de Desenvolvimento para o distrito, a aplicar através de um Plano de Desenvolvimento Integrado da Península de Setúbal (PDIPS) e de um Plano de Desenvolvimento Integrado do Alentejo Litoral (PDIAL).

Seriam objetivos específicos desta Estratégia: a) reforço da coesão e identidade territorial; b) Diminuição das desigualdades e promoção da integração social; c) criação de empregos, melhoria das qualificações profissionais, da qualidade do emprego e das condições de trabalho; d) diversificação, modernização e expansão das atividades económicas e em particular dos setores produtivos; e) promoção do ordenamento do território, da defesa do ambiente, da valorização do património histórico e cultural e da qualidade de vida dos cidadãos.

A Estratégia desenvolver-se-ia em torno de quatro eixos: 1) promoção da qualidade do território regional; 2) promoção da coesão do tecido social; 3) reforço da capacidade do tecido económico; 4) reforço do sistema regional de conhecimento.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que meios financeiros do atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (2007-2013) estão ainda disponíveis para apoiar a concretização desta Estratégia de Desenvolvimento para o Distrito de Setúbal, a aplicar através do PDIPS e do PDIAL? Quais as taxas de cofinanciamento previstas?

2. Que meios financeiros do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020 se prevê que venham a estar disponíveis para apoiar a concretização desta Estratégia de Desenvolvimento para o Distrito de Setúbal, a aplicar através do PDIPS e do PDIAL? Quais as taxas de cofinanciamento previstas?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(8 de julho de 2013)

1. Na medida em que os planos regionais ou sub-regionais são parte integrante da preparação dos programas portugueses financiados pela UE para o período de 2014-2020, podem ser cofinanciados ao abrigo de fundos de assistência técnica dos programas da política de coesão tanto a nível regional como nacional. Os requisitos de elegibilidade exatos, bem como as eventuais taxas de cofinanciamento, são estabelecidos pelas autoridades de gestão do programa e devem, por conseguinte, ser averiguados junto das mesmas.

2. O quadro jurídico e o quadro orçamental dos Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus para o período de 2014-2020 ainda não foram aprovados. Consequentemente, não existem documentos de programação propostos e disponíveis das autoridades nacionais, nos quais esses valores pudessem estar eventualmente indicados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005250/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Development strategy for the district of Setúbal

In the light of a comprehensive and detailed characterisation of the district of Setúbal and its sub-regions, taking into account its problems, needs and strengths, it is becoming increasingly important to implement a development strategy for the district, through an Integrated Development Plan for the Setúbal Peninsula (PDIPS) and an Integrated Development Plan for the Coastal Alentejo Region (PDIAL).

The specific objectives of this strategy would be: a) to strengthen cohesion and regional identity; b) to reduce inequalities and promote social integration; c) to create jobs and improve vocational skills, the quality of jobs and working conditions; d) to diversify, modernise and expand economic activities particularly in the productive sectors; e) to promote spatial planning, environmental protection, historical and cultural heritage and citizens' quality of life.

The strategy would be developed around four axes: 1) promoting the quality of the region; 2) promoting social cohesion; 3) strengthening economic capacity; 4) strengthening the regional knowledge system.

1. What financial resources under the current Multiannual Financial Framework (2007-2013) are available to support the implementation of this development strategy for the district of Setúbal, through the PDIPS and PDIAL? What are the corresponding co-financing rates?

2. What financial resources under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 are expected to become available to support the implementation of this development strategy for the district of Setúbal, through the PDIPS and PDIAL? What are the corresponding co-financing rates?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

1. In so far as the regional or sub-regional plans are part of the preparation of the Portuguese EU funded programmes for the 2014-2020 period, they can be co-financed under from technical assistance funds from either the regional or national cohesion policy programmes. The exact eligibility requirements, as well as possible co-financing rates, are set by the programme managing authorities and should therefore be checked with them.

2. Both the legal and budgetary framework for the European Structural and Investment Funds funds for the 2014-2020 period are not yet approved. As a consequence there are no proposed programming documents available from the national authorities in which such figures would eventually be indicated.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005251/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Candidaturas a fundos comunitários no domínio do ciclo urbano da água

Em 2012, o governo português publicou um aviso para apresentação de candidaturas no domínio do ciclo urbano da água, no âmbito do Programa Operacional Temático Valorização do Território (POVT) 2007-2013, inserido no QREN, dirigido ao investimento nas redes de abastecimento de água e de drenagem de águas residuais, na vertente em baixa. Nesse aviso é estabelecido que um dos critérios a considerar na avaliação das candidaturas apresentadas é a exigência de que a entidade beneficiária — municípios, associações de municípios, juntas metropolitanas, comunidades intermunicipais, serviços municipalizados, setor empresarial local e sistemas municipais ou intermunicipais — «não tenha manifestado oposição ao processo de fusão de sistemas multimunicipais de captação, tratamento e distribuição de água para consumo público e/ou recolha, tratamento e rejeição de efluentes, ou aos processos de verticalização através de parcerias estabelecidas nos termos do Decreto-Lei n.° 90/2009, de 9 de abril».

Ou seja, os critérios de seleção, em vez de assentarem em parâmetros de avaliação objetivos e rigorosos, quanto à necessidade, importância e qualidade dos investimentos nas redes em baixa, quer de água quer de saneamento, são condicionados à aceitação de determinadas opções políticas tendentes à concessão e privatização dos serviços de água. Assim prejudicando todos, nomeadamente os municípios, que defendem a gestão pública da água e do saneamento, e prejudicando as duas populações.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Existe alguma orientação da UE que, explícita ou implicitamente, dê cobertura ou justificação para a inclusão no referido aviso desta disposição específica, que configura uma clara operação de chantagem?

2. Tem conhecimento de situações semelhantes à descrita, ou seja, de condicionamento do acesso a fundos comunitários à aceitação de opções de concessão e privatização de serviços públicos (no caso, de água) noutros Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(11 de julho de 2013)

1. A legislação da UE no domínio da água não inclui qualquer disposição específica nem estabelece qualquer preferência com vista à organização das entidades locais e administrativas previstas pelos Estados-Membros para a gestão dos recursos hídricos e a prestação de serviços de abastecimento de água. No entanto, os Estados-Membros devem, na opinião da Comissão, garantir a realização dos objetivos da forma mais eficiente e têm o direito de estabelecer critérios de seleção específicos para assegurar a otimização, a integração e a sustentabilidade dos investimentos, em conformidade com os planos aprovados a nível nacional.

A promoção de sistemas mais integrados de infraestruturas hídricas no âmbito de convites à apresentação de candidaturas para o ciclo das águas urbanas está em conformidade com os objetivos fixados no Peaasar II (Plano Estratégico de Abastecimento de Água e de Saneamento de Águas Residuais II) para o período de 2007-2013, que estabelece os objetivos para estruturas a nível do domínio da gestão da água em Portugal e, em especial, o objetivo de desenvolver soluções integradas territoriais. Tal está também em conformidade com a Diretiva-Quadro da Água ([1]), que visa assegurar o uso sustentável, a longo prazo, da água. Os princípios fundamentais da gestão integrada das bacias hidrográficas estão incorporados no Peaasar II, que é juridicamente vinculativo e reúne as perspetivas económicas e ecológicas da gestão da água. A Comissão sempre apoiou esta abordagem, que está em conformidade com os investimentos em infraestruturas de água que tenham sido cofinanciados pela política de coesão.

2. A Comissão não tem conhecimento das situações descritas pelo Senhor Deputado. No entanto, a Comissão não considera que a exigência de uma maior integração dos sistemas de infraestruturas hídricas esteja ligada a uma privatização do setor.

([1]) Diretiva 2000/60/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 23 de outubro de 2000, que estabelece um quadro de ação comunitária no domínio da política da água (JO L 327 de 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005251/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Applications for EU funds relating to the urban water cycle

In 2012, the Portuguese Government published a call for applications relating to the urban water cycle, under the Thematic Territorial Enhancement Operational Programme (POVT) 2007-2013, included in the National Strategic Reference Framework, for investment in the underground water supply and wastewater drainage networks. The call stipulates that one of the criteria to be considered in assessing the applications submitted is that the beneficiary — municipalities, associations of municipalities, city councils, inter-municipal communities, municipal services, the local business sector and municipal or inter-municipal systems — must not have expressed opposition towards the merging of multi-municipal systems for the collection, treatment and distribution of drinking water and/or the collection, treatment and disposal of effluents, or towards vertical integration through partnerships established under Decree-Law No 90/2009 of 9 April 2009.

In other words, rather than being based on objective and rigorous evaluation parameters, to determine the need, importance and quality of investments in underground water and sanitation networks, the selection criteria are based on the acceptance of certain policy options aimed at the concession and privatisation of water services. This harms everyone, including the municipalities, which defend the public management of water and sanitation, as well as those using these services.

1. Does any EU guidance, explicitly or implicitly, provide for or justify the inclusion of this specific provision in the aforementioned call, which is a clear example of blackmail?

2. Is the Commission aware of situations similar the one described above, i.e. basing access to EU funds on the acceptance of concession arrangements and the privatisation of public services (in this case, water) in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

1. The EU legislation in the field of water does not include any specific provision nor does it set out any preference for the organisation of the local and administrative entities set up by Member States for the management of water resources and the provision of water services. Nevertheless, Member States should, in the opinion of the Commission, ensure the achievement of the objectives in the most efficient way and are entitled to set specific selection criteria to ensure optimisation, integration and sustainability of investments, in line with nationally approved plans.

The promotion of more integrated water infrastructure systems in the framework of calls for applications for the urban water cycle is in line with the objectives set in the PEAASAR II (Plano Estratégico de Abastecimento de Água e de Saneamento de Águas Residuais II) for 2007-2013, which sets the objectives for water management developments in Portugal and in particular the objective to develop territorial integrated solutions. This is also in line with the Water Framework Directive ([1]), which aims to ensure the long term sustainable use of water. The key principles of integrated river basin management are incorporated into PEAASAR II, which is legally binding, bringing together economic and ecological perspectives into water management. The Commission has always supported this approach which is in line with the water infrastructure investments that have been co-financed by cohesion policy.

2. The Commission is not aware of any such situations described by the Honourable Member. Nevertheless, the Commission does not consider that the requirement for more integrated water infrastructure systems is linked to a privatisation of the sector.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000, establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005252/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Candidatura da Arrábida a Património Mundial

A recente aceitação pela Unesco da candidatura da Arrábida a Património Mundial foi o mais recente passo de um processo que se iniciou em 2001, envolvendo municípios e diversas entidades e visando concretizar uma das iniciativas do Plano Estratégico de Desenvolvimento Regional da Península de Setúbal.

O trabalho de pré-candidatura assentou fundamentalmente na valorização da componente natural da Serra da Arrábida, muito embora a candidatura se revista de um caráter mais amplo, não se cingindo apenas aos critérios de ordem natural, mas incluindo também os de ordem cultural e cultural imaterial, tendo-se transformado numa Candidatura a Património Mundial Misto.

Ao longo dos últimos anos, com a coordenação da Associação de Municípios da Região de Setúbal, foi possível construir uma candidatura abrangente e amplamente participada, envolvendo um grande número de instituições, entidades, agentes regionais, assim como da população em geral.

O objetivo desta candidatura é proteger, preservar e valorizar a Arrábida, enquanto expressão de harmonia entre natureza e cultura, assegurando a fruição, pelas populações, da Arrábida mediante critérios de sustentabilidade.

A prossecução da candidatura exige agora o desenvolvimento de um conjunto de estudos e de ações, exigência que se confronta com a escassez de meios necessários, designadamente no plano financeiro, para lhe dar cabal resposta. Desde os estudos exigidos pela Unesco (por exemplo, capacidade de carga) às ações de valorização e salvaguarda dos valores candidatados — recuperação de espaços, sinalização de caminhos, sensibilização da população, entre outras.

Em face do exposto, poderá a Comissão prestar-me informações sobre os programas e medidas da poderão apoiar financeiramente as ações e os estudos a desenvolver no âmbito da candidatura da Arrábida a Património Mundial da Unesco.

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de informar o Senhor Deputado de que a UE não é parte da Convenção do Património Mundial da Unesco (1972). Como tal, o processo de apresentação de candidaturas para Património Mundial não faz parte das competências da União. Porém, as autoridades portuguesas/responsáveis pela Arrábida podem explorar a possibilidade de utilizar os fundos estruturais da UE para apoiar o projeto em questão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005252/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Arrábida's bid to become a World Heritage Site

Unesco recently accepted Arrábida's bid to become a World Heritage Site. This was the latest step in a process that began in 2001, involving municipalities and several organisations, which aims to implement one of the initiatives established in the Strategic Regional Development Plan for the Setúbal Peninsula.

The pre-application work was founded primarily on promoting the natural beauty of the Arrábida Mountains; however, the bid encompasses much more than just natural criteria, including culture and cultural heritage, which puts it in the running to become a mixed World Heritage Site.

A comprehensive and broadly inclusive bid has been put together over the last few years, coordinated by the Association of Municipalities of the Setúbal Region and involving a large number of institutions, organisations, regional actors and the general public.

The aim of this bid is to protect, preserve and promote Arrábida as an expression of harmony between nature and culture, ensuring public enjoyment of the area through sustainability criteria.

The next stage of the bid now requires a number of studies and measures to be carried out; however, there are insufficient funds available to fully meet these requirements, from the studies required by Unesco (for example, load capacity), to promoting and protecting elements of the bid (area regeneration, marking pathways, raising public awareness, etc.).

In view of this, can the Commission provide information on programmes and measures which could help fund the actions and studies to be undertaken as part of Arrábida's bid to become a Unesco World Heritage Site?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the EU is not a party to the Unesco World Heritage Convention (1972). The World Heritage Site bidding process is not therefore a matter of Community competence. However, the Portuguese / Arrábida authorities could explore the possibility of using EU structural funds to support the project in question.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005253/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Apoio à requalificação da Escola Luís António Verney

Numa visita recente à Escola Básica EB 2,3 Luís António Verney, em Lisboa, pude constatar o avançado estado de degradação em que esta se encontra, com pavilhões fechados por não terem condições para funcionar e um ginásio com falhas que põem em risco a segurança dos alunos, entre outros problemas.

Ademais, este é um dos estabelecimentos escolares que ainda tem estruturas de fibrocimento que não foram substituídas e que, dado o avançado estado de degradação em que se encontram, colocam problemas quanto à possível libertação de amianto.

Em face do exposto, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que programas e medidas da UE poderão apoiar a concretização de uma intervenção de requalificação da Escola Básica EB 2,3 Luís António Verney e do espaço envolvente, dando seguimento a projetos já elaborados, mas nunca concretizados?

2. Dispõe de informação atualizada sobre a presença de amianto em estruturas de fibrocimento em estabelecimentos escolares e outros e sobre os seus efeitos na saúde dos frequentadores destes espaços? Que medidas tomou a UE, até à data, neste domínio?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(4 de julho de 2013)

1. A renovação de infraestruturas escolares foi possível no âmbito da prioridade 3 do programa Lisboa do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional para o período de 2007-2013. No entanto, o financiamento de novos projetos de renovação escolar já não será possível visto que o programa atingiu já a dotação financeira máxima e as metas para este tipo de projeto. De acordo com as informações fornecidas pelas autoridades de gestão, a escola primária Luís António Verney não foi financiada pelo programa.

A política de coesão é gerida no âmbito do princípio da gestão partilhada pelas autoridades nacionais e regionais designadas pelos Estados-Membros. Por conseguinte, para mais informações, a Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte as autoridades de gestão do programa Lisboa:

PO Regional de Lisboa
Rua de Artilharia Um, n.° 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Telefone: +351 213 837 100
Fax: +351 213 847 985
presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
http://www.ccdr-lvt.pt/

2. Nos termos do artigo 165.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia, a responsabilidade pelo conteúdo e pela organização dos sistemas de educação e de formação incumbe aos Estados-Membros. Consequentemente, a construção, a manutenção e a renovação das infraestruturas da educação são abrangidas pelo âmbito das competências dos Estados-Membros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005253/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Support for renovating the Luís António Verney School

I recently visited the Luís António Verney primary school in Lisbon. Its advanced state of decay was obvious, with buildings closed because they could not be used and a gymnasium with problems that put the students' safety at risk, amongst other issues.

This is also one of the educational establishments that have not yet had the asbestos cement structures replaced and, given the advanced state of decay, there is a real possibility of asbestos being released.

1. What EU programmes and measures are available to support the renovation of the Luís António Verney primary school and its surroundings, so that the long-planned projects can finally go ahead?

2. Does the Commission have any information about the presence of asbestos in the asbestos cement structures in educational and other establishments and its effect on the health of those people using these areas? What action has the EU taken in this regard to date?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

1. The renovation of school infrastructure was possible under Priority 3 of the Lisbon European Regional Development Fund Programme for 2007-2013. However, the financing of new school renovation projects is no longer possible as the programme has already reached the maximum financial allocation and targets for this type of project. According to information provided by the managing authorities, the Luis António Verney Primary School has not been financed by the programme.

Cohesion policy is managed under the shared management principle by national and regional authorities designated by the Member States. The Commission therefore suggests the Honourable Member contacts the managing authorities of the Lisbon programme for further information:

PO Regional Lisboa
Rua Artilharia Um, 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Tel.: +351 213 837 100
Fax: +351 213 847 985
presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
http://www.ccdr-lvt.pt/

2. In accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests with Member States. Consequently, the construction, maintenance and renovation of educational infrastructure fall under Member States' competencies.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005254/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios às associações de bombeiros voluntários — Bombeiros Voluntários do Beato

A Associação dos Bombeiros do Beato conta com cerca de 50 voluntários e desenvolve uma intensa e muito importante atividade na cidade de Lisboa, que importa reconhecer, valorizar e apoiar.

Numa recente visita às instalações do quartel dos Bombeiros Voluntários do Beato, pude constatar o impressionante (a vários títulos) estado de degradação em que estas se encontram.

Concretamente, estas instalações não proporcionam um local adequado para o devido descanso dos voluntários, que dormem no chão, sem o mínimo de condições, situação que se agrava com a entrada de água da chuva e com as temperaturas elevadas nos períodos de grande calor. Registe-se ainda a ausência de um parque de viaturas, onde estas possam ser estacionadas e lhes possa ser feita a necessária manutenção.

Algumas propostas de mudança do quartel têm sido aventadas, mas nenhuma ainda concretizada, processo que, em qualquer caso, exigirá um investimento em termos financeiros.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que iniciativas têm sido desenvolvidas para apoiar e valorizar a atividade dos bombeiros voluntários na UE?

2. Que programas de medidas poderão apoiar o investimento necessário à instalação do Quartel dos Bombeiros Voluntários do Beato noutro local, para que, assim, possam prestar os seus serviços à população da cidade com dignidade e em melhores condições do que as atuais?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(8 de julho de 2013)

Em consonância com o princípio da subsidiariedade, a principal responsabilidade pela proteção das pessoas, dos bens e do ambiente cabe às autoridades dos Estados-Membros. Os níveis local, regional e nacional são, de um modo geral, os mais bem colocados para prepararem e responderem a catástrofes, incluindo incêndios. A UE tem competência para apoiar os Estados-Membros no domínio da proteção civil.

O Programa Operacional Valorização do Território (POVT) poderia financiar este tipo de projetos no âmbito da sua prioridade 2 «Sistemas ambientais e sistemas para a prevenção, gestão e monitorização de riscos — Fundo de Coesão», no domínio de intervenção «Prevenção e gestão de riscos».

Contudo, como é do conhecimento do Senhor Deputado, tendo em conta o princípio da gestão partilhada dos fundos estruturais, as autoridades nacionais são responsáveis pela execução dos programas, incluindo os critérios e procedimentos de seleção. A Comissão sugere, portanto, que o Senhor Deputado entre diretamente em contacto com as autoridades portuguesas responsáveis pela gestão do programa em causa, nomeadamente:

Programa Operacional Valorização do Território
Avenida D. João II, lote 1.07.2.1 — 2.°
1998-014 Lisboa
Tel: 21 154 50 00
Correio eletrónico: povt@povt.qren.pt
Sítio Internet: www.povt.qren.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005254/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Support for volunteer fire-fighting associations: Beato Volunteer Fire Station

The Beato Fire-fighting Association relies on about 50 volunteers and provides an active and very important service in Lisbon which should be recognised, appreciated and supported.

I recently visited the Beato Volunteer Fire Station and the state of decay was striking.

The rest facilities for the volunteers are inadequate as they have to sleep on the floor in very poor conditions. These deteriorate further due to leaks when it rains and high temperatures when the weather is hot. There is also no yard for vehicles to be parked and maintained.

Various proposals have been made for relocating the fire station but none have been realised and would, in any case, require financial investment.

1. What EU initiatives exist for supporting and appreciating the service provided by volunteer fire-fighters?

2. What programmes could assist with the investment needed to relocate the Beato Volunteer Fire Station so that the volunteers can provide their services to the people of the city with dignity and under better conditions than at present?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

The primary responsibility to protect people, property and the environment lies with the Member States, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. The local, regional, and national levels are generally best placed to prepare for and respond to disasters, including fires. The EU has a supporting competence in the field of civil protection.

The Operational Programme Territorial Enhancement 'POVT' could finance these types of projects under its priority 2 'Environmental Systems and systems of Prevention, Management and Monitoring of Risks — Cohesion fund' under the intervention domain 'Prevention and management of risks'.

However, as the Honourable Member is aware, due to the shared management principle of administering the Structural Funds, the national authorities are responsible for the implementation of the programmes, including project selection criteria and procedures. The Commission would therefore suggest the Honourable Member contacts directly the Portuguese authorities in charge of managing the programme concerned, namely:

Programa Operacional Valorização do Território
Avenida D. João II, lote 1.07.2.1 — 2°
1998-014 Lisboa
Tel.: 211 545 000
Email: povt@povt.qren.pt
Website: www.povt.qren.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005255/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Doença de Parkinson — Apoio a associações e investigação biomédica

A Associação Portuguesa de Doentes de Parkinson (APDPk, membro da EPDA — European Parkinson's Disease Association e da WPDA — World Parkinson's Disease Association) desempenha uma importante missão humanitária, não só junto dos seus associados, mas igualmente de todos os outros atingidos pela doença e seus acompanhantes. Em Portugal, estima-se que exista um universo de 20 mil doentes de Parkinson.

Entre as muitas atividades desenvolvidas por esta associação contam-se: a defesa dos interesses dos doentes de Parkinson junto de organizações oficiais e poderes públicos; a divulgação de informação sobre a doença e as formas de superar as dificuldades, contribuindo para a mudança de atitude em relação à doença de Parkinson, tanto das pessoas portadoras como do público em geral; o aconselhamento individual presencial, por telefone e *on line* por meio de pessoal especializado; a assistência domiciliária (visitas e fisioterapia) aos membros mais necessitados; a promoção de encontros de associados, como meio de gerar entreajuda e convívio, organização de atividades lúdico-terapeuto-culturais (visitas de estudo, sessões de psicoterapia, dança, etc.); a organização de cursos e eventos para cuidadores de doentes e voluntários, fóruns com médicos e técnicos de saúde, em que são apresentados e discutidos temas relacionados com as terapias de Parkinson, e ações de sensibilização da sociedade.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que programas e ações existem ao nível da União Europeia para apoiar a atividade de associações como a APDPk, tendo em conta a importante função social que desempenham?

2. Que apoios existem para a investigação biomédica da doença, tendo em conta a sua importância para o tratamento e a prevenção? Que prioridades estão previstas?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(25 de junho de 2013)

Não existem quaisquer programas ao abrigo do programa de saúde da UE 2008-2013 para apoiar a Associação Portuguesa de Doentes de Parkinson ou outras associações nacionais no domínio da doença de Parkinson. O apoio a organizações nacionais é um assunto da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros. Com base em convites anuais, o programa de saúde da UE 2008-2013 pode prestar apoio a associações ou redes europeias (subvenções de funcionamento) ou às suas atividades (conferências ou projetos) que contribuam para os objetivos do programa numa base concorrencial. Até agora, não foi concedido qualquer apoio a redes ou associações ativas em matéria da doença de Parkinson.

A investigação sobre a doença de Parkinson foi uma prioridade em todo o 7.° Programa-Quadro de Investigação da UE (7.° PQ, 2007-2013). Desde 2007, o 7.° PQ investiu um montante de 167 milhões de euros para dar resposta, em especial, à fisiopatologia da doença e ao desenvolvimento de novas estratégias de tratamento.

A Associação Europeia da Doença de Parkinson — de que a associação portuguesa é membro, é um dos parceiros de três projetos financiados: Replaces ([1]) destinado a lidar com mudanças sinápticas em condições fisiológicas e neurodegenerativas; NRT ([2]), destinado a inverter a evolução da doença, através da promoção de mecanismos endógenos de reparação do cérebro; e Rempark ([3]), destinado a desenvolver um dispositivo pessoal de saúde para a gestão remota e autónoma da doença de Parkinson.

A proposta da Comissão para o Horizonte 2020 — Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação (2014-2020) ([4]) será, provavelmente, oferecer oportunidades para a investigação sobre a doença de Parkinson, através do desafio societal «Saúde, evolução demográfica e bem-estar». É ainda prematuro avaliar a questões específicas em matéria de investigação que serão abordadas.

([1]) http://www.replaces-pd.org
([2]) www.nrtfp7.com
([3]) www.rempark.eu
([4]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005255/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Parkinson's disease — Support for associations and biomedical research

The Portuguese Parkinson Association (APDPk, member of the EPDA — European Parkinson's Disease Association and the WPDA — World Parkinson's Disease Association) plays an important humanitarian role, not only for its members, but for all those affected by the disease and their carers. An estimated 20 000 people in Portugal suffer from Parkinson's disease.

This association performs numerous activities including: working with official organisations and public authorities to protect the interests of those suffering from Parkinson's disease; disseminating information about the disease and how to overcome difficulties, helping to change attitudes towards Parkinson's disease, both in people with the condition and the general public; individual counselling in person, via telephone and online with specialised personnel; home care (visits and physiotherapy) for the members most in need; promoting members' meetings as a way of generating mutual support and social contact, organising recreational, therapeutic and cultural activities (study visits, psychotherapy sessions, dance, etc.); organising courses and events for carers and volunteers, forums with doctors and health specialists, involving the presentation and discussion of topics related to treatment for Parkinson's and ways to raise public awareness.

1. What programmes and actions are in place at EU level to support the activity of associations such as APDPk, given the important social role they play?

2. What support is available for biomedical research into the disease, given its importance for treatment and prevention? What priorities have been established?

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

No programmes are in place under the EU Health Programme 2008-2013 to support the Portuguese Parkinson Association or other national associations in the field of Parkinson's disease. Supporting national organisations is a matter falling under the responsibility of Member States. On the basis of annual calls, the EU Health Programme 2008-2013 can provide support to European associations or networks (operational grants) or their activities (conferences or projects) that contribute to the objectives of the programme on a competitive basis. No support has been granted so far to European associations or networks active on Parkinson's disease.

Research on Parkinson's disease has been a priority throughout the EU 7th Framework Programme for Research (FP7, 2007-2013). Since 2007, FP7 invested EUR 167 million to address in particular the physiopathology of the disease and develop new treatment strategies.

The European Parkinson's Disease Association — of which the Portuguese association is a member — is a partner in three funded projects: REPLACES ([1]) addressing synaptic changes in physiological and neurodegenerative conditions; NRT ([2]) aiming to reverse the course of the disease, by promotion of endogenous brain repair mechanisms; and REMPARK ([3]) developing a personal health device for the remote and autonomous management of Parkinson's disease.

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]) will likely offer opportunities for research on Parkinson's disease through the 'Health, demographic change and well-being' societal challenge. It is yet premature to ascertain the specific research issues which will be addressed.

([1]) http://www.replaces-pd.org
([2]) www.nrtfp7.com
([3]) www.rempark.eu
([4]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005256/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Despedimentos na Talaris e deslocalização da produção para a China

A Talaris (antiga Papelaco) é a única empresa da Europa a produzir caixas de levantamento automático de dinheiro do tipo Multibanco (ATM) e outros equipamentos de gestão de numerário.

A empresa, que foi adquirida em 2012 pela multinacional japonesa Glory, teve em 2011 um volume de negócios de 26 milhões de euros e 429 mil euros de resultados líquidos positivos, que, em 2010, tinham ascendido a 1,4 milhões de euros.

Apesar disso, pretende encerrar a linha de produção, que emprega 20 trabalhadores, transferi-la para a China e passar o departamento de recursos humanos e o departamento financeiro para Espanha, avançando com um despedimento coletivo de 37 trabalhadores, parte dos quais da produção da fábrica.

Aqui temos mais um exemplo de um comportamento inadmissível por parte de uma empresa que, segundo o Sindicato das Indústrias Elétricas do Sul e Ilhas (SIESI), «tem resultados líquidos, exporta a maior parte da produção e está a usar a facilidade que existe em Portugal para fazer despedimentos coletivos para se deslocalizar».

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação? Que avaliação faz da mesma?

2. Dispõe de informação sobre se a Talaris, ou alguma outra empresa do grupo Glory, recebeu alguns apoios da UE para se instalar em Portugal ou em algum outro país da UE?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(8 de julho de 2013)

1. A Comissão não tem competência para intervir em decisões específicas da empresa, mas insta as empresas a adotarem boas práticas relacionadas com a antecipação e a gestão socialmente responsável da reestruturação. Na sequência do seu Livro Verde ([1]) de janeiro de 2012 e da aprovação pelo Parlamento Europeu do Relatório Cercas, em 15 de janeiro de 2013, a Comissão proporá uma comunicação relativa a um quadro de qualidade que irá enquadrar a legislação da UE e iniciativas relevantes para a reestruturação e apresentará as melhores práticas a serem implementadas por todas as partes interessadas.

A Comissão salienta também que os trabalhadores suscetíveis de serem afetados pela reestruturação podem candidatar-se ao apoio do FSE e, se reunirem as condições necessárias para tal, do Fundo Europeu de Ajustamento à Globalização.

2. De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a empresa Talaris recebeu um apoio financeiro no valor total de 10 797,81 euros do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) no período de programação de 2000-2006. As operações selecionadas para financiamento destinaram-se a reforçar o potencial dos trabalhadores e cumpriram as regras nacionais e da UE ao longo de todo o período de execução. Embora a Comissão não tenha conhecimento de qualquer plano de deslocalização, salienta que o objetivo do FSE não seria comprometido por essa deslocalização, visto que o financiamento se referiu a atividades de formação ligadas à qualificação profissional, que visam melhorar o potencial dos trabalhadores.

([1]) Ver as respostas e um resumo em:
http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005256/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Layoffs at Talaris and the relocation of production to China

Talaris (formerly Papelaco) is the only company in Europe who manufactures automated teller machines (ATMs) and other money-handling equipment.

In 2011, the company, which was acquired in 2012 by the Japanese multinational Glory, had a turnover of EUR 26 million and a net profit of EUR 429 000, which had risen to EUR 1.4 million in 2010.

Nevertheless, it plans to close its production line, which employs 20 workers, and transfer it to China and move its human resources and financial departments to Spain, going ahead with a collective dismissal of 37 workers, some of whom work in factory production.

Here we have yet another example of unacceptable behaviour by a company that, according to the Union of Electrical Industries of the South and Islands (SIESI), makes a net profit, exports the majority of production and uses the facility in Portugal to make collective dismissals in order to relocate.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation? What is its assessment?

2. Does it have information on whether Talaris, or any other company within the Glory group, has received any EU support to establish itself in Portugal or in any other EU country?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

1. The Commission has no powers to interfere in specific company's decisions but urges them to follow good practices anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring. Following its January 2012 Green Paper ([1]) and the adoption by the European Parliament on 15 January 2013 of the Cercas report, the Commission will propose a communication establishing a Quality Framework that will frame the EU legislation and initiatives relevant to restructuring and will present the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders.

The Commission would also point out that workers likely to be affected by restructuring may qualify for support from the ESF and, provided that the necessary conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

2. According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, Talaris Company has received a total financial support amounting to EUR 10.797,81 from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the programming period 2000-2006. The operations selected for funding aimed to enhance the employees' potential and complied with EU and national rules throughout the implementation period. Although the Commission is not aware of any relocation plans, it would point out that the aim of the ESF would not be jeopardised by relocation since the funding referred to concerned training activities linked to vocational training which aim to improve the employees' potential.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005257/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Segurança no trabalho, acidentes de trabalho e doenças profissionais

Desde 2011 que em Portugal se assinala, a 28 de abril, o Dia Nacional de Prevenção e Segurança no Trabalho.

Nos últimos quatro anos morreram a trabalhar 550 pessoas em Portugal, na sua maioria operários, das quais 34 já este ano. Mas estes números pecam por defeito, já que as mortes ocorridas depois da ida aos hospitais não são contabilizadas.

Para além dos que morrem, um número muito significativo de trabalhadores fica com sequelas para toda a vida na sequência de acidentes, ou são vítimas de doenças profissionais. Estima-se que, em todo o mundo, as doenças profissionais causem seis vezes mais mortos do que os acidentes de trabalho.

É sabido que os acidentes acontecem na relação direta da precariedade no emprego, do aumento do horário de trabalho, da intensificação dos ritmos de laboração, dos impedimentos à organização dos trabalhadores nos locais de trabalho e perante a falta de investimento na formação na área da prevenção. É sabido que todos estes fatores têm evoluído de forma negativa em Portugal nos últimos anos e, muito especialmente, desde a aplicação do programa UE-FMI.

Em face do exposto, perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Que acompanhamento tem sido feito do problema da segurança no trabalho, dos acidentes de trabalho e das doenças profissionais na UE?

2. Dispõe de informação estatística atualizada relativamente aos acidentes de trabalho e às doenças profissionais em cada um dos 27 Estados-Membros?

3. Reconhece a relação entre as medidas inscritas nos programas UE-FMI em curso e o aumento da precariedade no emprego, o aumento do horário de trabalho e a intensificação dos ritmos de laboração, entre outros fatores acima referidos, que, consabidamente, estão relacionados com o aumento da sinistralidade no trabalho e das doenças profissionais? Nessa medida, está disposta a corrigir a sua posição?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(1 de julho de 2013)

1. Para a monitorização da saúde e segurança no trabalho (SST) a nível da UE, a Comissão baseia-se principalmente em dados do Eurostat ([1]), tal como os módulos *ad hoc* das EEAT ([2]) e do IFT ([3]) relativos a acidentes de trabalho e a problemas de saúde relacionados com o trabalho. Tem ainda em conta os resultados do Inquérito Europeu às Empresas e Riscos Novos e Emergentes ([4]) da Agência Europeia para a Segurança e a Saúde no Trabalho, do inquérito europeu às condições de trabalho ([5]) da Fundação Europeia para a Melhoria das Condições de Vida e de Trabalho e de outras fontes de informação nacionais. Os resultados em matéria de SST a nível da UE são avaliados no contexto mundial, através da colaboração com outras organizações internacionais.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/health_safety_work
([2]) Estatísticas europeias sobre os acidentes no trabalho http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-12-002/EN/KS-RA-12-002-EN.PDF
([3]) Inquérito às forças de trabalho.
([4]) https://osha.europa.eu/en/esener-enterprise-survey/enterprise-survey-esener
([5]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/surveys/

2. No que respeita aos dados a nível da UE, a situação sobre os acidentes no trabalho nos Estados-Membros é monitorizada através dos dados EEAT anuais desde 1999. Desde há anos que se verifica uma quebra nas taxas de incidência de acidentes mortais e não mortais, por exemplo, o número de acidentes mortais por 100 000 pessoas passou de 2 323 em 2008 para 1 742 em 2010. As atualizações para 2011 estarão disponíveis no quarto trimestre de 2013. Os problemas de saúde relacionados com o trabalho são monitorizados pelos módulos *ad hoc* do IFT de 2007 e 2013 ([6]): os primeiros resultados sobre os dados de 2013 serão publicados no final de 2014. As Estatísticas Europeias de Doenças Profissionais deverão permitir a monitorização das doenças profissionais reconhecidas, mas a recolha de dados está incompleta e não é comparável entre os Estados-Membros, pelo que tem de ser revista. Entretanto, são utilizadas fontes de informação ([7]) alternativas.

3. A Comissão segue de perto os principais desenvolvimentos na SST através de todos os canais colocados à sua disposição em conformidade com o acervo da UE em matéria de saúde e segurança no trabalho e das práticas em vigor. Está em curso uma consulta pública ([8]) em matéria de saúde e segurança no trabalho, que deverá ajudar a identificar os atuais e futuros desafios no domínio da SST e as respetivas soluções.

([6]) Acordo SEE — módulo ad hoc do IFT de 2013 sobre «acidentes de trabalho e outros problemas de saúde relacionados com o trabalho»: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/ESS_LFS_2013_AHM/EN/ESS_LFS_2013_AHM-EN.PDF

([7]) Estatísticas nacionais e estudos.

([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=699&consultId=13&furtherConsult=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005257/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Occupational safety, accidents at work and occupational diseases

In Portugal, the National Day for Prevention and Safety at Work is held on 28 April, and has been since 2011.

In the last four years, 550 people have been killed at work in Portugal, most of them manual workers, 34 of whom have been killed this year. However, these figures do not tell the whole story, as deaths that occur after admission to hospital are not counted.

In addition to those who are killed, a very large number of workers are left suffering lifelong effects following accidents, or are the victims of occupational diseases. It is estimated that, worldwide, occupational diseases are responsible for six times as many deaths as accidents at work.

The occurrence of accidents goes hand in hand with how dangerous a job is, longer working times, more intensive working patterns, curbs on employees' associations in the workplace and a lack of investment in accident prevention training. All these factors have followed a negative trend in Portugal in recent years and, in particular, since the EU-IMF programme was put in place.

1. To what extent has the Commission monitored the problem of occupational safety, accidents at work and occupational diseases in the EU?

2. Does it have any up-to-date statistics on accidents at work and occupational diseases in each of the 27 Member States?

3. Does it acknowledge the link between measures under the current EU-IMF programmes and work being more dangerous, longer working times and more intensive working patterns, among other factors mentioned above, which are widely known to be linked to an increase in accidents at work and occupational diseases? To that extent, is the Commission prepared to change its position?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

1. For monitoring occupational safety and health (OSH) at EU level, the Commission mainly relies on Eurostat data ([1]), such as the ESAW ([2]) and the LFS ([3]) ad hoc modules on accidents at work and work-related health problems. It also draws on the results of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work's European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks ([4]), the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions' European Working Conditions Survey ([5]) and other national sources of information. The EU's OSH results are assessed in the global context through collaboration with other international organisations.

2. As regards data at EU level, the situation on accidents at work in the Member States is monitored through the annual ESAW data since 1999. Since years the incidence rates for non-fatal and fatal accidents are dropping, for example the number of non-fatal accidents per 100.000 persons dropped from 2323 in 2008 to 1742 in 2010. Updates for 2011 will be available in the 4th quarter of 2013. Work related health problems are monitored by the LFS ad hoc modules of 2007 and 2013 ([6]): for the 2013 data first results will be published end of 2014. The European Occupational Diseases Statistics should allow monitoring of the recognised occupational diseases, but the data collection is incomplete and not comparable amongst Member States and therefore needs to be reviewed. In the meanwhile, alternative sources of information ([7]) are used.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/health_safety_work.
([2]) European Statistics on Accidents at Work http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-12-002/EN/KS-RA-12-002-EN.PDF
([3]) Labour Force Survey.
([4]) https://osha.europa.eu/en/esener-enterprise-survey/enterprise-survey-esener.
([5]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/surveys/.
([6]) ESS agreement — LFS 2013 ad-hoc module on 'accidents at work and other work-related health problems': http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/ESS_LFS_2013_AHM/EN/ESS_LFS_2013_AHM-EN.PDF
([7]) Such as national statistics and studies.

3. The Commission is following the main developments in OSH closely through all channels made available to it in line with EU OSH *acquis* and established practice. A public consultation ([8]) is under way on health and safety at work and should help identify current and future challenges in the OSH area and solutions to them.

([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=699&consultId=13&furtherConsult=yes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005258/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Situação dos motoristas de veículos pesados de mercadorias

Em Portugal, nos últimos tempos, têm aumentado as queixas dos motoristas de veículos pesados de mercadorias, alvo de pressões para aumentarem o já de si longo horário de trabalho (que chega a atingir dezasseis e mais horas diárias), pondo assim em risco, não só a vida dos próprios motoristas, como a de todos os que circulam pelas estradas. No setor do transporte internacional, é tal o grau de desregulação dos horários que há motoristas que, segundo denúncias dos próprios, «saem de Portugal com a indicação de que vão estar fora uma semana e acabam por estar três semanas ou mais».

Em muitas empresas, trabalhadores com vínculos efetivos são pressionados a abandonarem as empresas, ao mesmo tempo que se substitui o salário por pagamento ao quilómetro, à tonelagem ou à viagem — o que se repercute na redução significativa do valor da retribuição. Ademais, existe a intenção do patronato do setor de retirar os tempos de espera e descarga do «período normal de trabalho», o que levaria a um efetivo aumento do horário e da exploração.

Em face do exposto, tendo em conta a legislação da UE existente, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento das situações descritas, seja em Portugal, seja noutros países da UE? Que avaliação faz das mesmas?

2. Que medidas tenciona tomar para impedir o aumento da exploração destes trabalhadores, garantir-lhes condições dignas de trabalho e um salário justo e salvaguardar a sua segurança e a de todos os que circulam nas estradas?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(1 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão foi avisada de que algumas empresas de transporte da UE parecem violar as normas relativas ao horário de trabalho estabelecidas na Diretiva 2002/15/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 11 de março de 2002, relativa à organização do tempo de trabalho das pessoas que exercem actividades móveis de transporte rodoviário ([1]). Todos os Estados-Membros da UE devem certificar-se de que a legislação nacional salvaguarda os direitos previstos nessa diretiva. As autoridades nacionais são os principais responsáveis pela execução das normas, visto que estão em melhor posição para investigar os casos individuais, tendo em conta as circunstâncias específicas e o contexto jurídico nacional. A Comissão toma as medidas adequadas sempre que as normas da UE não são respeitadas. Contudo, a Comissão não dispõe de dados suficientes sobre o assunto para poder investigar o problema levantado, pelo que não está em posição de responder à pergunta neste momento, mas solicita aos Senhores Deputados que lhe enviem mais pormenores.

A Comissão coopera com os Estados-Membros para melhorar a aplicação das normas sociais da UE no setor do transporte rodoviário, com vista a eliminar os casos de horários de trabalho excessivos, padrões de trabalho perturbadores ou remunerações baseadas no desempenho, que são ilícitos. A Comissão aguarda com expectativa o lançamento de um debate com os parceiros sociais sobre a harmonização mínima das normas no domínio da proteção social e das condições de trabalho. A remuneração, porém, não cabe no âmbito das competências da UE, segundo o disposto no artigo 153.°, n.° 5, do TFUE.

([1]) JO L 80 de 23.2.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005258/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Situation of heavy goods vehicle drivers

In Portugal, there has been a recent increase in complaints from heavy goods vehicle drivers, who are under pressure to extend their already long working hours (which can reach or exceed 16 hours a day), endangering not only their own lives but those of all road users. The deregulation of working hours in the international transport sector is such that some drivers complain of being sent on 'week-long' jobs outside Portugal, only to end up spending three or more weeks away.

In many companies, workers with employment contracts are pressured into leaving while companies replace wages with payments per kilometre, tonnage or trip — leading to a considerable drop in earnings. Furthermore, employers in the sector intend to exclude waiting and unloading times from 'normal working hours', which would lead to an effective increase in working hours and exploitation.

In view of this, and given the existing EU legislation:

1. Is the Commission aware of these situations, both in Portugal and in other EU countries? What is its assessment of them?

2. What measures does it intend to take to prevent further exploitation of these workers, to guarantee them decent working conditions and a fair wage, and to protect their safety and that of all road users?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The Commission has been warned that some transport undertakings in the EU allegedly violate working time rules established by Directive 2002/15/EC of the European parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2002 on the organisation of the working time of persons performing mobile road transport activities ([1]). All EU Member States must make sure that their national laws protect the rights laid down in this directive. The national authorities have primary responsibility for enforcing these rules, as they are best placed to investigate individual cases, taking into account the particular factual background and the national legal contex. The Commission takes appropriate steps when the EU provisions are not respected. However, the Commission does not have sufficient details on the matter to be able to investigate the problem raised and is not therefore in a position to answer the question at the moment. It would ask the Honourable Member to provide more details.

The Commission works with Member States to improve enforcement of the existing EU social rules in road transport with a view to eliminate the cases of excessive working hours, disruptive working patterns or performance-based remuneration, which are illicit. The Commission looks forward to launching a debate with social partners on harmonising minimum social protection and working conditions standards. Remuneration falls, however, not within the remit of the EU competences, as provided for in Art 153 §5 of the TFEU.

([1]) OJ L 80, 23.2.2002.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005259/13
ao Conselho
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Quotas leiteiras e quotas do açúcar

Em resposta à pergunta escrita E-011170/2012, sobre «recuperação das quotas leiteiras», é reiterada a decisão de acabar com as quotas leiteiras, referindo que os dois relatórios elaborados pela Comissão sobre «a evolução da situação do mercado e as consequentes condições para a supressão faseada e harmoniosa do regime de quotas leiteiras» concluíram que «numa grande maioria dos Estados-Membros estava bem encaminhada uma "aterragem suave" e que não era necessária qualquer alteração do quadro existente».

Todavia, o Conselho não responde à questão sobre a comparação entre o setor do leite e o setor do açúcar, tendo em conta as decisões de sentido contrário tomadas em relação a um e a outro.

Assim sendo, reitero a seguinte pergunta ao Conselho:

1. Como se pode justificar a recuperação de instrumentos de regulação e de distribuição da produção (quotas) no setor do açúcar e não no setor do leite? Que razões justificam, no entender do Conselho, a diferença de tratamento entre os dois setores?

2. Que Estados-Membros se opõem atualmente à recuperação das quotas leiteiras e que Estados-Membros a defendem?

Resposta
(11 de setembro de 2013)

Em 26 de junho de 2013, o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho aprovaram, de comum acordo, a prorrogação das quotas do açúcar até 2017, no contexto dos debates realizados no âmbito do processo legislativo ordinário sobre a reforma da Política Agrícola Comum para o período de 2014-2020 (projeto de regulamento relativo à Organização Comum do Mercado).

No que respeita às quotas leiteiras, o Conselho e o Parlamento Europeu decidiram manter a decisão tomada no contexto do «exame de saúde» da PAC de 2009, tendo por outro lado efetuado algumas adaptações necessárias ao regulamento relativo a este setor. A situação neste setor será debatida numa Conferência consagrada ao leite que terá lugar em 24 de setembro de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005259/13
to the Council
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Milk quotas and sugar quotas

The answer to Written Question E-011170/2012, on 'restoring milk quotas', reiterates the decision to abolish milk quotas and states that the two reports drafted by the Commission on 'the evolution of the market situation and the consequent conditions for a smooth phasing-out of the milk quota system' concluded that 'the soft landing was on track in a vast majority of Member States and that no change to the existing framework was required'.

However, the Council does not answer the question on the comparison between the milk industry and the sugar industry, given that contrasting decisions have been made in each case.

I therefore repeat the following question to the Council:

1. How can it be justified to restore regulatory and production distribution instruments (quotas) in the sugar industry and not in the milk industry? In the Council's view, what reasons justify the difference in treatment between the two industries?

2. Which Member States currently oppose the restoration of milk quotas and which Member States support it?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

The extension until 2017 of sugar quotas was agreed by the European Parliament and the Council on 26 June 2013 in the context of the discussions under the ordinary legislative procedure on Common Agricultural Policy reform for the period 2014-2020 (draft Regulation on the Single Common Market Organisation).

Regarding milk quotas, the Council and the European Parliament agreed to maintain the decision taken in the context of the 2009 CAP 'Health Check' while making some necessary adaptation to the regulation of the sector. The situation in the sector will be discussed at a Milk Conference to be held on 24 September 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005260/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Rotulagem obrigatória quanto ao país de origem

Na sequência da divulgação da fraude alimentar de substituição de carne de vaca por carne de cavalo em refeições ultracongeladas, a Comissão Europeia aceitou rever as regras da rotulagem obrigatória, admitindo a obrigatoriedade de indicação do país de origem.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Confirma a intenção de propor a alteração das regras de rotulagem quanto à origem, prevendo a obrigatoriedade de indicação do país de origem e prestando, assim, uma informação importante ao consumidor (de que este hoje não dispõe) para uma escolha informada e consciente?

2. Sabe que Estados-Membros se opõem, neste momento, à rotulagem obrigatória?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(20 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão tem defendido repetidamente que a obrigatoriedade de rotulagem não é um instrumento para prevenir a fraude por operadores mal intencionados. O escândalo atual poderia ter ocorrido mesmo se a rotulagem de origem fosse obrigatória para os géneros alimentícios em questão. As práticas enganosas podem ser eliminadas através da aplicação adequada da legislação da UE, principalmente através de controlos oficiais regulares pelas autoridades nacionais competentes com base numa análise de risco adequada e na imposição de sanções dissuasivas eficazes, em conformidade com o Regulamento (CE) n.° 882/2004 relativo aos controlos oficiais ([1]).

A Comissão prossegue com as necessárias medidas de acompanhamento previstas no Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativo à prestação de informação aos consumidores sobre os géneros alimentícios ([2]), que entrará em vigor em 13 de dezembro de 2014. A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-003758/2013 ([3]).

A Comissão não está em condições de avaliar a posição dos Estados-Membros enquanto se aguarda a entrega dos relatórios em causa.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 882/2004 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 29 de abril de 2004, relativo aos controlos oficiais realizados para assegurar a verificação do cumprimento da legislação relativa aos alimentos para animais e aos géneros alimentícios e das normas relativas à saúde e ao bem-estar dos animais (JO L 165 de 30.4.2004, p. 1).

([2]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 25 de outubro de 2011, relativo à prestação de informação aos consumidores sobre os géneros alimentícios, que altera os Regulamentos (CE) n.° 1924/2006 e (CE) n.° 1925/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, e revoga as Diretivas 87/250/CEE da Comissão, 90/496/CEE do Conselho, 1999/10/CE da Comissão, 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE da Comissão e o Regulamento (CE) n.° 608/2004 da Comissão, JO L 304 de 22.11.2011, p. 18.

([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005260/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Mandatory labelling on the country of origin

In the wake of the food fraud scandal involving the substitution of beef for horsemeat in frozen meals, the Commission has agreed to review the rules on mandatory labelling, including the mandatory indication of country of origin.

1. Can the Commission confirm its intention to propose an amendment to the rules regarding origin labelling, including the mandatory indication of country of origin, thus providing important information to consumers (which is currently not available) so that they can make an informed and conscious choice?

2. Is it aware that Member States currently oppose mandatory labelling?

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

The Commission has repeatedly held that mandatory origin labelling is not a tool to prevent fraud by malicious operators. The present scandal could have occurred, even if origin labelling was mandatory for the foods in question. Deceptive practices can be eliminated by appropriate enforcement of EU legislation mainly by means of regular official controls by national competent authorities based on appropriate risk analysis and the imposition of effective dissuasive sanctions, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls ([1]).

The Commission is proceeding with the necessary follow-up actions foreseen in Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]), which will enter into application on 13 December 2014. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question P-003758/2013 ([3]).

The Commission is not in a position to evaluate the position of the Member States pending the delivery of the reports concerned.

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

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005261/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Uso de substâncias químicas perigosas em produtos utilizados no dia-a-dia

Num estudo recente divulgado pela Associação Portuguesa para a Defesa do Consumidor (DECO), é evidenciada a utilização continuada de substâncias químicas perigosas na composição de muitos produtos usados no dia-a-dia. Segundo a DECO, «efeitos cancerígenos, infertilidade, atraso no crescimento das crianças, alergias — estes são apenas alguns dos efeitos potenciais de algumas substâncias químicas que vamos encontrando em produtos que utilizamos diariamente — nos pijamas das crianças, em mobiliário, telemóveis, entre outros». A DECO afirma que a forma como a legislação da UE tem tentado controlar o uso destas substâncias é manifestamente ineficaz. A verdade é que se persiste nesse uso, mesmo quando se sabe que o fabrico dos produtos em cuja composição estão presentes pode e deve ser feito com o recurso a substâncias alternativas de muito menor risco.

De entre as mais de 400 substâncias que foram objeto de registo pela Agência Europeia das Substâncias Químicas (ECHA), mais de uma centena — que correspondem às substâncias mais perigosas para a saúde humana (as SVHC — «substances of very high concern») — necessita de autorização da ECHA para poderem ser utilizadas. Todavia, a sua periculosidade, os seus efeitos nocivos e o facto de ser possível fabricar produtos semelhantes sem a sua utilização, exigiriam antes a sua erradicação e não sua utilização continuada, ainda que mediante um processo de autorização.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Está disponível para propor a revisão da legislação da UE, de forma a que todas as substâncias que suscitam elevada preocupação (SVHC) sejam banidas sempre que estiver provada a viabilidade do uso de alternativas?

2. Tendo em conta que muitos fabricantes ou distribuidores alegam não saber ou não mostram disponibilidade para informar corretamente os consumidores, comprometendo assim as intenções plasmadas no Regulamento REACH, que medidas pensa tomar a este respeito?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(9 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de remeter para a resposta que deu às perguntas E-011231/2011 e E-001919/2013 ([1]).

Presentemente, existem 138 substâncias que suscitam elevada preocupação (SVHC) identificadas pela ECHA ([2]) e incluídas na lista de substâncias candidatas ([3]), 22 das quais constam atualmente do anexo XIV do Regulamento REACH. A colocação no mercado e a utilização deste último grupo de substâncias estão sujeitas a autorização.

Um dos objetivos da autorização consiste em substituir progressivamente as SVHC por substâncias alternativas adequadas, sempre que estas sejam económica e tecnicamente viáveis. Os pedidos de autorização devem incluir uma análise das alternativas, que avalie a adequação e a disponibilidade de alternativas potenciais. Esta análise deve igualmente abranger as ações e os prazos necessários para que se proceda à transferência para uma alternativa. O Regulamento REACH prevê duas possibilidades para a obtenção de uma autorização: demonstrar que os riscos são devidamente controlados ou, se tal não for possível, demonstrar que os benefícios socioeconómicos são superiores ao risco para a saúde humana ou para o ambiente decorrente da utilização da substância. Neste último caso, a disponibilidade de alternativas adequadas exclui a possibilidade de autorização.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) A Agência Europeia dos Produtos Químicos, sediada em Helsínquia.
([3]) Em conformidade com o artigo 59.° do Regulamento REACH.

A análise do funcionamento do Regulamento REACH efetuada pela Comissão ([4]) permitiu concluir que o regulamento funciona bem e atinge os objetivos que atualmente podem ser avaliados, tendo a Comissão decidido não propor alterações ao seu articulado. Foram realizados progressos substanciais no âmbito da identificação de SVHC e da sua inclusão no anexo XIV. No que diz respeito à obrigação prevista no artigo 33.° de, mediante pedido dos consumidores, prestar informações sobre SVHC presentes em artigos, a análise concluiu que deve ser prosseguida a monitorização neste domínio. Os Estados-Membros responsáveis pelo controlo do cumprimento do Regulamento REACH estão a cooperar ativamente no âmbito do Fórum para o Controlo do Cumprimento a fim de melhorar a conformidade com o artigo 33.°

([4]) As conclusões dessa análise foram publicadas em fevereiro de 2013 num relatório geral da Comissão [COM(2013) 49] e no documento de trabalho dos serviços da Comissão que o acompanha [SWD(2013) 25].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005261/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Use of dangerous chemicals in everyday products

A recent study released by the Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection (DECO) highlights the continued use of dangerous chemicals in many everyday products. According to DECO, carcinogenic effects, infertility, stunted growth in children and allergies are just some of the potential effects of some chemicals found in products we use on a daily basis, including children's pyjamas, furniture and mobile phones. DECO says that the way in which EU legislation has attempted to control the use of these substances is clearly ineffective. The reality is that these chemicals continue to be used, even when we know that the products containing them can and should be made using alternative substances which pose a much lower risk.

Out of more than 400 substances registered by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), more than a hundred — which correspond to the substances most dangerous to human health (SVHC — substances of very high concern) — require authorisation from ECHA to be used. However, the dangerousness and harmful effects thereof, as well as the fact that it is possible to produce similar products without using them, call for the eradication of these substances and not their continued use, albeit via an authorisation procedure.

1. Is the Commission prepared to propose a revision of EU legislation, so that all substances of very high concern (SVHC) are banned whenever it is proven that viable alternatives can be used?

2. What measures will it take in this regard, given that many manufacturers and distributors claim ignorance or show no willingness to properly inform consumers, thereby undermining the intentions set out in the REACH Regulation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

The Commission would like to refer to its reply to E-011231/2011 and E-001919/2013 ([1]).

At present there are 138 substances of very high concern (SVHC) identified by ECHA ([2]) and included in the candidate list ([3]), 22 of which are currently listed in Annex XIV REACH. Placing on the market or use of the latter group is subject to the authorisation requirement.

One of the objectives of authorisation is to progressively replace SVHC by suitable alternatives where technically and economically viable. Authorisation applications should include an analysis of alternatives, assessing the suitability and availability of potential alternatives. The actions and timelines required to transfer to an alternative should also be part of this analysis. REACH foresees two routes to obtain an authorisation, i.e. by demonstrating adequate control of the risks or, where adequate control of the risks cannot be demonstrated, by showing that the socioeconomic benefits outweigh the risk to human health or the environment arising from the use of the substance. In this latter case, the availability of suitable alternatives will exclude the possibility of authorisation.

The Commission's review of the operation of REACH ([4]), asserted that REACH functions well and delivers on objectives that at present can be assessed and decided not to propose changes to its enacting terms. Important progress has been made in identifying SVHCs and including them in Annex XIV. Concerning the article 33 obligation to provide information about SVHC in articles upon request from consumers, the review identified this area as requiring further monitoring. Member States in charge of enforcing REACH are actively cooperating within the Forum for enforcement in order to enhance compliance with Article 33.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) The European Chemicals Agency in Helsinki.
([3]) in accordance with Article 59 of the REACH Regulation.
([4]) The conclusions of the review were published in February 2013 in a General Report from the Commission {COM(2013)49} and an accompanying Staff Working Paper {SWD(2013)25}.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005263/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: FATCA-Abkommen — Meldung der Bankdaten von US-Bürgern

Derzeit laufen ja EU-Verhandlungen zum FATCA-Abkommen (Foreign Account Tax Compliance), welches die automatische Weitergabe von Bankdaten von US-Bürgern an die US-Behörden vorsieht. Ein entsprechendes Abkommen wurde seitens der Schweiz schon unterzeichnet, da die USA anscheinend drohen, alle Banken, die sich der Meldepflicht widersetzen, von Geschäften am US-Kapitalmarkt auszuschließen. Davon wären primär international tätige Großbanken betroffen. Angeblich steht in einem Anhang zum Abkommen, dass Lokalbanken in der Schweiz wohnhafte US-Bürger nicht ausschließen dürfen.

1. Wären nach momentanem Stand bei Abschluss der Verhandlungen alle Banken von der Meldepflicht betroffen oder nur international tätige Großbanken?

2. Soll das FATCA-Abkommen auch umgekehrt für in den USA ansässige EU-Bürger gelten?

3. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, ob die heimischen Banken mittels des Abkommens tatsächlich zur Einhebung einer Quellensteuer auf den Verkaufserlös von amerikanischen Wertpapieren verpflichtet würden, der von EU-Bürgern in der EU erzielt wird?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juli 2013)

Einleitend möchte die Kommission klarstellen, dass derzeit Verhandlungen zur Unterzeichnung von FATCA-Abkommen (zwischenstaatlichen Abkommen) zwischen den USA und den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten (nicht zwischen den USA und der EU) laufen. Die Verhandlungen stützen sich auf zwei Musterabkommen, die über die Website des US-Finanzministeriums öffentlich zugänglich sind ([1]).

1. Grundsätzlich unterliegen alle Banken den durch den FATCA auferlegten Sorgfalts- und Meldepflichten. Beide Musterabkommen enthalten jedoch Ausnahmen für Finanzinstitute mit einem lokalen Kundenstamm ([2]) sowie für lokale Banken ([3]), die gelten, sofern bestimmte Voraussetzungen erfüllt sind. Diese Voraussetzungen sollen sicherstellen, dass nur die Banken von den sich aus dem FATCA ergebenden Pflichten befreit sind, bei denen ein geringes Risiko zur Hinterziehung von US-Steuern besteht, weil sie beispielsweise nur lokale Kunden haben.

2. Der FATCA und die FATCA-Abkommen gelten für EU-Bürger mit Wohnsitz in den USA ebenso wie für andere US-Bürger. Daher werden die Finanzinstitute in der EU dazu verpflichtet sein, Angaben über die EU-Konten dieser Personen weiterzuleiten. In der auf Gegenseitigkeit beruhenden Fassung des zwischenstaatlichen FATCA-Abkommens ist vorgesehen, dass die USA im Gegenzug Informationen über die US-Konten von Personen mit Wohnsitz in der EU übermitteln.

3. Die Kommission geht davon aus, dass die Finanzinstitute mit Sitz in den Mitgliedstaaten, die ein zwischenstaatliches Abkommen nach dem Muster 1 unterzeichnen, gemäß dem FATCA nicht dazu verpflichtet sein werden, unter den in der Anfrage beschriebenen Umständen von ihren Kunden Quellensteuer einzuziehen. Eine besondere Bestimmung des zwischenstaatlichen Abkommens nach dem Muster 1 sieht die Aussetzung von Vorschriften zur Anwendung einer Quellensteuer bei nichtkooperativen Kontoinhabern vor ([4]).

([1]) http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/tax-policy/treaties/Pages/FATCA.aspx
([2]) Abschnitt III Buchstabe A des Anhangs II der beiden Musterabkommen.
([3]) Abschnitt III Buchstabe B des Anhangs II der beiden Musterabkommen.
([4]) Artikel 4 Absatz 2 des Musterabkommens 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005263/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: FATCA Agreement — disclosure of bank account details of US citizens

EU negotiations are currently in progress in relation to the FATCA (Foreign Account Tax Compliance) Agreement, which provides for the automatic disclosure of the bank account details of US citizens to the US authorities. A corresponding agreement has already been signed by Switzerland as the USA seems to be threatening to exclude all banks that reject this disclosure requirement from transacting on the US capital market. This would primarily affect internationally active large banks. An annex to the agreement reportedly states that local banks are not permitted to decline to do business with US citizens who are resident in Switzerland.

1. According to the current status of negotiations, would the agreement mean that all banks would be affected by the disclosure requirement, or just internationally active large banks?

2. Will the FATCA agreement also apply conversely to EU citizens who are resident in the USA?

3. Can the Commission confirm whether local banks would actually be required under the agreement to levy a withholding tax on the proceeds of the sale of American securities by EU citizens in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

As a preliminary remark, the Commission would like to clarify that negotiations to sign FATCA agreements (IGAs) are currently taking place between the US and the individual Member States (not between the US and the EU). Negotiations are based on two Model IGAs which are publicly available on the US Treasury website ([1]).

1. In principle, all banks are subjected to the due diligence and reporting obligations imposed by FATCA. However, both Model IGAs include exceptions for financial institutions with a local client base ([2]) as well as for local banks ([3]), provided that certain requirements are met. These requirements are aimed at ensuring that only banks which pose a low risk of US tax evasion, e.g. because they only have local clients, are exempted from FATCA obligations.

2. FATCA and the FATCA agreements apply to EU citizens who are resident in the US in the same way as to other US citizens. Therefore, EU financial institutions will be required to report information on the EU accounts of such persons. The reciprocal version of the FATCA IGA foresees reciprocal information exchange by the US on US accounts held by EU residents.

3. The Commission understands that financial institutions established in Member States that sign a Model 1 IGA will not be required to apply withholding taxes on their clients, as a consequence of FATCA in the circumstances outlined in the question. A special provision of the Model 1 IGA foresees the suspension of rules requiring the application of a withholding tax on recalcitrant account holders ([4]).

([1]) http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/tax-policy/treaties/Pages/FATCA.aspx.
([2]) Section III(A) of Annex II of both Model agreements.
([3]) Section III(B) of Annex II of both Model agreements.
([4]) Article 4(2) of Model 1 IGA.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005264/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Pflichtversicherung für AKW

In der Regel sind AKW in der EU für den Pannenfall nur minimal versichert. Folglich müssten — wie es ja bereits in der Vergangenheit der Fall war — den Großteil der Schäden aus einem Atomunfall die Staaten tragen. Umgekehrt müssen Wasser- und Wärmekraftwerke oftmals für etwaige Schäden, die sie verursachen, haften. Da dies eine eklatante Wettbewerbsverzerrung darstellt, wurde vor einigen Wochen Beschwerde bei der Kommission eingereicht. Derzeit legen ja die EU-Mitgliedstaaten selbst die Haftungshöhe für Atomkraftwerke fest.

1. Wie weit sind die Pläne bezüglich eines legislativen Vorschlags hinsichtlich Haftung und Versicherung von Schäden, die durch Unfälle in Nuklearanlagen verursacht werden, gediehen?

2. Steht hinsichtlich der Haftungsfrage auch die Haftung von Schäden durch (die Lagerung von) atomaren Abfall aus AKW zur Diskussion?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(15. Juli 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-1894/13 von Herrn Raül Romeva i Rueda ([1]). Wie sie in dieser Antwort angegeben hat, prüft die Kommission derzeit in einer Folgenabschätzung, wie die Haftungs- und Versicherungssituation im Bereich der Kernenergie verbessert werden könnte. Diese Folgenabschätzung wird auch den Anwendungsbereich möglicher weiterer Initiativen der Europäischen Union aufzeigen.

([1]) Veröffentlicht unter: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005264/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Compulsory insurance for nuclear power stations

As a rule, nuclear power stations in the EU only have minimal insurance against accidents. Consequently, the Member States would have to bear the greater part of the burden in the event of a nuclear accident — as has already been the case in the past. Conversely, hydroelectric and thermal power stations are frequently held liable for any damage they cause. As this involves a glaring distortion of competition, complaints were lodged with the Commission a few weeks ago. At present, the EU Member States themselves determine the amount of liability for nuclear power stations.

1. What progress has been achieved with the plans in relation to a legislative proposal concerning liability and insurance against damage caused by accidents in nuclear power stations?

2. Is liability for damage caused by (the storage of) nuclear waste from nuclear power stations also the subject of discussion?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-1894/13 by Raül Romeva i Rueda ([1]). As stated in this reply, the Commission is currently exploring by means of an impact assessment how the situation in the area of nuclear third party liability and insurance could be improved. This impact assessment will demonstrate the scope of application that any further European Union initiative should have.

([1]) See at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005265/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Staatlich garantierte Stromabnahmepreise für AKW

Die aktuell niedrigen Strompreise im Großhandel machen neue AKW zu Verlustbringern. So soll die Kilowattstunde Strom im Großhandel bei ca. 40 EUR liegen. Betreiber in Großbritannien, in dem ja eine Serie neuer nuklearer Kraftwerke geplant ist, und in Tschechien, das Temelin 3 und 4 errichten will, wünschen sich daher staatlich garantierte Stromabnahmepreise. Mit Kosten von 100 EUR je KWh der neuen Atomkraftwerke rechnen Großbritannien und Tschechien mit ca. 70 EUR.

1. Stellen staatlich garantierte Stromabnahmepreise für AKW nach Ansicht der Kommission nicht einen Widerspruch zum EU-Wettbewerbsrecht dar?

2. In welchen EU-Staaten laufen ähnliche Subventionen für Betreiber von Kraftwerken, die auf erneuerbaren bzw. umweltfreundlicheren Konzepten beruhen?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(1. Juli 2013)

Jedes Vorhaben der britischen oder der tschechischen Regierung im Hinblick auf die Ausarbeitung eines Rahmens zur Förderung der Kernenergieerzeugung mittels staatlicher Beihilfen müsste mit den Beihilfevorschriften und den Binnenmarktvorschriften der Europäischen Union in Einklang stehen.

Die Dienststellen der Kommission führen derzeit Gespräche mit den britischen Behörden, doch sind bisher keine Anmeldungen vonseiten des Vereinigten Königreichs oder Tschechiens bei der Kommission eingegangen und hat die Kommission auch keine Kenntnis von den betreffenden Mitgliedstaaten bereits gewährten entsprechenden Beihilfen. Die britischen Behörden haben in Bezug auf einige wesentliche Merkmale eines etwaigen Förderrahmens für CO_2-arme Energielösungen im Vereinigten Königreich offenbar noch keinen endgültigen Standpunkt festgelegt. Daher hat auch die Kommission noch keinen Standpunkt zum etwaigen Vorliegen einer Beihilfe oder zum Umfang, in dem eine solche Beihilfe nach den Beihilfe- bzw. Binnenmarktvorschriften gerechtfertigt sein könnte.

Bisher wurde bei der Kommission keine andere mitgliedstaatliche Förderregelung für die Kernenergieerzeugung angemeldet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005265/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: State-guaranteed electricity feed-in prices for nuclear power plants

The current low wholesale prices for electricity make new nuclear power plants a loss-making enterprise. The kilowatt hour wholesale price for electricity is reported to be around EUR 40. Therefore, operators in the United Kingdom, where a series of new nuclear power plants is planned, and in the Czech Republic, which wants to establish Temelin 3 and 4, want to see State-guaranteed electricity feed-in prices. With costs of EUR 100 per kWh for the new nuclear power plants, the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic expect around EUR 70.

1. In the Commission's opinion, are State-guaranteed electricity feed-in prices for nuclear power plants not inconsistent with EU competition law?

2. Which EU Member States have similar subsidies for operators of nuclear power plants based on renewable or more environmentally friendly approaches?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

Any plan by the United Kingdom (UK) government or the government of the Czech Republic to devise a framework in support of nuclear energy generation which involved state aid would need to be compatible with European Union state aid rules and internal market rules.

While the Commission services are in discussions with the UK authorities, the Commission has not yet received any notification from the UK or Czech authorities at this stage and is not aware of these Member States having granted aid. The UK authorities do not yet seem to have formed a definitive point of view on several key characteristics of any possible support framework in the context of their support to low carbon energy solutions. Hence, the Commission does not yet have a position on the possible existence of aid or the extent to which such aid might be justified under state aid and/or internal market rules.

The Commission has not been notified of any other national scheme in support of nuclear energy production.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005266/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Zweites AKW in der erdbebengefährdeten Türkei

Anfang des Monats erfolgte die Vertragsunterzeichnung hinsichtlich des Baus eines zweiten türkischen Kernkraftwerks in Sinop an der Schwarzmeerküste. Die von Franzosen und Japanern errichtete Anlage soll 2023 fertig gestellt sein. Der Bau von AKW in der Türkei ist insofern besonders problematisch, da das gesamte Staatsgebiet als erdbebengefährdet gilt. Nach wie vor verfügt Ankara nicht über eine Atomaufsichtsbehörde, welche für die Bewilligung zuständig wäre.

1. Wird Ankara im Rahmen der EU-Beitrittsverhandlungen dazu angetrieben, endlich eine Atomaufsichtsbehörde einzurichten?

2. Hat sich die Kommission im Rahmen der AKW-Stresstests für ein Verbot von AKW-Neubauten in erdbebengefährdeten Zonen ausgesprochen?

3. Erstreckt sich das EU-Frühwarnsystem für atomare Zwischenfälle auch auf jene Länder, mit denen Beitrittsverhandlungen laufen?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(26. Juni 2013)

1. Die Aufsichtsbehörde für den Nuklearbereich in der Türkei ist die türkische Atomenergiebehörde (TAEK), die bereits im Rahmen der türkischen nationalen Rechtsvorschriften eingerichtet worden ist. TAEK ist dafür zuständig, die Sicherheitsmaßnahmen für kerntechnische Tätigkeiten festzulegen und Vorschriften über den Strahlenschutz und die Genehmigung kerntechnischer Anlagen auszuarbeiten.

2. Grundsätzlich ist die Kommission nicht befugt, die Nutzung der Kernenergie oder den Bau von Kernkraftwerken in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten oder in Drittländern zu verbieten. Die Türkei wurde eingeladen, sich an den freiwilligen Stresstests zu beteiligen, und hat vor kurzem einen nationalen Bericht über die abgeschlossenen Stresstests vorgelegt.

3. Die Kommission bietet allen EU-Beitrittskandidaten an, dem ECURIE ([1])-System beizutreten. Der Türkei wurde erstmalig 2001 von der Kommission offiziell eine Mitgliedschaft angeboten. Bisher hat die Türkei dieses Angebot nicht angenommen, so dass sie nicht offiziell dem ECURIE-System angehört. Auf Dienststellenebene beteiligt sich die Türkei jedoch am ECURIE-System und liefert Überwachungsdaten zur Umgebungsstrahlung an EURDEP ([2]).

([1]) European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange system — System der Europäischen Gemeinschaft für den Informationsaustausch in radiologischen Notsituationen. Weitere Informationen: http://rem.jrc.ec.europa.eu/RemWeb/activities/Ecurie.aspx

([2]) EUropean Radiological Data Exchange Platform. Weitere Informationen: http://eurdep.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Basic/Pages/Public/Home/Default.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005266/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Second nuclear power plant in earthquake-prone Turkey

At the beginning of the month a contract was signed in respect of the construction of a second Turkish nuclear power plant in Sinop on the Black Sea coast. The plant, which is to be built by French and Japanese companies, is intended to be completed in 2023. The construction of nuclear power plants in Turkey is particularly problematic as the whole region is prone to earthquakes. Ankara still has no nuclear regulatory body that would be responsible for authorisation.

1. In the context of the EU accession negotiations, will Ankara be urged to finally establish a nuclear regulatory authority?

2. Within the framework of the nuclear power plant stress tests, has the Commission expressed support for a ban on building new nuclear power plants in earthquake-prone zones?

3. Does the EU early warning system for nuclear incidents extend to those countries with which we are conducting accession negotiations?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

1. The nuclear regulatory authority in Turkey is the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority (TAEK), which has already been established under Turkey's national legislation. TAEK is responsible for defining safety measures for nuclear activities and drafting regulations concerning radiation protection and licensing of nuclear installations.

2. As a general rule, the Commission has no competence to ban the use of nuclear energy or the construction of nuclear power plants, neither in the EU Member States nor in third countries. Turkey was invited to participate in the voluntary stress tests exercise and has recently submitted a national report on the completed stress tests.

3. Commission policy is to offer membership in ECURIE ([1]) to all EU candidate countries. For Turkey, a formal membership offer was first made by the Commission in 2001. So far Turkey has not replied positively, so it is not officially part of the ECURIE system. However, at service level Turkey participates in the ECURIE cooperation and actively provides environmental radiation monitoring data to EURDEP ([2]).

([1]) European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange system. For more information, see at: http://rem.jrc.ec.europa.eu/RemWeb/activities/Ecurie.aspx

([2]) European Radiological Data Exchange Platform. For more information, see at: http://eurdep.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Basic/Pages/Public/Home/Default.aspx

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-005267/13
à la Commission
Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(13 mai 2013)

Objet: Nouveau coronavirus

Suite au deuxième cas confirmé de nouveau coronavirus (NCoV) en France, nous avons à présent la certitude que le virus est capable de se transmettre d'homme à homme. Cette hypothèse a d'ailleurs été confirmée par l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé. Des cas ont aussi été rapportés en Allemagne et au Royaume-Uni.

En Arabie Saoudite, le bilan de l'épidémie est de 24 personnes touchées dont 15 sont décédées. Au total, 34 cas confirmés dans le monde ont été notifiés à l'OMS depuis septembre 2012, dont 18 personnes qui en sont mortes.

Face à ces récentes évolutions, la Commission en lien avec le Centre européen de prévention et de contrôle des maladies peut-elle communiquer le nombre précis de cas répertoriés au sein de l'Union européenne?

La Commission peut-elle aussi nous indiquer le niveau de dangerosité du virus (notamment par rapport au SRAS) et les éventuelles mesures de précaution à prendre face au risque de contagion? Des recommandations européennes permettraient en effet de limiter les informations contradictoires et d'éviter tout climat anxiogène.

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2013)

La Commission a connaissance de la situation épidémiologique du nouveau coronavirus en Europe et en suit attentivement l'évolution, en étroite collaboration avec le Centre européen de prévention et de contrôle des maladies et l'Organisation mondiale de la santé.

À ce jour (22 mai 2013), deux cas, dont un mortel, ont été enregistrés en Allemagne, quatre cas, dont deux mortels, au Royaume-Uni et deux cas en France.

Selon l'évaluation des risques actualisée ([1]) publiée par le Centre européen de prévention et de contrôle des maladies, ce nouveau virus appartient à la famille des coronavirus mais il est différent de celui du syndrome respiratoire aigu sévère (SRAS). Une source active d'infection chez l'homme reste présente dans la péninsule Arabique et en Jordanie. Il est dès lors possible que de nouveaux cas soient recensés dans l'UE dans un avenir proche. La Commission travaille actuellement — en collaboration avec le Centre européen de prévention et de contrôle des maladies, l'Organisation mondiale de la santé et le comité de sécurité sanitaire — à l'élaboration de recommandations sanitaires destinées aux voyageurs et aux professionnels de la santé.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/risk-assessment-middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus-MERS-CoV-17-may-2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005267/13
to the Commission
Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: New corona virus

Following the second confirmed case of the new corona virus (NCoV) in France, we can now be certain that person-to-person transmission of the virus is possible. This has moreover been confirmed by the World Health Organisation. Cases have also been reported in Germany and the United Kingdom.

In Saudi Arabia, 24 people have been infected, of whom 15 have died. Since September 2012, the WHO has been notified of 34 cases of infection, worldwide, 18 of them fatal.

In view of these developments, can the Commission, together with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, establish the precise number of cases registered in the European Union?

Can it also indicate the risk levels attaching to the virus (for example with regard to SARS) and advise what precautions should be taken? The issuing of European recommendations would help contain the spread of contradictory information and prevent panic from taking hold.

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

The Commission is aware of the epidemiological situation of the Novel Coronavirus in Europe and is, in close collaboration with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation, actively monitoring developments.

At this juncture (22 May 2013), there are two cases including one fatality registered in Germany, four cases including two fatalities in the United Kingdom and two cases in France.

According to the updated risk assessment ([1]) by the ECDC, this new virus belongs to the coronavirus family but it is not the same as the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus. An ongoing source of human infection remains present in the Arabian Peninsula and Jordan. This means that more cases may be identified in the EU in the immediate future. The Commission is currently preparing — in cooperation with the ECDC, the World Health Organisation and the Health Security Committee — health information for travellers and health professionals.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/risk-assessment-middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus-MERS-CoV-17-may-2013.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-005268/13
alla Commissione
Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(13 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: MUOS (Mobile user objective system): sistema di telecomunicazioni satellitare

La costruzione del MUOS (Mobile User Objective System), il nuovo sistema di telecomunicazioni satellitare delle forze armate USA che sorgerà a 2 km da Niscemi (Caltanissetta), è tuttora oggetto di numerose proteste a causa delle possibili conseguenze negative sulla salute in quanto il sistema trasmetterebbe segnali a grande potenza e ad un ampio spettro di frequenze per un raggio d'azione di circa 130 km.

A Niscemi c'è già un tasso elevato di mortalità per cancro dovuto molto probabilmente alla presenza di 41 antenne americane. Gli studi commissionati dagli USA e dall'Italia sugli effetti delle emissioni del sistema MUOS sulla salute dei cittadini hanno prodotto risultati diversi e contraddittori. Le conclusioni delle analisi portate avanti da diversi comitati scientifici evidenziano gravi rischi per la popolazione locale e per l'ambiente.

Il 24 aprile scorso, l'Agenzia Internazionale per la Ricerca sul Cancro (IARC) ha pubblicato una nuova importante monografia sulla valutazione dei rischi cancerogeni per l'uomo dei campi elettromagnetici, in cui si evince l'esistenza di dannose associazioni fra l'esposizione alle radiazioni e l'insorgenza di tumori.

Ciò premesso, non ritiene la Commissione che sia necessario:

— intervenire urgentemente presso le autorità italiane per verificare che i dati e le analisi raccolti rispondano a criteri di integrità e congruenza e siano compatibili e conformi con il principio di precauzione?

— introdurre limiti più severi all'esposizione della popolazione ai campi elettromagnetici come indicato espressamente nella raccomandazione n. 99/519/CE del Consiglio del 12 luglio 1999?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(21 giugno 2013)

La sicurezza dei terminali di telecomunicazione e dei sistemi satellitari, una volta immessi sul mercato dell'UE, è disciplinata dalla direttiva sulle apparecchiature radio e sulle apparecchiature terminali di telecomunicazione (direttiva 1999/5/CE) ([1]), fatte salve le eccezioni previste dalla direttiva. Una di queste eccezioni riguarda gli apparecchi usati esclusivamente nelle attività concernenti la pubblica sicurezza, la difesa, la sicurezza dello Stato (compresa la prosperità economica dello Stato, nel caso di attività riguardanti questioni connesse con la sicurezza dello Stato) e nelle attività dello Stato in materia di diritto penale ([2]). Gli Stati membri hanno la responsabilità di attuare e far rispettare questa direttiva. La Commissione può intervenire soltanto se gli Stati membri non ottemperano appieno al loro ruolo di autorità di vigilanza del mercato per quanto concerne i prodotti che rientrano nel campo di applicazione della direttiva.

La raccomandazione 1999/519/CE del Consiglio ([3]) fissa chiari limiti di esposizione della popolazione ai campi elettromagnetici. Il Comitato scientifico dei diritti sanitari emergenti e recentemente identificati (CSRSERI) fornisce alla Commissione aggiornamenti indipendenti sulle prove scientifiche disponibili e controlla se queste corroborino ancora i limiti di esposizione proposti.

Finora tutte le valutazioni sono giunte alla conclusione che non sussistono motivazioni scientifiche per rivedere i limiti di esposizione. Attualmente si è iniziato un nuovo aggiornamento nel cui ambito è prevista un consultazione pubblica nell'autunno 2013.

La Commissione rinvia inoltre l'onorevole deputata alle proprie risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-4592/09, E-4852/10, E-5970/10, E-1624/11, E-5586/2011 e E-12554/2011 ([4]).

([1]) Direttiva 1999/5/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 9 marzo 1999, riguardante le apparecchiature radio e le apparecchiature terminali di telecomunicazione e il reciproco riconoscimento della loro conformità, GU L 91 del 7.4.1999, pag. 10.
([2]) Cfr. l'articolo 1, paragrafo 5.
([3]) GU L 199 del 30.7.1999.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005268/13
to the Commission
Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: MUOS (Mobile User Objective System): satellite telecommunications system

The projected MUOS ground station (MUOS, or Mobile User Objective System, being the new satellite telecommunications system for the US armed forces), which is to be built 2 km from Niscemi (Caltanissetta), is still giving rise to a spate of protests on account of the possible damage to health, given that the system would transmit high-power signals covering a wide frequency range and a radius of approximately 130 km.

The fact that Niscemi already has a high cancer death rate is very probably due to the 41 American antennas installed there. The studies commissioned by the US and Italy on the public health effects of MUOS emissions have produced divergent, and indeed contradictory, findings. Having conducted analyses, scientific committees have concluded that the risks to the local population and the environment would be serious.

On 24 April 2013 the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) published a monograph assessing the carcinogenic risks posed to humans by electromagnetic fields, which suggests that exposure to radiofrequency radiation is associated with the development of tumours.

In the light of the foregoing, does not the Commission believe that it should:

— approach the Italian authorities without delay in order to establish that the data and analyses obtained are complete and fit for purpose and compatible and in accordance with the precautionary principle?

— protect the public from exposure to electromagnetic fields by laying down stricter limits along the lines expressly set out in Council recommendation 1999/519/EC of 12 July 1999?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

The safety of telecommunication terminal equipment and satellite systems, when placed on the EU market, is governed by the Radio Equipment and Telecommunications Terminal Equipment (1999/5/EC) ([1]), unless they fall within the exceptions of the directive. One of these exceptions relates to apparatus exclusively used for activities concerning public security, defence, State security (including the economic well-being of the State in the case of activities pertaining to State security matters) and the activities of the State in the area of criminal law ([2]). Member States are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this directive. The Commission can intervene only if Member States do not fulfil their role as market surveillance authorities, relating to products within the scope of the directive.

Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC ([3]) sets clear limitations of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields. The Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) provides the Commission with an independent update of the scientific evidence available and checks whether it still supports the proposed exposure limits.

All assessments to date have concluded that there is no scientific rationale to revise the exposure limits. A new update has been launched, with a public consultation expected in autumn 2013.

The Commission would also like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-4592/09, E-4852/10, E-5970/10, E-1624/11, E-5586/2011 and E-12554/2011 ([4]).

([1]) Directive 1999/5/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 1999 on radio equipment and telecommunications terminal equipment and the mutual recognition of their conformity.
([2]) See Article 1.5.
([3]) OJ L 199, 30.7.1999.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005269/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios ao setor da construção civil

O setor da construção civil e obras públicas, em Portugal, atravessa uma situação gravíssima. Esta situação agrava-se devido à reduzidíssima carteira de encomendas no mercado nacional e ao corte brutal do investimento público com a suspensão ou indefinição de inúmeros projetos de obras públicas — como acordado no memorando com a troika —, elevadas dívidas ao setor financeiro e significativos pagamentos vencidos e não cumpridos pelo Estado (Administração Central e Local), bem como com a impossibilidade prática de acesso ao crédito junto do sistema bancário.

Nos últimos anos encerraram mais de 6 500 empresas, a que correspondeu uma perda de mais de 246 mil postos de trabalho. Nos últimos tempos, a taxa de mortalidade empresarial foi de 14 empresas por dia, a que corresponderam mais de 270 postos de trabalho por dia.

Segundo dados recentes do Eurostat, Portugal liderou, em relação aos países da União Europeia, as quebras em fevereiro no setor da construção civil. Os dados revelam que, em fevereiro, as quebras se situaram nos 20,9 %, enquanto a média da UE é de 1,1 %.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe:

1. Qual a avaliação que faz sobre o impacto das medidas impostas pela troika, como a suspensão de grandes projetos de obras públicas, para o crescimento económico e consequente criação de emprego em Portugal?

2. Que meios financeiros podem ser mobilizados, designadamente do QREN, para fazer face a este grave problema?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(22 de julho de 2013)

A diminuição da parte do investimento na construção no conjunto da atividade económica não é um fenómeno recente em Portugal. Em 2010, essa parte atingia quase 17 %, sendo 5 pontos percentuais mais elevada do que a média na zona euro. Em 2011, tinha diminuído para 11 %, situando-se na média da zona euro. Apesar de ter descido ainda mais para 9,14 % em 2012, manteve-se, mesmo assim, mais elevada do que em muitos outros países da UE, como a Dinamarca (8,3 %), a Irlanda (5,2 %), a Grécia (6,6 %), a Eslovénia (8,1 %), a Suécia (8,7 %) e o Reino Unido (8,8 %).

A diminuição da parte do investimento no setor da construção em Portugal é o resultado da transferência inevitável do setor dos bens não transacionáveis para os setores de bens transacionáveis. A excessiva concentração de recursos em setores de bens não transacionáveis, como a construção, está subjacente à acumulação de grandes desequilíbrios económicos e ao rápido crescimento da dívida externa. A reorientação da economia para os setores de bens transacionáveis é, por conseguinte, um processo necessário para criar as bases para um crescimento sólido e sustentável da produção e do emprego no futuro.

Embora os programas cofinanciados pelos fundos estruturais da UE não incluam medidas específicas de apoio ao setor da construção, o novo Mecanismo Interligar a Europa, previsto no novo quadro financeiro para o período 2014-2020, oferece uma boa oportunidade para construir e concluir linhas ferroviárias, ligações aeroportuárias, portos, ligações de transportes marítimos, redes de energia, gasodutos e oleodutos, sistemas de transportes inteligentes e redes de banda larga com uma dimensão europeia.

As autoridades portuguesas estão a analisar a criação de uma instituição especializada para canalizar mais eficazmente os recursos financeiros ao abrigo da política de coesão da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005269/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Support to the civil construction sector

The civil construction and public works sector is enduring an extremely difficult period in Portugal. This situation is made worse by the reduced order book in the national market and brutal cuts to public investment with the suspension or cancellation of countless public works projects, as agreed in the memorandum with the Troika, as well as by high indebtedness vis-à-vis the financial sector and significant overdue and defaulted payments by central and local government, along with the practical impossibility of accessing credit from the banking system.

More than 6 500 companies have closed in recent years, corresponding to the loss of more than 246 000 jobs. The company mortality rate has been running at 14 companies per day in recent times, corresponding to more than 270 jobs per day.

According to recent Eurostat data, Portugal topped the list of EU countries for bankruptcies in the civil construction sector in February. The data reveal that, in February, bankruptcies were around 20.9%, while the EU average is 1.1%.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the impact of the measures imposed by the Troika, with the suspension of large public works projects, on economic growth in Portugal and the consequent creation of jobs?

2. What funds can be mobilised, specifically within the Portuguese National Strategic Reference Framework, to address this serious problem?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

The decline in the share of the construction investment in overall economic activity in Portugal is not a recent phenomenon. This share amounted to almost 17% in 2000 when it was 5 percentage points higher than the average in the euro area. By 2011, it had fallen to 11%, identical to the euro area average. Even though it had fallen further in 2012, to 9.4%, it was still higher than in many other EU countries such Denmark (8.3%), Ireland (5.2%), Greece (6.6%), Slovenia (8.1%), Sweden (8.7%) or the United Kingdom (8.8%).

The fall in the share of construction investment in Portugal is the result of the unavoidable shift from the non-tradable to the tradable sectors. The excessive concentration of resources in non-tradable sectors such as construction has been underlying the accumulation of large economic imbalances and rapidly growing external debt. The reorientation of the economy towards the tradable sectors is therefore a necessary process creating the basis for robust and sustainable growth of output and employment in the future.

While there are no specific measures to support the construction sector foreseen in the programmes co-financed by the EU Structural Funds, the new Connecting Europe Facility of new financial framework 2014-2020 offers a good opportunity to build and complete the railways, airport links, ports, maritime transport links, energy grids, pipelines, intelligent transport systems and broadband networks with an European dimension.

The Portuguese authorities are considering the establishment of a specialised institution to channel more efficiently the financial resources under the EU Cohesion Policy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005270/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios para a habitação social

As consequências do agravamento da crise económica e financeira e da aplicação das chamadas medidas de austeridade, com a diminuição dos salários e o aumento do desemprego, associado às rendas altas e ao aumento das prestações das casas, está a conduzir a um aumento de despejos e penhora das casas por parte dos bancos. A alteração dos perfis sociofamiliares daqueles que atualmente recorrem à habitação social tem levado ao aumento da procura deste tipo de habitação.

Ao mesmo tempo que aumenta a procura de habitação social, a carência desta é mais visível. A imposição de cortes orçamentais, principalmente nos países intervencionados, como Portugal, reflete-se também na falta de investimento e apoio estatal para a construção e renovação de habitação social, tal como a reconversão de prédios devolutos para esse fim.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe:

1. Que fundos comunitários podem ser mobilizados para a área da habitação social, nomeadamente para a construção, reabilitação e autoconstrução de habitação?

2. Quais são os países que mais têm requerido estes apoios e quais os que mais têm executado financiamento nesta área?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2013)

É aos Estados-Membros que cabe a competência prioritária para conceber e aplicar as suas políticas de habitação. A Comissão presta-lhes apoio, através das políticas relevantes da UE e dos fundos da UE. O pacote de investimento social (SIP) ([1]) dá aos Estados-Membros orientações sobre a forma de melhor utilizar o investimento social, mediante a mobilização de fundos da UE para cumprir os objetivos da estratégia Europa 2020 ([2]) contra a crise e os desafios demográficos. O SIP sublinha que disponibilizar o acesso a serviços sociais de qualidade, incluindo a habitação social, é uma medida importante para a inclusão ativa e explora as melhores formas de os Estados-Membros melhorarem o acesso a alojamentos a preços acessíveis e, por conseguinte, prevenir as carências habitacionais.

Uma das áreas prioritárias do FSE ([3]) é a inclusão social, que representa 13,6 mil milhões de euros, ou seja, 17 % do total dos fundos do FSE, que a Comissão propôs aumentar para 20 %, pelo menos, no próximo período de programação. Inclui modos de fomentar a integração das pessoas desfavorecidas, tais como as pessoas em situação de exclusão social, e apoiar e melhorar o seu acesso a serviços sociais de qualidade. As infraestruturas sociais, incluindo a construção e renovação de habitações, só é elegível para o FEDER ([4]), se os projetos visarem os grupos marginalizados e forem complementados por atividades de apoio nos domínios da educação, da saúde e/ou do emprego, principalmente financiadas pelo FSE.

O apoio do FEDER à habitação só teve início em 2007 e, desde então, totalizou 130 milhões de euros de investimentos em desenvolvimento urbano na UE12, de acordo com os relatórios anuais de 2012. O FEDER abrange hoje também investimentos em eficiência energética e habitação a favor de comunidades marginalizadas em todos os Estados-Membros. A política de coesão para 2014-2020 também permite apoiar a habitação social, como parte do esforço para reduzir a pobreza e fomentar a inclusão social.

([1]) Para mais informações sobre o pacote de investimento social, consulte: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catid=1044&langid=en
([2]) Para mais informações sobre a estratégia Europa 2020, consulte: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm
([3]) Fundo Social Europeu.
([4]) Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005270/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Support for social housing

The wage cuts and increased unemployment resulting from the worsening economic and financial crisis and the imposition of so-called austerity measures, combined with the high cost of renting property and increases in mortgage repayments, are leading to an increase in evictions and house repossessions by banks. The social and family circumstances of those seeking social housing have changed, leading to increased demand.

The shortage of social housing is becoming more apparent as demand rises. Budget cuts, principally in bailed-out countries such as Portugal, are also being felt in the lack of investment and state support for building and renovating social housing, and for converting vacant buildings for this purpose.

1. What EU funds can be mobilised for the social housing area, specifically for house building, renovation and self-build.

2. Which countries have most requested support of this type and which have applied most funding to this area?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

Member States have the primary competence to design and implement their housing policies. The Commission supports them through relevant EU policy work and through the EU Funds. The Social Investment Package (SIP) ([1]) provides Member States guidance on how to best target social investment by mobilising EU Funds to meet the Europe 2020 strategy targets ([2]) against the crisis and demographic challenges. The SIP highlights that access to quality social services including social housing is an important measure for active inclusion and it explores good practices how Member States may improve access to affordable housing and thus prevent homelessness.

One of the priority areas of the ESF ([3]) is social inclusion which represents EUR 13.6 billion, i.e. 17% of total ESF funding, which the Commission proposed to increase to at least 20% in the next programming period. It includes pathways to integration for disadvantaged people, such as people experiencing social exclusion and support to improving their access to quality social services. Social infrastructure, including house building and refurbishment is only eligible from ERDF ([4])., provided that the project targets marginalised groups and is complemented with support activities in education, health and /or employment, funded mainly by ESF.

ERDF support to housing started only in 2007 and concerned up to EUR 130 million investments in urban development in EU12 according to the 2012 annual reports. The ERDF today covers also energy efficiency investments and housing in favour of marginalised communities in all Member States. Cohesion policy for 2014-2020 will also enable support to social housing as part of contribution to poverty reduction and social inclusion.

([1]) For more information on the Social Investment Package, please visit http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en.
([2]) For more information on the Europe 2020 strategy, please visit http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm
([3]) European Social Fund.
([4]) European Regional Development Fund.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005271/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Financiamento para a Cultura 2014-2020

O acordo no Conselho Europeu sobre o Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020 da UE no que se refere à categoria 3, que prevê o financiamento para a cultura e educação, entre outras áreas, apresenta uma redução de 15 % relativamente à proposta da Comissão Europeia, significando apenas 1,8 % do orçamento geral da UE.

Por outro lado, a proposta de regulamento do novo programa «Europa Criativa» prevê a utilização de um esquema de empréstimos para apoio às estruturas culturais, modelo esse que é introduzido pela primeira vez no apoio às artes e cultura.

Assim, peço à Comissão que me informe do seguinte:

1. Os agentes culturais das áreas das artes visuais e performativas bem como do cinema/audiovisual poderão continuar a usufruir de apoio sem recorrer ao esquema de empréstimos proposto, ou este servirá como complemento aos apoios a fundo perdido?

2. Está previsto algum processo de compensação financeira dos países intervencionados pela Troika — que fizeram, por essa via, cortes nos orçamentos nacionais para a cultura — no âmbito do Programa «Europa Criativa»?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(24 de junho de 2013)

O Conselho Europeu, no seu acordo político de fevereiro deste ano, reduziu a rubrica 3 do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (QFP) em 16,6 %. De momento, a Comissão aguarda a votação do Parlamento sobre o QFP.

A fim de facilitar a tarefa do Parlamento e do Conselho nas negociações do QFP, a Comissão decidiu analisar em que medida os cortes ao orçamento propostos pelo Conselho Europeu afetariam as suas propostas iniciais. Estes dados provisórios da Comissão resultariam ainda num aumento de 9 % no nível de despesas para os setores culturais e criativos, em relação ao período 2007-2014 — embora seja um aumento muito inferior ao inicialmente proposto pela Comissão. A afetação de dotações orçamentais às várias vertentes no âmbito do futuro programa «Europa Criativa» é provisória e baseia-se no compromisso da Comissão de não reduzir as dotações atualmente atribuídas aos programas Cultura e MEDIA e de ter igualmente em conta, as verbas mínimas necessárias à viabilidade do novo mecanismo de garantia de empréstimos para a cultura e o setor criativo.

No âmbito do futuro programa «Europa Criativa», o apoio concedido aos organismos que trabalham nos setores das artes visuais, performativas e cinema/audiovisual permanecerá ao nível dos atuais programas MEDIA e Cultura. Para se ser elegível para a concessão de apoio financeiro, não será necessário utilizar o mecanismo de garantia de empréstimos.

Os apoios financeiros concedidos no âmbito do futuro programa «Europa Criativa» estão sujeitos aos princípios da transparência e da igualdade de tratamento, e não estando prevista uma dotação orçamental por país.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005271/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Funding for Culture 2014-2020

The funding for category 3 agreed by the Council in the EU multiannual financial framework 2014-2020, which is allocated to culture and education, amongst other areas, has been reduced by 15% in comparison to the Commission's proposal, and represents just 1.8% of the EU's overall budget.

At the same time, the proposal for a regulation for the new 'Creative Europe' programme provides for the use of a loan scheme to support cultural structures, the first time this model has been used to support the arts and culture.

1. Will those bodies working in the visual and performing arts and cinema/audiovisual arts continue to receive support without resorting to the proposed loan scheme, or is this to replace the funding support that has been lost?

2. Is any financial compensation procedure planned within the scope of the 'Creative Europe' programme for the countries bailed out by the Troika, which have had to cut national budgets in relation to culture?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2013)

In its political agreement of February this year, the European Council has cut heading 3 of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) by 16.6%. The Commission is now waiting for the vote of the Parliament on the MMF.

In order to facilitate the task of Parliament and Council in the MFF negotiations, the Commission has decided to consider how the budget cuts proposed by the European Council would affect its initial proposals. These provisional Commission figures would still result in a 9% increase in the level of expenditure for cultural and creative sectors compared to the period 2007-2014 — albeit a much lower increase than originally proposed by the Commission.

The allocation of the budget between the different strands within the future Creative Europe programme is provisional and based on the Commission's commitment not to fall below the budgets currently allocated to the MEDIA and Culture Programmes and also to take into account the minimum volume required for the viability of the new Cultural and Creative Sector Loan Facility.

Under the future Creative Europe programme the support for bodies working in the visual, performing and cinema/audiovisual arts will remain at the levels of the current MEDIA and Culture programmes. It will not be necessary to use the loan facility in order to be eligible for grants.

The grants under the future Creative Europe programme are subject to the principles of transparency and equal treatment and there is no budget allocation per country.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005272/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Financiamento «Totalitarianism in Europe»

No passado mês de março esteve em exibição, no Parlamento Europeu, uma exposição designada «Totalitarianism in Europe», em que colocavam no mesmo patamar o Fascismo, o Nazismo e o Comunismo.

Aferimos que o programa «Europe for Citizens» é um dos patrocinadores desta exposição. O mesmo programa tem expresso num dos seus objetivos de ação querer preservar a memória do passado.

Considero que essa memória do passado deve ser preservada e divulgada com base na verdade histórica, e não com base em operações de distorção da história.

Considero que o objetivo deste tipo de iniciativas, e da própria «Platform of European Memory and Conscience», é branquear o nazi-fascismo e condenar o comunismo. O seu objetivo é apagar o contributo decisivo dos comunistas e da União Soviética para a derrota do nazi-fascismo, o seu papel nos avanços nas condições de vida dos trabalhadores, o seu contributo para a libertação dos povos do jugo colonial, o seu papel contra a exploração e a guerra, após a Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe qual a verba despendida para apoiar esta iniciativa.

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(28 de junho de 2013)

A exposição intitulada «Totalitarismo na Europa» foi financiada pelo programa «Europa para os cidadãos ([1])», em 2011, com o montante de 55 000 euros (52 % dos custos elegíveis).

O programa «Europa para os cidadãos» não apoia uma única interpretação do passado recente da Europa, mas permite um diálogo e uma troca de opiniões que envolve um amplo leque de intervenientes da sociedade civil, autoridades municipais e locais, instituições de ensino e de memória. A sua ação 4 «Memória europeia ativa» financia cerca de 40 projetos por ano e visa comemorar as vítimas do nazismo e do estalinismo.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005272/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Funding for 'Totalitarianism in Europe'

Last March, the European Parliament hosted an exhibition entitled 'Totalitarianism in Europe', which equated Fascism, Nazism and Communism.

We understand that the 'Europe for Citizens' programme was one of the sponsors of this exhibition. The same programme states that one of its goals is to preserve the memory of the past.

I believe that the memory of the past to be preserved and disseminated must be based on historic truth, and not on historic distortion.

In my opinion, the goal of this type of initiative and the 'Platform of European Memory and Conscience' itself is to whitewash Nazism/Fascism and to condemn Communism. The aim is to strike out the decisive contribution that the Communists and Soviet Union made to defeating Nazism/Fascism and their role in advancing workers' quality of life, their contribution to freeing people from the colonial yoke, and their role in countering exploitation and war following the Second World War.

Can the Commission tell me what sum of money was spent in supporting this initiative?

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

The exhibition entitled 'Totalitarianism in Europe' was funded by the Europe for Citizens programme ([1]) in 2011 with the sum of EUR 55 000 (52% of eligible costs).

The Europe for Citizens Programme does not support one single interpretation of Europe's recent past but allows for a dialogue and exchange of opinions involving a broad range of actors from civil society, municipal and local authorities, educational and memorial institutions. Its Action 4 'Active European Remembrance' finances around 40 projects every year and is concerned with commemorating the victims of both Nazism and Stalinism.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005273/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Reforço financiamento Educação

Na Comunicação «Repensar a educação — Investir nas competências para melhores resultados socioeconómicos», podemos ler «que o investimento na educação e na formação para o desenvolvimento de competências é essencial para estimular o crescimento e a competitividade: as competências determinam a capacidade da Europa para aumentar a produtividade», acrescentando que, «a longo prazo, as competências podem desencadear inovação e crescimento». É ainda enfatizado que professores de qualidade e bem qualificados podem ajudar os alunos a desenvolver as competências de que necessitam num mercado de trabalho global que exige níveis de qualificações cada vez mais elevados.

Por outro lado, a Comissária Androulla Vassiliou referiu na reunião da Comissão do Emprego e dos Assuntos Sociais do Parlamento Europeu, no passado dia 22 de abril, que o Ensino Público é um dos melhores instrumentos para combater a injustiça social e as desigualdades e que a Comissão instou os Estados-Membros a darem prioridade à Educação, sendo escolha dos EM os cortes financeiros que efetuaram nesta área.

Em Portugal, o Governo tem desinvestido sucessivamente na área da educação através do despedimento de milhares de professores, do encerramento de escolas e consequente concentração em mega-agrupamentos escolares, o que conduz ao aumento do número de alunos por sala de aula, tendo como consequência a diminuição da qualidade pedagógica e o aumento da já elevadíssima taxa de abandono escolar precoce. O Governo justifica esses cortes com o memorando de entendimento assinado com a Troika (BCE/CE/FMI).

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— continua a considerar que a Educação é uma prioridade da União Europeia?

— encara a possibilidade de recomendar aos EM em geral, e em especial aos EM intervencionados, o reforço do investimento na Educação?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(5 de julho de 2013)

A qualidade da educação e da formação é crucial para a coesão social e o crescimento económico, sendo igualmente importante para os esforços de retoma a curto prazo e para o crescimento sustentável a longo prazo. A estratégia Europa 2020, o quadro estratégico Educação e Formação 2020, a Análise Anual do Crescimento 2013, a Comunicação intitulada «Repensar a Educação» e outros documentos oficiais da Comissão reconhecem explicitamente o papel fundamental que a educação e a formação revestem para a União.

A Comissão considera que há que salvaguardar um nível adequado de investimento na qualidade da educação e da formação, especialmente em tempos de dificuldade económica. E que, no respetivo processo de consolidação orçamental, os Estados-Membros devem privilegiar e, sempre que possível, reforçar o investimento em domínios que contribuem para o crescimento, tais como a educação, a investigação, a inovação e a energia.

Além disso, Portugal deve fixar como objetivo o aproveitamento pleno dos Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento europeus, os quais podem apoiar a reforma educativa e financiar infraestruturas de educação. A Comissão e os Estados-Membros estão atualmente a negociar prioridades de investimento para o período de 2014-2020. Neste contexto, Portugal tem agora a oportunidade de mobilizar importantes recursos do FSE em apoio da educação e da formação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005273/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Strengthening funding for education

The communication 'Rethinking education — investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes' states that 'investment in education and training for skills development is essential to boost growth and competitiveness: skills determine Europe's capacity to increase productivity', and that 'in the long-term, skills can trigger innovation and growth'. It is also stressed that high-quality and well-trained teachers can help learners to develop the competences they need in a global labour market demanding ever higher skill levels.

At the same time, Commissioner Vassiliou said in the meeting of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee on 22 April that state education is one of the most effective instruments for tackling social injustice and inequalities and that the Commission has called on Member States to make education a priority, as it is the Member States that choose where to make the budget cuts affecting this area.

The Portuguese Government has progressively reduced investment in education by dismissing thousands of teachers and closing schools, leading to students being concentrated in mega-schools, with an increase in the number of students per classroom. As a consequence, the quality of education has decreased and there has been an increase in the already extremely high rates of early school leaving. The government defends these cuts by referring to the memorandum of understanding signed with the Troika (ECB/EC/IMF).

— Given the above, does the Commission still consider education to be a priority for the European Union?

— Will it consider recommending that Members States in general, and the bailed-out Member States in particular, strengthen investment in education?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

Quality education and training are crucial for social cohesion and economic growth, and for short-term recovery and long-term sustainable growth. The Europe 2020 strategy, the Education and Training 2020 strategic framework, the 2013 Annual Growth Survey, the communication 'Rethinking Education' and other official Commission documents explicitly acknowledge the fundamental role of education and training for the Union.

The Commission believes that maintaining an adequate level of investment in quality education and training needs to be safeguarded, especially in times of economic difficulty; and that in conducting fiscal consolidation, Member States should give priority to, and strengthen where possible, investment in growth-friendly areas such as education, research, innovation and energy.

In addition, Portugal should aim to take full advantage of the European Structural and Investment Funds, which can underpin educational reform and finance educational infrastructure. The Commission and the Member States are currently negotiating investment priorities for 2014-2020. In this context, Portugal has now got the opportunity to mobilise substantial ESF resources to support education and training.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005274/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(13 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Approvazione piano urbanistico attuativo C2RS 99, nel comune di Venezia, in assenza della valutazione ambientale strategica (VAS) di cui alla direttiva 2001/42/CE

Il 21 marzo 2011 il Comune di Venezia ha approvato un piano urbanistico denominato C2RS 99 di Via del Tinto, che prevede interventi edilizi e infrastrutturali ([1]) in prossimità del bosco planiziale di Carpenedo, situato nella periferia di Mestre (VE), classificato SIC e ZPS ([2]).

Per detto intervento è stata effettuata la VINCA (valutazione di incidenza ambientale) a norma della direttiva 92/43/CEE, ma non la VAS (valutazione ambientale strategica) a norma della direttiva 2001/42/CE.

Questo è un altro caso in cui è stata disattesa la valutazione ambientale della sostenibilità del piano urbanistico rispetto alla valenza naturalistica e paesaggistica dell'area ([3]). In precedenza si sono, infatti, verificati altri casi analoghi come quello relativo al sito di Cà Roman denunciato nell'interrogazione E-000014/2013.

Il suddetto mancato adempimento è già stato segnalato tramite missiva in data 22 marzo 2013 del delegato LIPU (Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli) della provincia di Venezia al Ministero dell'Ambiente e alla Regione Veneto. Il Comune di Venezia permane nell'indirizzo operativo di inapplicazione della VAS, anche dopo la sentenza della Corte costituzionale n. 58 del 25.3.2013, che richiama la Regione Veneto all'obbligo dell'applicazione della normativa VAS anche per i casi in deroga ex legge regionale n. 13 del 10.4.2012.

Ora quindi vi è pericolo dell'avvio a breve del piano edilizio/infrastrutturale vicino al bosco di Carpenedo, con irrimediabile e grave perdita della compagine boschiva e della falda acquifera sub affiorante derivanti dalla imponente cementificazione.

In relazione a quanto esposto si chiede alla Commissione di verificare il rispetto della direttiva 2001/42/CE sulla VAS e della direttiva Habitat 92/43/CEE in merito alla tutela degli ambiti della rete Natura 2000 direttamente interessati.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(8 luglio 2013)

La Commissione ha contattato la regione Veneto che, il 4 giugno 2013, ha tenuto una riunione con il comune di Venezia sul piano urbanistico.

Il verbale della riunione riferisce che il piano di lottizzazione «Via del Tinto C2RS 99» è già stato oggetto di una valutazione appropriata a norma della direttiva 92/43/CEE ([4]) («direttiva Habitat») secondo la quale non sono state individuate incidenze significative sul vicino sito Natura 2000 ([5]). Il piano urbanistico è integrato nel piano di assetto del territorio consolidato, attualmente soggetto a una procedura di valutazione ambientale strategica a norma della direttiva 2001/42/CE ([6]).

([1]) Si tratta di una nuova area di espansione residenziale di circa 8 ettari, ove è consentita la realizzazione di oltre 21.000 metri cubi residenziali (circa 200 abitanti), nuova viabilità, superfici a parcheggio e altre superfici di servizio all'urbanizzazione, in area inedificata.
([2]) Sito di interesse comunitario e zona di protezione speciale it3250010 «bosco di carpenedo».
([3]) Nell'area sono presenti due habitat di interesse comunitario, il 6510 lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) — prati falciati e il 91LO illyrian oak-hornbeam forests (Erythonio — Carpionon) — bosco planiziale; per quest'ultimo la VINCA segnala uno stato di conservazione «non soddisfacente» già allo stato pre progetto.
([4]) GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([5]) IT3250010 «Bosco di Carpenedo».
([6]) GU L 197 del 21.7.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005274/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Approval of the implementing development plan C2RS 99, in the municipality of Venice, in the absence of the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) referred to in Directive 2001/42/EC

On 21 March 2011 the municipality of Venice approved a development plan entitled Via del Tinto C2RS 99, which provides for building and infrastructure projects ([1]) near the lowland forest of Carpenedo, located on the outskirts of Mestre (Venice), classified as a site of Community importance (SCI) and a special protection area (SPA) ([2]).

Only an environmental impact assessment (EIA), pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC, was carried out for this project, not a strategic environmental assessment (SEA), pursuant to Directive 2001/42/EC.

This is another case in which the environmental assessment of the sustainability of the development plan in relation to the area's natural and landscape value ([3]) has been ignored. There have been other similar cases in the past, such as that of the Cà Roman site mentioned in Question E-000014/2013.

The above case of non-compliance with the law has already been pointed out in a letter dated 22 March 2013 from the LIPU (Italian League for Bird Protection) delegate of the province of Venice to the Ministry of the Environment and the Region of Veneto. The municipality of Venice is still failing to apply the SEA, even after judgment No 58 of 25 March 2013 by the Constitutional Court, which reminds the Region of Veneto of its obligation to apply the SEA legislation even in cases of derogation under Regional Law No 13 of 10 April 2012.

There is therefore now a risk that in the near future work will start on the building/infrastructure project close to the Carpenedo forest, with irremediable and serious loss of woodland integrity and of the aquifer emerging below, as a result of the concreting required.

In relation to the above, can the Commission verify compliance with Directive 2001/42/EC on the SEA and with the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) as regards the protection of environments in the Natura 2000 network that are directly affected?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

The Commission has contacted the Veneto Region who had a meeting with the Venice Municipality on 4 June 2013 on the development plan.

The report of the meeting showed that an Appropriate Assessment required by Directive 92/43/EEC ([4]) (on Habitats) had been carried out on the development plan ([5]) 'Via del Tinto C2RS 99' and it concluded that no significant impacts on the nearby Natura 2000 site ([6]) were identified. The development plan is incorporated into the consolidated territorial plan ([7]) which is currently undergoing a procedure according to Directive 2001/42/EC ([8]) (on Strategic Environmental Assessment).

([1]) This is a new area of residential expansion of approximately eight hectares, where permission has been given for the construction of over 21 000 cubic metres of residential accommodation (for approximately 200 residents), new roads, car parks and other municipality service areas, in an area that is currently not built on.
([2]) IT3250010, 'Bosco di Carpenedo', a site of Community importance and a special protection area.
([3]) The area includes two habitats of Community importance, 6510 lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) — mown meadows, and 91LO Illyrian oak-hornbeam forests (Erythonio — Carpionon) — lowland forest; in the latter case the environmental impact assessment points out that even prior to the project its state of conservation is 'unsatisfactory'.
([4]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([5]) Piano di Lottizzazione.
([6]) IT3250010 'Bosco di Carpenedo'.
([7]) Piano di Assetto del Territorio.
([8]) OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005276/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: The Trikala Shelter for Dogs and Cats

I have been contacted by a constituent who has brought the Trikala Shelter for Dogs and Cats in Thessaly, Greece to my attention. Further information about the shelter can be found here: http://www.trikalashelterdogs.com/

My constituent tells me that the shelter is suffering from financial difficulties and only remains open thanks to public donations. She says that the shelter is struggling to provide basic requirements such as food for the animals and that it has been driven to beg local restaurants for any leftover food.

My constituent says that these problems are the result of the discontinuation of funds and support by the Mayor of rural Trikala.

Is the Commission aware of any European charters, policies, directives or regulations which require Member States to make provision for the humane treatment and emergency feeding of animals such as dogs? Is any EU funding available that can be applied for by organisations such as the Animal Welfare Society of Trikala?

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

Reference is made to the answers to written questions E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, and E-002062/2012 ([1]) which address the issues of stray dogs and of dog population management.

The Commission has no specific role regarding the way animal shelters are managed by the national competent authorities and there is no such possibility to fund shelters for stray animals at the level of the European Union.

The protection of stray animals falls within the sole competence of the Member States.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005277/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Independence of monitoring and evaluation reviews of EU-funded projects

I have been contacted by a constituent who would like to see an increase in the independence of monitoring and evaluation reviews of EU-funded projects. My constituent is concerned by the fact that projects funded by the EU taxpayer are being monitored or evaluated by the European Union itself, and he believes that it is ineffective to rely only on self-assessment.

My constituent is concerned that the close relationship between EU Project Managers and the reviewers of their project portfolios means that the reviewers are unlikely to criticise the EU institution which designed a particular project. He is also concerned that flaws in the design of projects are sometimes fundamental and lead to them being inherently incapable of delivering any benefit, yet they go ahead anyway because the EU budget holders are under pressure to spend their budgets on time.

Could the Commission investigate the possibility of improving accountability for the delivery of EU projects by:

— asking non-EU bodies such as national governments to fund the evaluation of EU projects;

— funding independent assessors to review EU projects enabling, for example, peer reviews by independent sources such as EuropeAid, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other donor partners who could rotate to review each other's projects;

— opening its work to scrutiny by the public, including non-EU institutions and individuals, by stating deliverables and outputs on EU websites and providing space for any stakeholders affected by a project to comment publicly on its performance and effectiveness;

— reviewing the openness and transparency of the current monitoring and evaluation system?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

The Commission's departments and EU Delegations ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the projects and programmes financed by the EU as part of the regular tasks of a donor. The systems in place are mostly similar to other donors'; first line monitoring is done by the donor itself. The Commission has a system whereby independent external consultants additionally review selected projects/ programmes, one function of which is to help identify projects and programmes which are not likely to meet their objectives, so that corrective action can be taken. Evaluations are systematically undertaken by independent external consultants, in some cases as joint evaluations with other donors, particularly the Member States. Evaluations and external monitoring follow OECD/DAC ([1]) methodological guidelines.

The Commission's internal procedures, and those applicable to external monitoring and evaluations, require it to fully involve stakeholders.

The Commission's monitoring and evaluation systems are subject to regular supervision and scrutiny by the Council, European Parliament and European Court of Auditors, which are well aware of the monitoring and evaluation systems in place. They have requested the Commission to improve its reporting on results. The Commission is also working to improve its monitoring and information management systems. These systems should allow for improved access to information on the performance and results of projects and programmes, in addition to the existing full online access to strategic country and thematic evaluations via the Commission's webpages.

As a DAC member, the EU is subject to regular peer reviews. The last review ([2]) paid particular attention to monitoring and evaluation.

([1]) The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD).
([2]) http://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/50155818.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005279/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Effects of e-cigarettes

Could the Commission please inform me whether have there been any EU-funded studies into the health and societal effects of e-cigarettes (content, promotion, best regulatory practices)?

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

As already stated in the reply to E-005021/2013 ([1]), the Commission's assessment of the market trends with regard to electronic cigarettes is set out in the Commission's Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive ([2]).

The Impact Assessment also refers to the existing scientific evidence on the health and societal effects of electronic cigarettes. There have so far been no additional studies funded by the EU in this respect.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) SWD(2012) 452 final, pp. 15-17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005280/13
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Research on pylons

The Commission is asked to provide the most up-to-date information and research findings on pylons from its Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR).

Is SCENIHR currently carrying out any studies on pylons, and is it aware of any such studies being carried out by other research teams in Europe or elsewhere?

Have any comparative studies been conducted to test the strength of the electromagnetic field (EMF) generated by wires placed underground as opposed to those carried above ground via pylons?

Have any studies been conducted to test the strength, within a 100-metre radius, of the magnetic or electromagnetic field generated by a 400 kV line placed underground as opposed to one carried above ground?

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

The Commission requests periodically the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) to evaluate the risks from electromagnetic fields (EMF) and checks whether the Committee's opinion still supports the exposure limits proposed in the Council Recommendation on EMF exposure limits (1999/519/EC) ([1]). An update of the last SCENIHR opinion on electromagnetic fields from 2009 ([2]) is ongoing and scheduled to be ready for public consultation by the end of 2013.

SCENIHR conducts analyses based on scientific evidence available and delivers its opinion upon submission of a request from the Commission services. SCENIHR is not a research team and does not carry out any studies itself.

A multinational project (ARIMMORA ([3])) focused on finding a mechanistic and biological explanation for the observed increased risk of childhood leukaemia near high power lines in epidemiological studies is being funded by the Seventh EU Research Framework Programme. The Commission is not aware of studies on the strength of the electromagnetic fields generated by wires placed underground.

([1]) OJ L 199/59, 30.7.1999.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf
([3]) http://arimmora-fp7.eu/

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005281/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(13. maj 2013)

Om: Dyretransporter — foranstaltninger til at øge antallet af inspektioner

For at forbedre den for øjeblikket utilstrækkelige håndhævelse af forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 meddelte Kommissionen, at den agtede at vedtage gennemførelsesforanstaltninger vedrørende den kontrol, der skal udføres af de kompetente myndigheder i medlemsstaterne. Dens erklærede mål er at øge antallet af inspektioner, hvilket bør føre til bedre håndhævelse.

Kommissionen anmodes om at besvare følgende spørgsmål ([1]).

1. Hvilke opnåelige og målbare gennemførelsesforanstaltninger med sigte på at øge antallet af dyretransportinspektioner forbereder Kommissionen i øjeblikket eller planlægger den i nær fremtid?

(Bemærk venligst, at spørgsmålet ikke henviser til Kommissionens gennemførelsesafgørelse vedrørende medlemsstaternes årsberetninger, eftersom den afgørelse ikke sigter mod at øge antallet af inspektioner, men blot mod at indhente bedre og mere sammenlignelige data fra medlemsstaterne om de kontroller, de allerede har foretaget).

2. Bliver disse gennemførelsesforanstaltninger retligt bindende?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(21. juni 2013)

Artikel 27, stk. 1, i forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport ([2]) fastsætter følgende: »Den kompetente myndighed kontrollerer ved hjælp af ikke-diskriminerende kontrol […], at forskrifterne i denne forordning er overholdt. […]. Antallet af kontroller øges, hvis det konstateres, at bestemmelserne i denne forordning er blevet tilsidesat.« Artiklen giver Kommissionen beføjelse til at fastsætte antallet af kontroller ved gennemførelsesforan-stalt-ninger. Sådanne gennemførelsesforanstaltninger kan medføre en stigning eller et fald i antallet af udførte offentlige kontroller af dyretransporter.

Inden Kommissionen kan overveje at vedtage sådanne gennemførelsesforanstaltninger, har den brug for bedre og mere sammenlignelige data fra medlemsstaterne om antallet og resultatet af den udførte offentlige kontrol. Det er et af de vigtigste mål med Kommissionens gennemførelsesafgørelse om årsrapporter om ikke-diskriminerende kontrol ([3]), som der henvises til i spørgsmålet.

Når Kommissionen har modtaget disse oplysninger, vil den overveje, om yderligere tiltag, retligt bindende eller ej, ville føre til en bedre håndhævelse af forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005.

([1]) Rapport fra Kommissionen til Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet om konsekvenserne af Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport. KOM(2011)0700.
([2]) Kommissionens forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport og dermed forbundne aktiviteter (EUT L 3 af 5.1.2005, s. 1).
([3]) Kommissionens gennemførelsesafgørelse 2013/188/EU af 18. april 2013 om årsrapporter om ikke-diskriminerende kontrol foretaget i henhold til Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport (EUT L 111 af 23.4.2013, s. 107).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005281/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Animal transport — measures to increase number of inspections

In order to improve the currently inadequate enforcement of Regulation (EC), No 1/2005 the Commission has announced its intention to 'adopt implementing measures concerning the controls to be performed by the competent authorities of the Member States'. Its declared objective is 'an increase in the number of inspections', which 'should lead to improved enforcement'.

The Commission is asked to answer the following questions ([1]):

1. What achievable and measurable implementing measures aimed at increasing the number of animal transport inspections are currently being prepared or are planned in the near future by the Commission?

(Please note that the question does not refer to the Commission's implementing Decision concerning the Member States' annual reports, as that decision is aimed not at increasing the number of inspections, but simply at retrieving better and more comparable data from the Member States on the controls they already perform.)

2. Will those implementing measures be legally binding?

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

Article 27(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([2]) provides that 'The competent authorities shall check that the requirements of this regulation have been complied with, by carrying out non-discriminatory inspections […]. The proportion of inspections shall be increased where it is established that the provisions of this regulation have been disregarded'. The article mandates the Commission to determine these proportions through implementing measures. Such implementing measures could lead to an increase or a decrease in the number of performed official controls of animal transports.

Before the Commission could consider adopting such implementing measures, it requires better and more comparable data from the Member States regarding the number and outcome of performed official controls. This is one of the main objectives of the recently adopted Commission Decision on Member States' annual reports on controls of animal transports ([3]), referred to in the question.

When the Commission is in possession of such data, it will consider whether further measures, legally binding or otherwise, would contribute to improved enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

([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) 0700 final.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([3]) Commission implementing Decision of 18 April 2013 on annual reports on non-discriminatory inspections carried out pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, 2013/188/EU, OJ L 111, 23.4.2013, p. 107.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005282/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Επανειλημμένη και συνειδητή παραβίαση του ελληνικού Συντάγματος με την σύμπραξη της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης και της Τρόικας

Η Επιτροπή στην ερώτησή μου E-001115/2013, αλλά και σε παλαιότερη ερώτηση E-010857/2011, απαντά ότι «Σύμφωνα με συνταγματικές διατάξεις, οι πόροι του Πράσινου Ταμείου πρέπει να χρησιμοποιούνται μόνο για τη στήριξη περιβαλλοντικών έργων.» Ταυτόχρονα, η Επιτροπή δηλώνει ότι «Η εισαγωγή αυστηρότερου κανόνα σχετικά με τις δαπάνες του Πράσινου Ταμείου ήταν ένα εκ των μέτρων για την ενίσχυση της δημοσιονομικής πειθαρχίας και τη μείωση του δημοσιονομικού ελλείμματος κατά την περίοδο 2013-14. Από την άποψη αυτή, οι αποφάσεις για τη μεταφορά των εσόδων αποτελούσαν μέρος των όρων του προγράμματος».

Με δεδομένο ότι στην απόφαση 2011/734/ΕΕ του Συμβουλίου, καλείται η Ελλάδα να θεσπίζει «ανώτατα όρια δαπανών από το Πράσινο Ταμείο σε ποσοστό 5% των καταθέσεών του, με στόχο την εξοικονόμηση 360 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ το 2012»,

ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γιατί ζήτησε επανειλημμένα από την Ελληνική κυβέρνηση να λάβει μέτρα αντίθετα με το Σύνταγμα της Ελλάδας; Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση είχε, κατά τη διάρκεια των τότε συζητήσεων, προβάλει ζήτημα συνταγματικότητας;

2. Η επανειλημμένη και συνειδητή παραβίαση του ελληνικού Συντάγματος υπό την απειλή διακοπής των δόσεων του δανείου, δεν αποτελεί προκλητική περιφρόνηση του ελληνικού Συντάγματος με την σύμπραξη της Τρόικας; Τι άμεσα μέτρα μελετά για την αποκατάσταση της συνταγματικής νομιμότητας;

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

Κανένα από τα μέτρα που περιλαμβάνονται στο πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα δεν αποβλέπει στη σκόπιμη παραβίαση συνταγματικών διατάξεων.

Όπως αναφέρεται στις απαντήσεις σε προηγούμενες σχετικές ερωτήσεις από το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με συγκεκριμένα έργα που χρηματοδοτούνται από το «Πράσινο Ταμείο», και ως εκ τούτου δεν γνωρίζει ο,τιδήποτε για πιθανή παραβίαση των συνταγματικών διατάξεων που αφορούν το μέσο αυτό, η οποία, εαν συνέβαινε, θα ενέπιπτε στην αποκλειστική αρμοδιότητα των ελληνικών αρχών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005282/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Repeated and deliberate violation of the Greek Constitution with the involvement of the Greek Government and the Troika

In response to question E-001115/2013/rev.1, and to a previous question E-010857/2011, the Commission stated that 'According to Constitutional provisions the revenues of the Green Fund have to be used for supporting environmental projects only'. At the same time, the Commission stated that 'The introduction of a tighter spending rule for the Green Fund was one of the measures to strengthen fiscal discipline and reduce the fiscal deficit in 2013-2014. In this respect it was part of programme conditionality'.

Given that Council Decision 2011/734/EU calls on Greece to adopt 'capping at 5% of its deposits spending by the Green Fund, with the aim of saving EUR 360 million in 2012',

Will the Commission say:

1. Why has it repeatedly asked the Greek Government to take measures that go against the Greek Constitution? During the discussions at the time, did the Greek Government raise the question of constitutionality?

2. Does the repeated and deliberate violation of the Greek Constitution by threatening to stop loan instalments, not constitute a disturbing disregard for the Greek Constitution with the involvement of the Troika? What immediate measures is it examining to restore constitutional legality?

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

None of the measures included in the adjustment programme for Greece is designed to deliberately break Constitutional provisions.

As stated in answers to previous questions on this subject by the Honourable Member, the Commission does not possess detailed information on specific projects funded by the 'Green Fund', and is therefore not aware of any possible violation of Constitutional provisions concerning this instrument, which would, if ocurred, fall under the exclusive responsibility of the Greek authorities.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005283/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Αναγκαία διαφάνεια κατά την πώληση Τραπεζών

Η πώληση της Αγροτικής Τράπεζας της Ελλάδας (ΑΤΕ) στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς υπολογίζεται ότι κόστισε στο ελληνικό Δημόσιο πάνω από 9 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ. Στο ποσό αυτό συμπεριλαμβάνονται 7 470 717 000 ευρώ ως διαφορά μεταξύ ενεργητικού και παθητικού της ΑΤΕ, 570 000 000 ευρώ για αύξηση κεφαλαίου, 300 000 000 ευρώ από το κέρδος της πώλησης των ομολόγων στο ελληνικό Δημόσιο (διαδικασία επαναγοράς Δεκεμβρίου 2012), 200 000 000 ευρώ από την υπεραξία του χαρτοφυλακίου από 27-7-2012 έως 28-01-2013 των μετοχών της ΑΤΕ που μεταβιβάσθηκαν στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς, αλλά και μέρους των προβλέψεων της ΑΤΕ, το σύνολο των οποίων στις 30-6-2012 ήταν 3,1 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Συμψηφίστηκαν στην οριστική αποτίμηση της 28-1-2013 τα 300 εκατομμύρια ευρώ που προέκυψαν ως κέρδος για την Τράπεζα Πειραιώς, κατά την πώληση των ομολόγων τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 στο Ελληνικό Δημόσιο, στην τιμή των 32 ευρώ/100 ευρώ, όταν οι τρέχουσες τιμές τους την ημέρα μεταβίβασης-πώλησης (27-7-2012) ήταν 18 ευρώ/100 ευρώ;

2. Το ποσό των περίπου 200 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ που προέκυψε ως κέρδος για την Τράπεζα Πειραιώς, από την υπεραξία των μετοχών του επενδυτικού χαρτοφυλακίου από 27-7-2012 έως 28-1-2013, δεν θα έπρεπε να έχουν συμψηφισθεί στα 7 470 717 000 ευρώ της διαφοράς ενεργητικού παθητικού;

3. Πώς έγινε ο διαχωρισμός προβλέψεων, ύψους περίπου 3,1 δισεκατομμυρίου ευρώ, μεταξύ της «καλής» και της «κακής» ΑΤΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Ιουλίου 2013)

1. & 2. Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 63Δ του ν. 3601/2007, η Τράπεζα της Ελλάδας προβαίνει σε μία αρχική εκτίμηση του κενού χρηματοδότησης που βασίζεται σε συντηρητικές υποθέσεις. Διαδοχικά, διορίζεται ελεγκτής για να εκτιμηθεί το χάσμα χρηματοδότησης κατά την ημερομηνία λήψης της απόφασης. Τα γεγονότα που ακολουθούν την ημερομηνία της απόφασης δεν λαμβάνονται υπόψη στη διαδικασία εκτίμησης για τον προσδιορισμό του τελικού κενού χρηματοδότησης. Τα ΟΕΔ και μετοχές που μεταβιβάστηκαν αποτιμώνται, όπως απαιτείται από τα ΔΠΧΠ, στην τιμή της αγοράς κατά την ημέρα της απόφασης. Ο αγοραστής επιβαρύνεται οποιοδήποτε κόστος ή όφελος από οποιαδήποτε αλλαγή στην απόδοση του χαρτοφυλακίου. Για τον σκοπό αυτό, ο ελεγκτής αποτιμά τα στοιχεία ενεργητικού και παθητικού με βάση τις διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες στις 27 Ιουλίου 2012, ενώ κάθε πιθανή απώλεια ή κέρδος που προκύπτει από γεγονότα που συμβαίνουν μετά την ημερομηνία της απόφασης, δεν λαμβάνεται υπόψη.

3. Οι προβλέψεις χωρίζονται ανάλογα με τις κατηγορίες δανείων (π.χ. αποδοτικά, μη αποδοτικά). Επιπλέον, πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι οι προβλέψεις εκτιμώνται με διαφορετικό τρόπο ανάλογα με το αν αφορούν τα εξυπηρετούμενα (καλά) ή μη εξυπηρετούμενα (κακά) δάνεια. Οι προβλέψεις που θα διατεθούν για τα «κακά» δάνεια που βαρύνουν τον οργανισμό αποτιμώνται με βάση την εκκαθάριση, ενώ οι πόροι που θα διατεθούν για τα «καλά» είναι εύλογης αξίας. Για πληροφορίες σχετικά με συγκεκριμένες αποφάσεις στην Ελλάδα, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην τοπική αρχή που εξέδωσε την απόφαση, που εμπίπτει στη δικαιοδοσία της Τράπεζας της Ελλάδας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005283/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Transparency needed during sale of banks

The sale of the Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE) to Piraeus Bank is estimated to have cost the Greek State over EUR 9 billion. This sum includes an ATE asset/liability differential of EUR 7 470 717 000, EUR 570 000 000 for a share capital increase, EUR 300 000 000 in profits from the sale of bonds to the Greek Government (December 2012 buyback scheme), EUR 200 000 000 from portfolio capital gains between 27 July 2012 and 28 January 2013 on ATE shares transferred to Piraeus Bank and part of ATE's provisions, which totalled EUR 3.1 billion on 30 June 2012.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Was the resultant EUR 300 million in profit for Piraeus Bank offset in the final valuation made on 28 January 2013 against the bonds sold to the Greek State in December 2012 at a price of EUR 32/EUR 100, when their market value on the transfer/sale date (27 July 2012) was EUR 18/EUR 100?

2. Should the profit of approximately EUR 200 million to Piraeus Bank from capital gains between 27 July 2012 and 28 January 2013 on shares in the investment portfolio not have been offset against the asset/liability differential of EUR 7 470 717 000?

3. How were the provisions of approximately EUR 3.1 billion divided between the 'good' and the 'bad' Agricultural Bank of Greece?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

1 & 2. According to Article 63D of Law 3601/2007, the Bank of Greece performs an initial estimation of the funding gap based on conservative assumptions. Sequentially, an auditor is appointed to estimate the funding gap at the date of the resolution. Subsequent events to the date of resolution are not taken into account in the valuation process for the determination of the final funding gap. The GGBs and shares transferred are valued, as required by the IFRS, at market price on the day of the resolution. The acquirer shall bear both any cost or benefit from any change in the portfolio's performance. To this end, the auditor valued the assets and liabilities transferred based on the information available on the 27 July 2012 while any potential loss or any gain arising from events occurring after the resolution day is not taken into consideration.

3. Provisions are split according to the loan categories (i.e. performing, non-performing). Furthermore, it should be noted that provisions are valued differently depending on whether they are allocated to the 'good' or 'bad' parts. Provisions to be allocated to the 'bad' part of the institution are valued on a liquidation basis, whereas those allocated to the 'good' part are fair-valued. For information related to specific resolution cases in Greece, the Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult the local resolution authority, which is within the mandate of the Bank of Greece.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005284/13
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Lücken im EU-Patentrecht: Exklusivrechte an konventionellem Saatgut für Biotech-Firmen

Es gibt Gesetzeslücken im EU-Recht, die es Biotech-Firmen erlauben, Exklusivrechte an konventionellem Saatgut zu erhalten. Dadurch können Pflanzensorten und konventionelle Züchtungsmethoden patentiert werden. Züchter herkömmlicher Gemüse- und Obstsorten können dazu gezwungen werden, Biotech-Firmen für die Benutzung ihres Saatguts zu bezahlen. Falls sie das nicht tun, würden sie nach jetzigem Gesetzesstand eine Anklage riskieren. Die Gesetzeslücke ist gleichbedeutend mit dem beinahe uneingeschränkten Zugriff einzelner Firmen auf Lebensmittel.

Im April 2013 wurde in den USA ein Gesetz verabschiedet, welches Biotech-Firmen die Möglichkeit einräumt, genmanipuliertes Saatgut in den einzelnen Bundesstaaten anzupflanzen, selbst wenn das vom Obersten Gerichtshof des jeweiligen Bundesstaates verboten wurde. In Europa könnte die Entstehung eines Präzedenzfalls vor allem für Landwirte eine ernsthafte Bedrohung darstellen.

1. Wird die Kommission Maßnahmen einleiten, um die Gesetzeslücke zu schließen?

2. Welche Möglichkeiten sieht die Kommission, gegen eine Patentierung von Lebensmitteln vorzugehen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juli 2013)

Durch die Richtlinie 98/44/EG ([1]) werden die nationalen Rechtsvorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten für biotechnologische Erfindungen harmonisiert, d. h. für Erfindungen, die ein Erzeugnis, das aus biologischem Material ([2]) besteht oder dieses enthält, oder ein Verfahren, mit dem biologisches Material hergestellt, bearbeitet oder verwendet wird, zum Gegenstand haben. Die Richtlinie 98/44/EG sieht vor, dass ein Patentschutz für biotechnologische Erfindungen nur unter bestimmten Voraussetzungen gewährt werden kann. Die Richtlinie nennt nicht nur konkrete Beispiele hierfür, sondern vor allem auch Ausnahmen von der Patentierbarkeit, und sieht vor, dass Pflanzensorten und konventionelle Züchtungsverfahren vom Patentschutz ausgenommen sind.

Die wichtigsten Bestimmungen der Richtlinie 98/44/EG sind in die Ausführungsordnung zum Europäischen Patentübereinkommen (EPÜ) eingegangen. Die Rechtsprechung des Europäischen Patentamts zeigt, dass diese Ausnahmen streng ausgelegt werden, wie etwa im sogenannten „Brokkoli-/Tomaten-Fall“ ([3]), und dass konventionelle Züchtungsverfahren keinen Patentschutz genießen, auch wenn sie auf einer erfinderischen Tätigkeit beruhen.

Unabhängig von der Frage der Patentierbarkeit möchte die Kommission außerdem daran erinnern, dass die EU über äußerst strenge Rechtsvorschriften für gentechnisch veränderte Lebensmittel verfügt. Solche Lebensmittel dürfen in der Europäischen Union nur dann zugelassen werden, wenn im Rahmen einer höchsten Standards entsprechenden Sicherheitsbewertung ihre Unbedenklichkeit für die Gesundheit von Mensch und Tier und für die Umwelt erwiesen wurde. Im Übrigen können die Mitgliedstaaten eine spezielle Schutzklausel geltend machen, um den Anbau oder die Verwendung bestimmter gentechnisch veränderter Organismen in ihrem Hoheitsgebiet aufgrund wissenschaftlicher Bedenken hinsichtlich der Sicherheit der betreffenden Organismen zu untersagen.

([1]) Richtlinie 98/44/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 6. Juli 1998 über den rechtlichen Schutz biotechnologischer Erfindungen (ABl. L 213 vom 30.7.1998, S. 13).
([2]) Jedes Material, das genetische Informationen enthält und sich selbst reproduzieren oder in einem biologischen System reproduziert werden kann.
([3]) http://www.epo.org/law-practice/case-law-appeals/recent/g070002ex1.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005284/13
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Loopholes in EU patent law: exclusive rights to conventional seeds for biotech companies

Loopholes exist in EC law that allow biotech companies to acquire exclusive rights to conventional seeds. This enables plant varieties and conventional cultivation methods to be patented, and growers of conventional vegetable and fruit varieties can then be forced to pay biotech companies for the use of their seed. As the law currently stands, to fail to do so would be to risk prosecution. This legal loophole means that individual companies have almost unrestricted access to foodstuffs.

In April 2013, a law was passed in the USA that allows biotech companies to grow genetically modified seed in the various Federal States, even if the Supreme Court of the State in question has prohibited such activity. If a precedent were set in Europe, this could pose a serious threat to farmers in particular.

1. Does the Commission intend to take steps to close this loophole?

2. What options does the Commission identify for preventing the patenting of foodstuffs?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

Directive 98/44/EC ([1]) harmonises the national laws of the Member States in relation to biotechnological inventions, i.e. inventions which concern a product consisting of or containing biological material ([2]) or a process by means of which biological material is produced, processed or used. Directive 98/44/EC provides that patent protection can be granted for biotechnological inventions only subject to specific conditions. In this context, it not only gives positive examples but, more importantly, also contains exclusions from patentability and provides that plant varieties and conventional breeding methods are excluded from patent protection.

The main provisions of Directive 98/44 have been incorporated into the Implementing Regulations (IR) to the European Patent Convention (EPC). The case law of the European Patent Office shows that a strict interpretation is given to these exclusions, as reflected in the so-called Broccoli and Tomato case ([3]), and that conventional breeding methods are not susceptible of patent protection even if they contain a technical step.

Moreover, and apart from the issue of patentability, the Commission would like to recall that, regarding genetically modified (GM) foods, the EU regulatory framework is very stringent; GMs can only be authorised in the European Union after a safety assessment of the highest possible standard confirmed their safety for human and animal health or for the environment. In addition, a Member State can invoke a specific safeguard clause to prohibit the cultivation or use of a GMO in its territory based on scientific concerns regarding the safety of the GMO.

([1]) OJ L 213, 30.7.1998, p. 13-21Directive 98/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 1998 on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions.
([2]) Any material containing genetic information and capable of reproducing itself or being reproduced in a biological system.
([3]) http://www.epo.org/law-practice/case-law-appeals/recent/g070002ex1.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005285/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Έξοδος από την Ευρωζώνη

Σήμερα, σε χώρες όπως η Ελλάδα, η Κύπρος, η Ισπανία, η Πορτογαλία και άλλες που έχουν πληγεί από την συνεχιζόμενη οικονομική κρίση, υπάρχει ένας έντονος προβληματισμός και ένας γρήγορα αναπτυσσόμενος ευρωσκεπτικισμός. Με τις αποσχιστικές τάσεις να διευρύνονται και τις φωνές, σε πολλές από αυτές τις χώρες, για έξοδο από την Ευρωζώνη και επιστροφή στα εθνικά νομίσματα να πυκνώνουν, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι προβλέπει η Συνθήκη της Λισσαβόνας για έξοδο ενός κράτους μέλους από την Ευρωζώνη;

2. Μια πιθανή έξοδος ενός κράτους μέλους από την Ευρωζώνη συνεπάγεται και έξοδο από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση;

Απάντηση του κ. Šefčovič εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Συνθήκη της Λισαβόνας δεν προβλέπει την αποχώρηση κράτους μέλους από τη ζώνη του ευρώ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005285/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Exit from the euro area

There is acute speculation and fast-growing euroscepticism today in countries such as Greece, Cyprus, Spain, Portugal and others affected by the ongoing economic crisis. With separatist movements spreading and voices in many of these countries calling for them to leave the euro area and return to national currencies, will the Commission say:

1. What provision is made in the Treaty of Lisbon for a Member State to leave the euro area?

2. If a Member State were to leave the euro area, would it then have to leave the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

The Treaty of Lisbon makes no provision for a Member State to leave the euro area.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005286/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Παραχώρηση ιθαγένειας σε Τούρκους πολίτες από την ούτως καλούμενη Τουρκική Δημοκρατία της Βόρειας Κύπρου

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα στον Τύπο, μέσα σε πέντε χρόνια παραχωρήθηκαν 5 617 ιθαγένειες της ούτω καλούμενης Τουρκικής Δημοκρατίας της Βόρειας Κύπρου σε Τούρκους πολίτες. Από τα ΜΜΕ των κατεχομένων αναφέρεται ότι ο αριθμός μέχρι το τέλος του χρόνου θα ανέλθει στις 10 000.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια μέτρα λαμβάνει για να μην επιτραπεί η αλλοίωση του δημογραφικού χαρακτήρα των κατεχομένων;

2. Το Τουρκικό σχέδιο εποικισμού των κατεχομένων συνάδει με τις υποχρεώσεις της Τουρκίας ως υπό ένταξη χώρα;

3. Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή με την άποψη ότι η Τουρκική πλευρά συστηματικά επιχειρεί να δημιουργήσει τετελεσμένα στα κατεχόμενα ενόψει της επανέναρξης των συνομιλιών για το Κυπριακό;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-000535/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005286/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Granting citizenship to Turkish citizens from the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

According to press reports, in a period of five years, 5 617 citizenships have been granted to Turkish citizens in the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. According to the mass media in the occupied territory, the numbers will reach 10 000 by the end of the year.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What measures is it taking to prevent the demographic distortion of the occupied territory?

2. Is the Turkish settlement plan in the occupied territory consistent with its obligations as a candidate country for accession?

3. Does the Commission agree with the view that the Turkish side is systematically attempting to produce conclusions in the occupied territory in light of the resumption of talks on the Cyprus problem?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000535/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005287/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Von Generaldirektionen einberufene Sachverständige ohne Vergütung

Die Generaldirektionen der Kommission berufen gelegentlich Sachverständige ein, wie beispielsweise die GD CNECT den ehemaligen deutschen Verteidigungsminister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg.

1. Wie viele Personen wurden als „Sachverständige ohne Vergütung" von den einzelnen Generaldirektionen der Kommission jeweils seit Amtsantritt der derzeitigen Kommissare einberufen?

2. Wie viele Sachverständige ohne Vergütung befinden sich derzeit im Dienst der Kommission?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juli 2013)

Reisekosten von Sachverständigen erstattet die Kommission gemäß dem Kommissionsbeschluss vom 5. Dezember 2007.

Für die Beantwortung einer schriftlichen Anfrage kann die Kommission nicht die langwierigen und kostspieligen Nachforschungen durchführen, die notwendig wären, um dem Herrn Abgeordneten die verlangten Informationen bereitzustellen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005287/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Experts utilised by Directorates General without remuneration

The Commission Directorates General occasionally utilise the services of experts, an example being the use by the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology of the former German Minister of Defence, Karl- Theodor zu Guttenberg.

1. How many people have been called in as 'experts without remuneration' by the individual Commission Directorates General since each of the current Commissioners took office?

2. How many experts without remuneration are currently in the services of the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

On basis of a Commission decision of 5 December 2007, the Commission reimburses travel expenses of experts.

The Commission cannot undertake, for the purpose of answering a written question, the lengthy and costly research that would be required to provide the Honourable Member with the detailed information requested.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005288/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Staatliche Maßnahmen, um das Überleben und die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der EU-Luftverkehrsunternehmen zu sichern

In ihrer Antwort auf die parlamentarische Anfrage E-010019/2012 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt die Kommission: „Nach Ansicht der Kommission können EU-Luftfahrtunternehmen im globalen Luftverkehrsmarkt wettbewerbsfähig sein und dort auch profitabel arbeiten. Dies erfordert sowohl Anstrengungen vonseiten der Luftverkehrsunternehmen als auch Maßnahmen auf nationaler und auf EU-Ebene". Die Kommission betont vor allem die Bedeutung weiterer Luftverkehrsabkommen mit Drittländern.

1. Welche weiteren Maßnahmen sind nach Ansicht der Kommission auf nationaler Ebene erforderlich?

2. Welche weiteren Maßnahmen sind nach Ansicht der Kommission auf EU-Ebene erforderlich?

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

Die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der EU-Luftverkehrsunternehmen auf dem Weltmarkt hängt von zahlreichen unterschiedlichen Faktoren ab. Einige dieser Faktoren können die Unternehmen selbst steuern oder beeinflussen, während andere vor allem von nationalen Strategien und Maßnahmen bestimmt oder beeinflusst werden oder das Ergebnis von Strategien und Maßnahmen auf EU-Ebene darstellen. Zudem unterliegen die EU-Unternehmen externen, durch den Weltmarkt bedingten Faktoren. Viele dieser Faktoren stehen miteinander im Zusammenhang. So stehen insbesondere Maßnahmen auf EU-Ebene in enger Verbindung mit nationalen Maßnahmen. Zahlreiche EU-Maßnahmen, die sich auf die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit von EU-Unternehmen auswirken, sind beispielsweise nur dann wirksam, wenn sie auf nationaler Ebene umgesetzt werden. Ein gutes Beispiel hierfür ist die Verwirklichung des einheitlichen europäischen Luftraums, dessen Gesamtrahmen auf EU-Ebene vereinbart wird, für den die Umsetzung durch die Mitgliedstaaten und Gruppen von Mitgliedstaaten aber äußerst wichtig ist.

Die Anpassung der Flughafeninfrastruktur an den künftigen Bedarf der EU ist ein weiterer Bereich, in dem sowohl die EU als auch die Mitgliedstaaten entscheidend dazu beitragen können, die internationale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der EU-Unternehmen zu bewahren.

In den Außenbeziehungen der EU mit Drittländern, d. h. mit den großen Luftverkehrspartnern, würde die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der EU-Unternehmen von einer stärkeren Koordination und einem abgestimmten Vorgehen zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten und der EU profitieren.

Maßnahmen zum Schutz eines fairen Wettbewerbs müssen zudem auf koordinierte Weise entwickelt werden. Dazu sollte auf EU-Ebene eine Klausel zum Schutz des fairen Wettbewerbs vereinbart werden, die die Mitgliedstaaten ihren Partnerländern bei bilateralen Verhandlungen vorschlagen könnten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005288/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: State measures to ensure the survival and competitiveness of EU air carriers

In its answer to parliamentary Question E-010019/2012 from Hans-Peter Martin, the Commission states the following: 'The Commission does believe that EU carriers can be competitive and profitable in the global aviation market. This will require efforts both by the airlines themselves as well as action at both national and EU level.' The Commission emphasises above all the importance of further air transport agreements with third countries.

1. What further action does the Commission believe to be necessary at national level?

2. What further action does it believe to be necessary at EU level?

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

The competitiveness of EU carriers in the global market place is determined by a mix of many factors including factors which an airline controls or can influence itself; factors which are determined or influenced mainly by national policies and actions; factors which are the result of EU level policies or actions; and external factors with impact from the global market context on EU carriers. Often these various factors are interrelated. In particular action at EU level is closely related to action at national level. Indeed, a number of actions taken at EU level influencing the competitiveness of EU carriers need implementation at national level in order to be effective. A good example of this is the implementation of the Single European Sky for which the overall framework is agreed at EU level but where implementation at Member State level as well as among groups of Member States is extremely important.

Developing airport infrastructure to meet the EU's future demand is another area where both the EU and Member States have important roles to play to safeguard the international competitiveness of EU carriers.

In the EU's external relations with the rest of the world namely in relation to large aviation partners a more coordinated approach and concerted action among Member States and the EU level would be able to have a positive impact on the competitiveness of EU carriers.

Developing measures to safeguard fair competition also necessitates a coordinated approach through agreeing on a fair competition clause at EU level which Member States could propose to partner countries during bilateral negotiations.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005289/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Reisekostenerstattungen von Herrn zu Guttenberg

In seiner Antwort auf Anfrage 2197/2013 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt Kommissar Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission, dass der ehemalige deutsche Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg von der GD CNECT als Sachverständiger ohne Vergütung einberufen wurde und Reisekosten für entsprechende Sitzungen erstattet bekam.

1. An wie vielen Sitzungen nahm zu Guttenberg für GD CNECT teil?

2. An wie vielen Sitzungen nahm zu Guttenberg für andere Generaldirektionen teil?

3. An welchen Orten fanden die Sitzungen statt, an denen zu Guttenberg teilnahm?

4. Nahm zu Guttenberg auch als Repräsentant der GD CNECT an nicht-internen Sitzungen teil? Wenn ja, an welchen?

4. Wie viele Reisen wurden zu Guttenberg erstattet?

5. Wie hoch waren die Reisekosten, die zu Guttenberg seit seiner Einberufung erstattet wurden, insgesamt?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(28. Juni 2013)

Herr zu Guttenberg hat weder an Sitzungen/Veranstaltungen im Namen der GD CONNECT noch an Sitzungen oder Veranstaltungen mit oder von anderen Generaldirektionen teilgenommen.

Herr zu Guttenberg nahm an rund einhundert Sitzungen teil, in denen er sehr nützliche Beratungsarbeit im Hinblick auf mögliche Verfahren der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem öffentlichen und dem privaten Sektor, innerhalb der EU-Mitgliedstaaten und mit Drittstaaten (insbesondere den USA) im Bereich Internetfreiheit leistete. Er nahm Kontakte zur IKT-Branche, zu politischen und nachrichtendienstlichen Kreisen, Vertretern der Wissenschaft, NRO, den Medien sowie zu einzelnen Internetaktivisten auf.

Nur sehr wenige der Reisen zu diesen Treffen wurden von der Kommission erstattet.

Die an Herrn zu Guttenberg seit seiner Ernennung zum Sachverständigen gezahlten Reisekostenerstattungen belaufen sich insgesamt auf rund 20 000 EUR.

Die Kommission erstattete Herrn zu Guttenberg Reisekosten nach den Bestimmungen des Beschlusses der Kommission vom 5. Dezember 2007 über die Erstattung der Kosten von nicht der Kommission angehörenden Personen, die von der Kommission als Sachverständige einberufen werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005289/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Refunding of travel expenses incurred by Mr zu Guttenberg

In his reply to Question 2197/2013 by Hans-Peter Martin, Commissioner Šefčovič writes on behalf of the Commission that the former German Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg had been consulted by DG CNECT as an unpaid expert and that he was refunded for the travel expenses incurred in connection with these meetings.

1. How many meetings did Mr zu Guttenberg attend for DG CNECT?

2. How many meetings did Mr zu Guttenberg attend for other Directorates-General?

3. Where were the meetings attended by Mr zu Guttenberg held?

4. Did Mr zu Guttenberg also attend non-internal meetings as a representative of GD CNECT? If so, which ones?

4. How many trips by Mr zu Guttenberg have been refunded?

5. What is the total amount of travel expenses refunded to Mr zu Guttenberg since his appointment?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2013)

Mr zu Guttenberg has not intervened in any meeting/event on behalf of DG CONNECT nor with or on behalf of other Directorates-General.

Mr zu Guttenberg has attended close to one hundred meetings where he has provided very useful face-to-face advice concerning possible cooperation mechanisms with the public and private sector, within EU Member States and third countries (in particular the USA) in the field of Internet freedom. He has been in contact with the ICT sector, the political and intelligence establishments, academia, NGOs, the media, as well individual Internet activists.

For all those meetings, only a very limited number of trips were refunded by the Commission

The total amount refunded to Mr zu Guttenberg since his appointment as expert for travel expenses is around EUR 20 000.

The Commission has reimbursed Mr Guttenberg for his travels within the framework set by Commission's Decision of 5 December 2007 on 'Rules on the reimbursement of expenses incurred by people from outside the Commission invited to attend meetings in an expert capacity'.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005290/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Γενετική τροποποίηση των ζώων

Η Επιτροπή παρέλαβε μια έκθεση και συστάσεις για τη χάραξη πολιτικής από το πρόγραμμα Πήγασος για τη γενετική τροποποίηση ζώων. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή για την Ασφάλεια των Τροφίμων ενέκρινε μια επιστημονική γνωμοδότηση δια της οποίας παρέχονται κατευθυντήριες γραμμές σχετικά με την αξιολόγηση του κινδύνου στα τρόφιμα και τις ζωοτροφές από γενετικώς τροποποιημένα (ΓΤ) ζώα καθώς και την υγεία και ευζωία των ζώων. Ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή θα γνωρίζει ότι υφίστανται σοβαρές ανησυχίες σχετικά με ευζωία των ζώων όπως και δεοντολογικού χαρακτήρα, όσον αφορά τη γενετική τροποποίηση των ζώων. Στην άλλη πλευρά του Ατλαντικού, οι αρχές των ΗΠΑ πρόκειται σύντομα να καταλήξουν σε κάποια απόφαση σχετικά με το εάν θα επιτρέπεται η είσοδος του γενετικά τροποποιημένου σολομού ιχθυοτροφείου στην ανθρώπινη διατροφική αλυσίδα. Η ΕΕ πρέπει αναλόγως και επειγόντως να διαμορφώσει τη δική της πολιτική σε σχέση με την ανάπτυξη και τη χρήση των γενετικά τροποποιημένων ζώων.

Υπό το πρίσμα των ανωτέρω και των ευρύτερων ανησυχιών κοινωνικού, πολιτικού και οικονομικού χαρακτήρα σχετικά με τα ΓΤ ζώα, ποια είναι η πολιτική θέση της Επιτροπής όσον αφορά:

1. την ανάπτυξη και

2. τη χρήση των ΓΤ ζώων;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση θέσπισε νομοθετικά μια αυστηρή διαδικασία εκτίμησης της επικινδυνότητας και έγκρισης των ΓΤΟ, η οποία εφαρμόζεται σε περίπτωση εκούσιας ελευθέρωσης ΓΤ ζώων στο περιβάλλον, ή για τρόφιμα και ζωοτροφές που προέρχονται από ΓΤ ζώα. Επιπλέον, η νομοθεσία σχετικά με τους ΓΤΟ διασφαλίζει την πλήρη ενημέρωση των καταναλωτών, μέσω ειδικής επισήμανσης σχετικά με το αν τα τρόφιμα ή οι ζωοτροφές προέρχονται από ΓΤΟ, δινοντάς τους τη δυνατότητα να επιλέγουν πιο συνειδητοποιημένα τις αγορές τους.

Προς το παρόν δεν υπάρχουν αιτήσεις για τη διάθεση στην αγορά ΓΤ ζώων ή προϊόντων που προέρχονται από ΓΤ ζώα. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι έχει πραγματοποιηθεί έρευνα στον εν λόγω τομέα. Η Επιτροπή, προκειμένου να προετοιμαστεί για πιθανές αιτήσεις για έγκριση, ζήτησε από την EFSA να εκπονήσει έγγραφο καθοδήγησης σχετικά με τις προναφερόμενες πτυχές καθώς και την καλή μεταχείριση των ζώων. Τα έγγραφα καθοδήγησης της EFSA σχετικά με την εκτίμηση της επικινδυνότητας των ΓΤ ζώων και των τροφίμων και ζωοτροφών που προέρχονται από ΓΤ ζώα για το περιβάλλον, την υγεία των ανθρώπων και των ζώων δημοσιεύτηκαν τον Ιανουάριο του 2012 και αναφέρονται διεξοδικά στους προβληματισμούς σχετικά με την υγεία και την καλή μεταχείριση των ΓΤ ζώων σε δοκιμές, σε στάδια αναπαραγωγής και χρήσης ([1]). Η καθοδήγηση είναι σαφής ως προς το ότι ο αιτών πρέπει να αποδείξει ότι τόσο οι εκούσιες όσο και οι ακούσιες συνέπειες της γενετικής τροποποίησης δεν θέτουν σε κίνδυνο την υγεία και την καλή διαβίωση του ΓΤ ζώου. Η αναπαραγωγή και η χρήση ΓΤ ζώων θα πρέπει επίσης να συμμορφώνεται με τα ελάχιστα πρότυπα που ορίζονται στη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ για την προστασία των ζώων που εκτρέφονται και κατέχονται για σκοπούς γεωργικής εκμετάλλευσης ([2]), καθώς και με τις οδηγίες της ΕΕ σχετικά με την καλή διαβίωση των μόσχων ([3]), των χοίρων ([4]) και των ορνίθων ωοπαραγωγής ([5]).

Η Επιτροπή βρίσκεται επί του παρόντος στη διαδικασία επανεξέτασης της τελικής έκθεσης του σχεδίου PEGASUS και θα λάβει πλήρως υπόψη τις συστάσεις που περιέχει η εν λόγω έκθεση.

([1]) Τμήμα 3.9; http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2501.pdf
([2]) Οδηγία 98/58/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου.
([3]) Οδηγία 91/629/ΕΟΚ όπως τροποποιήθηκε με την οδηγία 97/2/ΕΚ και την απόφαση 97/182/ΕΚ της Επιτροπής.
([4]) Οδηγία 91/630/ΕΟΚ όπως τροποποιήθηκε με την οδηγία 2001/88/ΕΚ και την οδηγία 2001/93/ΕΚ.
([5]) Οδηγία 99/74/ΕΚ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005290/13
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Genetic modification of animals

The Commission has received a report and policy recommendations from the Pegasus project on the genetic modification of animals. The European Food Safety Authority has adopted a scientific opinion giving guidance on the risk assessment of food and feed from genetically modified (GM) animals and on the animal health and welfare aspects. Therefore, the Commission will be aware that there are considerable animal welfare and ethical concerns over the genetic modification of animals. On the other side of the Atlantic, the US authorities are likely shortly to make a decision as to whether to permit GM-farmed salmon to enter the human food chain. Accordingly, the EU needs to develop its own policy on the development and use of GM animals, as a matter of some urgency.

Having regard to the above and the broader societal, political and economic concerns over GM animals, what is the Commission's policy position concerning:

1. the development and

2. the use of GM farm animals?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The European Union has set in law a strict procedure for risk assessment and authorisation of GMOs, which is applicable to the deliberate release of GM animals in the environment, or for food and feed originating from GM animals. Furthermore, the GMO legislation ensures that consumers are comprehensively informed via specific labelling on the GM origin of a food or feed product, allowing them to make an informed purchasing choice.

There are currently no applications for the placing on the market of GM animals or products derived from GM animals. However, the Commission is aware that research is carried out in this field. In order to prepare for possible applications for authorisation, the Commission requested EFSA to develop guidance on the abovementioned aspects as well as on animal welfare. The EFSA's guidance documents on the environmental, human and animal health risk assessment for GM animals and derived food and feed from GM animals were published in January 2012 and address extensively the related GM animal health and welfare considerations at trials, breeding and usage stages ([1]). The guidance is clear that it needs to be shown by the applicant that both the intended and unintended effects of the genetic modification do not jeopardise the health and welfare of the GM animal. Breeding and use of GM animals would also have to comply with the minimum standards set by the EC law for the protection of animals bred and kept for farming purpose ([2]), as well as with the EU Directives on welfare of calves ([3]), pigs ([4]) and laying hens ([5]).

The Commission is currently in the process of reviewing the final report of the project PEGASUS and will give the recommendations contained within the report their full consideration.

([1]) Section 3.9; http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2501.pdf
([2]) Council Directive 98/58/EC.
([3]) EU Directive 91/629/EEC as amended by Directive 97/2/EC and Commission Decision 97/182/EC.
([4]) EU Directive 91/630/EEC as amended by Directive 2001/88/EC and Directive 2001/93/EC.
([5]) EU Directive 99/74/EC.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005291/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Luftverkehrsabkommen mit asiatischen Ländern

In ihrer Mitteilung KOM(2012)0556 zur Luftfahrtaußenpolitik der EU schreibt die Kommission, dass mehrere asiatische Länder ein Interesse bekundet haben, umfassende Luftverkehrsabkommen mit der EU abzuschließen.

1. Welche asiatischen Länder haben ein solches Interesse bekundet?

2. Mit welchen asiatischen Ländern gibt es bereits Gespräche oder konkrete Planungen für Luftverkehrsabkommen?

3. Welche Vor- und Nachteile sieht die Kommission in Luftverkehrsabkommen mit diesen Ländern?

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

Die Gruppe der ASEAN-Mitgliedstaaten hat ihr Interesse bekundet, ein umfassendes Luftverkehrsabkommen mit der EU auszuhandeln. Auch die Republik Korea hat ihr Interesse an einem umfassenden Luftverkehrsabkommen mit der EU zum Ausdruck gebracht.

1. Zur Zeit laufen keine Verhandlungen mit einem dieser asiatischen Länder, da die Kommission noch nicht um ein entsprechendes Verhandlungsmandat ersucht und der Rat ein solches Mandat auch noch nicht erteilt hat. Im Jahr 2005 ersuchte die Kommission um die Genehmigung zur Aufnahme von Verhandlungen mit China und Indien, die der Rat jedoch nicht erteilte.

2. Asien ist eine zentrale Wachstumsregion auf dem weltweiten Luftverkehrsmarkt und dürfte auch EU-Luftfahrtunternehmen künftig bedeutende Möglichkeiten bieten. Es ist daher wichtig, den EU-Unternehmen den Zugang zu diesen Märkten zu sichern. Von EU-Luftverkehrsabkommen mit wichtigen asiatischen Märkten wie China, den ASEAN-Ländern und Indien würden Luftfahrtunternehmen, Verbraucher und andere Unternehmen in erheblichem Umfang profitieren. Die Kommission hat daher in ihrer Mitteilung KOM(2012)556 das Interesse der EU an Luftverkehrsabkommen mit diesen Ländern erneut bekräftigt. Korea hat die 2008 paraphierte horizontale Vereinbarung, mit der seine bilateralen Abkommen mit EU-Mitgliedstaaten in Einklang mit EU-Recht gebracht werden sollten, bisher nicht unterzeichnet. Solange diese Frage nicht gelöst ist, kommt auch ein umfassendes Luftverkehrsabkommen zwischen der EU und Korea nicht in Betracht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005291/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Aviation agreements with Asian countries

In its communication COM(2012)0556 on the EU's external aviation policy, the Commission writes that several Asian countries have expressed an interest in reaching comprehensive aviation agreements with the EU.

1. Which Asian countries have expressed such interest?

2. With which Asian countries are negotiations or specific plans for aviation agreements already in progress?

3. What advantages and disadvantages does the Commission recognise in aviation agreements with these countries?

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

The group of ASEAN member states have expressed an interest in discussing a comprehensive EU-ASEAN air transport agreement. The Republic of Korea has also expressed an interest in a comprehensive EU-Korea air transport agreement.

1. There are no ongoing negotiations with any of these Asian countries as the Commission has not yet requested, and the Council not granted, a negotiating mandate for any of these countries. In 2005, the Commission requested authorisations to open negotiations with China and India which have not been granted by the Council.

2. Asia is a key growth region in the global aviation market today with significant future opportunities also for EU carriers. Securing access to these markets for EU carriers is therefore important. EU aviation agreements with key Asian markets such as China, ASEAN and India would generate significant economic benefits for airlines as well as for consumers and businesses. This is why the Commission in its communication COM(2012)0556 reiterated the interest in EU aviation agreements with these countries. As far as Korea is concerned, Korea has failed to sign the Horizontal Agreement initialled in 2008 with the aim of bringing its bilateral agreements with EU Member States into conformity with EC law. As long as this matter remains unresolved, considering a comprehensive EU-Korea air transport agreement is not relevant.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005292/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: EU-ASEAN-Luftverkehrsabkommen

In ihrer Mitteilung KOM(2012)0556 zur Luftfahrtaußenpolitik der EU schreibt die Kommission, dass sie die Entwicklung hin zu einem vollständig liberalisierten ASEAN-Luftverkehrsbinnenmarkt beobachtet. Ein liberalisierter ASEAN-Luftverkehrsbinnenmarkt könnte anstelle bilateraler Abkommen mit ASEAN-Mitgliedstaaten eine Zusammenarbeit auf EU-ASEAN-Ebene ermöglichen.

1. Welche Entwicklungen gibt es derzeit, und erwartet die Kommission bald die Schaffung eines ASEAN-Luftverkehrsbinnenmarktes?

2. Befindet sich die EU bereits mit der ASEAN in Gesprächen über die Möglichkeit oder konkrete Details eines EU-ASEAN-Luftverkehrsabkommens?

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

1. Die Mitgliedstaaten der ASEAN (Assoziation südostasiatischer Staaten) haben im Rahmen der wirtschaftlichen Integration zwischen ihren 10 Mitgliedern vereinbart, bis 2015 durch einen schrittweisen Prozess der Marktöffnung und Integration sowie der Kooperation und Konvergenz im Regelungsbereich einen einheitlichen ASEAN-Luftverkehrsmarkt zu schaffen. Dieser Prozess weist viele Ähnlichkeiten mit der Entwicklung des Luftverkehrsbinnenmarktes in der EU in den letzten zwei Jahrzehnten auf.

2. Nein. In ihrer Mitteilung „Die Luftfahrtaußenpolitik der EU — Bewältigung der künftigen Herausforderungen“ (KOM(2012)556 endg.) vom 27. September 2012 ging die Kommission jedoch darauf ein, dass sich aus der Entwicklung des einheitlichen Luftverkehrsmarktes der ASEAN — eines rasch wachsenden Marktes mit einer Bevölkerungszahl von insgesamt ca. 600 Millionen — neue und interessante Möglichkeiten ergeben und dass dies zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt zu einem umfassenden Luftverkehrsabkommen zwischen der EU und der ASEAN führen sollte. Die Kommission hat den Rat nicht um ein Mandat für die Aushandlung eines solchen Abkommens ersucht. Hingegen haben die ASEAN-Mitgliedstaaten ihrerseits kürzlich ihr Interesse an der Aufnahme von Gesprächen über ein umfassendes Luftverkehrsabkommen EU-ASEAN bekundet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005292/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: EU-ASEAN air service agreement

In its communication COM(2012)0556 on the EU's external aviation policy, the Commission writes that it is following the developments towards a fully liberalised ASEAN Single Aviation Market. It observes that a liberalised ASEAN Single Aviation Market could enable cooperation at EU-ASEAN level instead of bilateral agreements with ASEAN Member States.

1. What are the current developments and does the Commission expect an ASEAN Single Aviation Market to be established in the near future?

2. Is the EU already in negotiations with ASEAN concerning the possibility of an EU-ASEAN air service agreement or the specific details of such an agreement?

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

1. As part of the economic integration among the 10 member states of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN member states have agreed on creating an ASEAN Single Aviation Market by 2015 through a gradual process of market opening and integration and regulatory cooperation and convergence. This process has many similarities to the creation of the EU single aviation market over the past two decades.

2. No. However, in the Commission's Communication entitled 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' (COM(2012) 556 final) dated 27 September 2012, the Commission described the new interesting opportunities offered by the development of the ASEAN Single Aviation Market, a fast-growing market with a total population of approximately of 600 million, and suggested that this should at some stage lead to a comprehensive EU-ASEAN aviation agreement. The Commission has not requested authorisation from the Council to negotiate such an agreement. The ASEAN Member States have, however, recently expressed an interest in starting discussions on a comprehensive EU-ASEAN air transport agreement.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005293/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Reisekosten für Sachverständige

Die Generaldirektionen der Kommission berufen gelegentlich Sachverständige ein. Diese Sachverständigen bekommen auf Grundlage einer Kommissionsentscheidung vom 5. Dezember 2007 ihre Reisekosten erstattet.

1. Für wie viele Reisen von Sachverständigen wurden seit Amtsantritt der derzeitigen Kommissare die Kosten erstattet?

2. Wie hoch waren die Reisekosten durchschnittlich?

3. Wie hoch waren die Reisekosten insgesamt?

4. Wie viele Reisekostenerstattungen entfielen jeweils auf die einzelnen Generaldirektionen?

5. Wie hoch waren die Reisekostenerstattungen für Sachverständige jeweils pro Generaldirektion pro Jahr?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(15. Juli 2013)

1. In den letzten drei Jahren wurden durchschnittlich 65 000 Sachverständigenreisen pro Jahr erstattet.

2. Die durchschnittlichen Reisekosten betragen 720 EUR pro Reise.

3. Der jährliche Durchschnittsbetrag beläuft sich für die letzten drei Jahre auf 47 Mio. EUR.

Für die Beantwortung einer schriftlichen Anfrage kann die Kommission nicht die langwierigen und kostspieligen Nachforschungen durchführen, die notwendig wären, um dem Herrn Abgeordneten die in Punkt 4 und 5 verlangten Informationen bereitzustellen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005293/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Travel expenses for experts

The Directorates-General of the Commission occasionally appoint experts. These experts are refunded their travel expenses on the basis of a Commission decision of 5 December 2007.

1. How many expert trips have been paid for by the present Commissioners since they took office?

2. What were the average travel expenses?

3. What were the total travel expenses?

4. What is the breakdown of travel expense refunds paid out by the individual Directorates-General?

5. What is the breakdown of travel expense refunds paid out to experts per Directorate-General per year?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

1. The average number of reimbursed expert trips per year for the last 3 years is 65 000.

2. The average travel expenses are EUR 720 per trip.

3. The average yearly total amount for the last 3 years is about EUR 47 million.

The Commission cannot undertake, for the purpose of answering a written question, the lengthy and costly research that would be required to provide the Honourable Member with the information requested under sub-questions 4 and 5.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005294/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Förderung von Projekten, die die persönliche Identifizierung von Internetnutzern oder die Begrenzung des Zugangs zu Internetinhalten ermöglichen

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-010018/2012 von Hans-Peter Martin betreffend Projekte zur Anonymität im Internet schreibt Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission: „Einige der von der Kommission unterstützten Projekte könnten die persönliche Identifizierung von Internetnutzern oder die Begrenzung des Zugangs zu Internetinhalten ermöglichen, dies allerdings nur im Rahmen des geltenden internationalen und EU-Rechts".

1. Welche von der Kommission geförderten Projekte könnten die persönliche Identifizierung von Internetnutzern ermöglichen?

2. Welche von der Kommission geförderten Projekte könnten die Begrenzung des Zugangs zu Internetinhalten ermöglichen?

3. Wer führt die genannten Projekte durch?

4. Mit welchen Fördermitteln der EU werden diese Projekte gefördert, und mit welchem Betrag werden sie gefördert?

5. In welcher Weise ist gesichert, dass die persönliche Identifizierung beziehungsweise die Begrenzung des Zugangs zu Internetinhalten „nur im Rahmen des geltenden internationalen und EU-Rechts" erfolgt und nicht von undemokratischen Regimen, widerrechtlich handelnden staatlichen Akteuren oder widerrechtlich handelnden privaten Akteuren genutzt werden kann, um Individuen zu schaden oder die freie Meinungsäußerung sowie den freien Informationskonsum von Individuen oder ganzen Bevölkerungsgruppen zu behindern?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juli 2013)

Die Frage des Herrn Abgeordneten betrifft eine hypothetische Aussage der Kommission („Einige der von der Kommission unterstützten Projekte könnten die persönliche Identifizierung von Internetnutzern oder die Begrenzung des Zugangs zu Internetinhalten ermöglichen"). Eine vollständige Liste dieser Projekte können wir dem Herrn Abgeordneten nicht bereitstellen, da die Ergebnisse von Forschungsvorhaben und deren Anwendungsmöglichkeiten nicht im Voraus bekannt sind. Unterschiedliche Arten von Projekten werden mithilfe unterschiedlicher Mechanismen gefördert (z. B. 7. Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und Entwicklung) ([1]). Jedes Vorhaben wird von einem Projektbeauftragten beaufsichtigt, der Verstöße gegen EU-Recht und etwaige sonstige Zuwiderhandlungen meldet und Abhilfemaßnahmen trifft, wenn und soweit dies erforderlich ist.

Gemäß den für das 7. Rahmenprogramm geltenden Rechtsakten sind die geltenden Regeln ([2]) bei allen Forschungstätigkeiten einzuhalten; Projektvorschläge, die diesen Regeln nicht entsprechen, werden nicht gefördert. Ethikprüfungen finden gegebenenfalls vor der Vergabe einer Finanzhilfe statt, und die Kommission kann Finanzhilfevereinbarungen bei Verstößen gegen ethische Grundsätze kündigen.

Hinsichtlich der Anwendung von Projektergebnissen in Drittländern haben die EU und ihre Mitgliedstaaten ein System von Export-Kontrollen eingerichtet, in dessen Rahmen darüber entschieden wird, ob die Ergebnisse eines bestimmten Projekts in Drittländern zur Verfügung gestellt werden.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:412:0001:0041:DE:PDF (RP7-Beschluss), Artikel 6.

([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:391:0001:0018:DE:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005294/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Support for projects that enable the personal identification of Internet users or limitations in accessing Internet content

In her reply to Question E-010018/2012 by Hans-Peter Martin, concerning projects relating to anonymity on the Internet, Ms Kroes writes the following on behalf of the Commission: 'Some of the projects supported by the Commission could enable personal identification of Internet users or limitations in accessing Internet content, but only in the framework of applicable international and EC law.'

1. Which projects supported by the Commission could enable the personal identification of Internet users?

2. Which projects supported by the Commission could enable limitations in accessing Internet content?

3. Who is carrying out these projects?

4. What EU funds are used to support these projects and what is the amount of support provided?

5. How is it ensured that the personal identification of Internet users or limitations in accessing Internet content take place 'only in the framework of applicable international and EC law' and cannot be used by undemocratic regimes or unscrupulous state and non-state actors to harm individuals or to impede freedom of expression and free consumption of information by individuals or entire population groups?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

The question of the Honourable Member refers to a hypothetical statement by the Commission ('Some of the projects supported by the Commission could enable personal identification of Internet users or limitations in accessing Internet content'). It is not possible to provide the Honourable Member with a full list of such projects, because the results and possible applications of research projects are not known in advance. Different types of projects are funded via different mechanisms (e.g. 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development) ([1]). Each project is supervised by a project officer who will report and act upon violations of EC law, or any other infringements, if and when they occur.

According to the legal acts governing the 7th FP, all research activities shall be carried out in compliance with rules of procedures ([2]); projects proposals contravening such rules shall not be financed. Ethical review procedures take place where appropriate before awarding a grant and a violation of ethical principles during the project implementation entitles the Commission to terminate the grant agreement.

For what concerns the use of projects' results in third countries, the EU and its Member States have created a system of export controls that decide whether the results of a particular project should be available in third countries.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:412:0001:0041:EN:PDF, FP7 Decision, Art 6.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:391:0001:0018:EN:PDF.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005295/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Zusammenarbeit mit den Golfstaaten im Bereich der Luftfahrt

In ihrer Mitteilung KOM(2012)0556 zur Luftfahrtaußenpolitik der EU schreibt die Kommission: „Die Beziehungen zu den Golfstaaten waren in den letzten Jahren weitgehend von einem einseitigen Prozess der Öffnung der EU-Märkte für Luftfahrtunternehmen der Golfregion geprägt, was zu sehr unausgeglichenen Chancen geführt hat". Des Weiteren sieht die Kommission Luftverkehrsabkommen mit „den wichtigsten Ländern" als „zweckmäßig" für Transparenz, fairen Wettbewerb und die weitere Marktentwicklung.

1. Aus welchem Grund waren die Beziehungen im Luftfahrtbereich in den letzten Jahren von einem einseitigen, für die EU nachteilhaften Prozess geprägt?

2. Welche Maßnahmen unternimmt die Kommission derzeit, um den Prozess in eine für beide Seiten vorteilhafte Richtung zu lenken?

3. Für welche der Golfstaaten sieht die Kommission ein Luftverkehrsabkommen vor? In welchem Stadium befindet sich jeweils die Vorbereitung und Aushandlung eines solchen Luftverkehrsabkommens?

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

In den letzten Jahren war aufgrund liberaler bilateraler Luftverkehrsabkommen zwischen EU-Mitgliedstaaten und Golfstaaten eine deutliche Öffnung des EU-Luftverkehrsmarkts für Unternehmen aus den Golfstaaten festzustellen, so dass diese Unternehmen nun in nie dagewesenem Umfang Zugang zum EU-Luftverkehrsmarkt haben. Dies hat neue Möglichkeiten eröffnet, aber auch gewisse Ungleichgewichte nach sich gezogen. So ist beispielsweise der Marktanteil von EU-Luftfahrtunternehmen auf Strecken zwischen der EU und der Golfregion noch immer gering. Dies ist vor allem auf das schnelle Wachstum von Unternehmen der Golfregion zurückzuführen, die auch davon profitieren, dass sie Fluggäste nun über ihre Drehkreuze in der Golfregion zwischen Europa und anderen Teilen der Welt befördern können.

Katar und die Vereinigten Arabischen Emirate versuchen seit einigen Jahren, ihren Marktzugang zur EU noch zu erweitern und setzen sich für „Open-Skies"-Abkommen mit der EU ein. Gleichzeitig bestehen hinsichtlich dieser Staaten/Luftfahrtunternehmen/Flughäfen jedoch Bedenken im Hinblick auf einen fairen Wettbewerb.

In ihrer Mitteilung KOM(2012)556 schlug die Kommission vor, die Zusammenarbeit mit den Golfstaaten in der Zivilluftfahrt auszubauen und im Rahmen eines umfassenden Luftverkehrsabkommens auf EU-Ebene wichtige Themen zu behandeln, darunter Transparenz sowie ein fairer und offener Wettbewerb. Die Kommission wird in naher Zukunft einen Dialog mit den Golfstaaten einleiten, um unter anderem die Transparenz zu verbessern und einen fairen Wettbewerb sicherzustellen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005295/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Cooperation with the Gulf States in the area of aviation

In its communication COM(2012)0556 on the EU's external aviation policy, the Commission writes: 'Relations with the Gulf States have in recent years been a largely one-way process of opening EU markets for Gulf carriers, which has created significant imbalances in opportunities.' Furthermore, the Commission regards aviation agreements with 'the key countries' as 'ensuring' transparency, fair competition and further market development.

1. Why were relations in the aviation area in recent years characterised by a unilateral process that was disadvantageous for the EU?

2. What steps are currently being taken by the Commission to guide the process in a direction that is beneficial to both sides?

3. With which of the Gulf States does the Commission intend concluding aviation agreements? What stage has been reached in preparing for and negotiating such aviation agreements?

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

In recent years a significant opening of the EU air transport market for Gulf carriers, through liberal bilateral air services agreements between Member States and Gulf States, has taken place giving these carriers unprecedented access to the EU aviation market. This has created new opportunities but has also contributed to certain imbalances. For example the market share of EU air carriers on the market between the EU and the Gulf region has remained low. This is mainly due to the rapid growth of Gulf carriers supported by the opportunities to carry passengers between Europe and other parts of the world via their hubs in the Gulf region.

Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have for some years been seeking to obtain even further market access to the EU and have also lobbied for 'open skies' agreements with the EU. At the same time, there have been concerns about fair competition from these states/airlines/airports.

In its communication COM(2012)0556, the Commission proposed to enhance cooperation with the Gulf countries in civil aviation and to address issues such as transparency and fair and open competition in the context of comprehensive EU level air transport agreements with them. The Commission will in the near future launch a dialogue with the Gulf States including with a view to enhancing transparency and safeguard fair competition.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005296/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Beziehungen mit Russland im Luftverkehrsbereich

In Punkt 49 ihrer Mitteilung KOM(2012)0556 zur Luftfahrtaußenpolitik der EU betonte die Kommission, dass Russland sein Engagement für die im Jahr 2011 geschlossene Vereinbarung zur Umsetzung der „vereinbarten Grundsätze der Modernisierung des Systems für Sibirienüberflüge“ noch belegen muss, dass eine normalisierte Beziehung oder sogar eine strategische Partnerschaft enorme Vorteile für beide Seiten hätte und dass die Kommission nach Beseitigung der derzeitigen Hindernisse einen Fahrplan für ein umfassendes Luftverkehrsabkommen mit Russland vorschlagen wird.

1. Hat Russland sein Engagement für die Vereinbarung zu Sibirienüberflügen mittlerweile belegt? Wenn nicht, welche Schritte hat die Kommission unternommen, um Russland zur Umsetzung des Abkommens zu bewegen?

2. In welchen Aspekten sind die Beziehungen zu Russland in der Luftfahrt derzeit nicht „normal“?

3. Wie hoch schätzt die Kommission den jährlichen Schaden durch problematische Beziehungen mit Russland im Luftfahrtbereich?

4. Welche wirtschaftlichen Vorteile würden (a) normalisierte Beziehungen und (b) eine strategische Partnerschaft mit Russland nach Ansicht der Kommission bringen?

5. Entwickelt die Kommission — entsprechend der eigenen Ankündigung — bereits einen Fahrplan für ein umfassendes Luftverkehrsabkommen mit Russland?

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

1. Die in den „Vereinbarten Grundsätzen“ vorgesehenen Übergangsfristen wurden von Russland bislang nicht eingehalten. Hieraus ergeben sich ernste Bedenken hinsichtlich des Engagements auf russischer Seite, den Termin für die endgültige Aufhebung des Systems (1. Januar 2014) einzuhalten. In den vergangenen Jahren wurde dieser Punkt von der Kommission bei den russischen Behörden auf allen Ebenen immer wieder zur Sprache gebracht.

2. Das russische System, Entgelte von EU-Luftfahrtunternehmen für die Nutzung der sibirischen Strecken für Flüge nach Asien zu erheben, widerspricht Artikel 15 des Abkommens von Chicago, da es sich bei diesen Entgelten um Zahlungen für die Gewährung von Überflugrechten handelt.

Auch die Übernahme des Grundsatzes der EU-Benennung in die bilateralen Luftverkehrs-abkommen zwischen Russland und EU-Mitgliedstaaten steht noch aus.

3. Schätzungen zufolge müssen die EU-Luftfahrtunternehmen jedes Jahr mehr als 300 Mio. EUR an Gebühren für Sibirienüberflüge entrichten.

4. Eine auf einem liberalisierten Luftverkehrsmarkt basierende strategische Luftverkehrs-partnerschaft zwischen der EU und Russland brächte beiden Seiten erhebliche wirtschaftliche Vorteile. Nach einer unabhängigen Studie ergäbe sich ein wirtschaftlicher Gesamtnutzen von rund 1,9 Mrd. EUR.

5. In ihrer Mitteilung zur Luftfahrtaußenpolitik schlug die Kommission die Ausarbeitung eines Fahrplans zur Verbesserung der Luftfahrtbeziehungen zwischen der EU und Russland vor, worüber der Rat sich zustimmend geäußert hat. Die Kommission erarbeitet derzeit diesen Fahrplan in enger Zusammenarbeit mit den EU-Mitgliedstaaten und der Luftfahrtbranche und geht davon aus, ihn in naher Zukunft vorlegen zu können.

In dem Fahrplan werden auch die Voraussetzungen für eine Vertiefung unserer Luftfahrtbeziehungen behandelt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005296/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Relations with Russia in the area of aviation

In point 49 of its communication COM(2012)0556 on the EU's external aviation policy, the Commission emphasised that Russia still needed to demonstrate its commitment to the 2011 agreement to implement the 'Agreed Principles on the modernisation of the Siberian overflight system', that a normalised relationship or even a strategic partnership would have enormous benefits for both sides and that the Commission would propose a road-map whose ultimate objective should be a comprehensive EU-Russia aviation agreement as soon as the current obstacles are resolved.

1. Has Russia demonstrated its commitment to the agreement on Siberian overflights in the interim? If not, what steps has the Commission undertaken to encourage Russia to implement the agreement?

2. What aspects of relations with Russia regarding aviation are not 'normal' at present?

3. What is the Commission's estimate of the annual damage sustained due to problematic relations with Russia in the area of aviation?

4. In the opinion of the Commission, what would be the economic benefits of (a) normalised relations and (b) a strategic partnership with Russia?

5. Is the Commission acting on its own undertaking by developing a road-map whose ultimate objective is a comprehensive EU-Russia aviation agreement?

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

1. So far, Russia has not respected the transitional deadlines contained in the 'Agreed Principles'. This has raised serious concerns about Russia's commitment to ensure that the final deadline for the dismantling of the overall system (1 January 2014) will be respected. Over the last years the Commission has constantly raised this issue with the Russian authorities at all levels.

2. The Russian Federation's system of charging EU carriers for using Siberian routes to fly to Asian destinations is not compliant with Article 15 of the Chicago Convention as these are payments for the right to transit its territory.

Besides, the principle of EU designation still needs to be introduced in the bilateral aviation agreements between Russia and EU Member States.

3. It has been estimated that EU airlines have had to pay more than EUR 300 million annually (in royalties) for flying over Siberia.

4. A strategic partnership in aviation between the EU and Russia which is based on a liberalised EU-Russia aviation market would provide substantial economic benefits to both sides. According to an independent study, the total economic benefit would be in the order of EUR 1.9 billion per year.

5. In its External Aviation Policy Communication, the Commission proposed developing a road-map for enhancing EU-Russia aviation relations and this was welcomed by the Council. The Commission is preparing this road-map in close cooperation with EU Member States and the aviation industry and expects to present it soon.

The roadmap will include conditions for deepening our aviation relations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005297/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Ricostruire la bolla dei derivati

Nella conferenza stampa che la BCE ha tenuto il 2 maggio, il Presidente ha annunciato che il suo istituto sta esplorando la possibilità di resuscitare il mercato delle cartolarizzazioni ABS (Asset-Backed Securities), mercato che «è morto da tempo» — ha dichiarato. Alla richiesta di spiegazioni, il Presidente ha spiegato che la BCE è alla ricerca di titoli da acquistare dalle banche, «ma — ha aggiunto — non c'è tanta roba in giro che possiamo acquistare». Dopo aver offerto quantità illimitate di liquidità, «ora la BCE — denuncia l'Executive Intelligence Review (EIR n.19) — pensa di pompare direttamente il mercato dei derivati, ricostruendo la bolla che è esplosa nel 2007».

La Commissione ritiene corretta una simile interpretazione?

È noto che le banche hanno ristretto il credito e, nonostante la liquidità offerta dalla BCE, non prestano denaro alle imprese e alle famiglie. In più l'austerità ha prodotto disoccupazione, ha distrutto reddito e consumo, le imprese subiscono una diminuzione delle domande e le famiglie si vedono ridotto il reddito. E la mancanza di prestiti costringe al fallimento le imprese e a restrizioni impreviste le famiglie. Invece di lanciare programmi d'investimento — continua l'EIR — in modo da agire su domanda e offerta, la BCE suggerisce che le banche prestino comunque denaro, trasferendo il rischio con la cartolarizzazione dei prestiti, seguendo proprio il modello OTC che ha creato la crisi.

Ciò premesso, non ritiene la Commissione che la continua immissione di liquidità nel sistema, senza contribuire allo sviluppo e alla crescita, concorra a creare inflazione?

Non reputa invece che un ritorno ai principi della Glass-Steagall rappresenterebbe un contributo efficace alla riforma del sistema?

Insistere su proposte che non impegnano il sistema nell'economia reale, non potrebbe significare il percorso di un cammino già sperimentato come fallimentare e l'andare incontro a nuove crisi?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(15 luglio 2013)

La crisi del debito sovrano ha innescato una frammentazione dei mercati creditizi dell'area dell'euro. Stabilire in che modo si possa rafforzare la capacità delle istituzioni finanziarie di indirizzare finanziamenti verso l'economia è una questione importante della consultazione pubblica avviata dal Libro verde sugli investimenti a lungo termine che la Commissione ha pubblicato il 25 marzo 2013. Un secondo elemento rilevante è l'efficacia dei mercati finanziari nell'offrire strumenti di finanziamento a lungo termine. In questo contesto, ridefinendo i mercati delle cartolarizzazioni sarebbe forse possibile sbloccare ulteriori fonti di finanziamento. Con una vigilanza e a una trasparenza dei dati adeguate, tali mercati potrebbero aiutare gli istituti finanziari a liberare capitali da destinare a ulteriori attività di prestito, e a gestire i rischi.

Le cartolarizzazioni ABS (asset-backed securities) includono un'ampia gamma di prodotti. Alcuni titoli sono molto sicuri e simili a obbligazioni garantite. Altri, diffusi fino all'inizio della crisi, sono meno transparenti e altamente rischiosi (a causa dei disallineamenti di durata e una leva finanziaria elevata) e sono stati uno dei motivi di perturbazione dei mercati finanziari. In Europa, anche prima della crisi, la maggior parte delle cartolarizzazioni appartenevano al primo di questi due gruppi.

La Commissione sta realizzando una valutazione d'impatto delle conseguenze della riforma della struttura delle banche troppo grandi o troppo importanti per fallire. Tale valutazione copre tre settori principali: attività da separare, tipo di separazione, campo d'applicazione e introduzione dei cambiamenti. I risultati dovrebbero essere disponibili a inizio autunno ed è ora troppo presto per formulare previsioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005297/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Restoring the derivatives bubble

At the European Central Bank (ECB) press conference on 2 May 2013, the President announced that the institution was looking into the possibility of reviving the market in asset-backed securities (ABSs), a market which had 'been dead for a long time', as he put it. When asked to explain, the President explained that the ECB was looking for bonds to buy from banks but there was not much available for it to buy. According to the Executive Intelligence Review (EIR No 19), having offered unlimited amounts of liquidity, the ECB is now considering directly inflating the derivatives market, restoring the bubble that burst in 2007.

Does the Commission think that such an interpretation is right?

Banks have restricted their lending and, despite the liquidity provided by the ECB, are not lending money to companies and households. In addition, austerity has led to unemployment, destroyed income and spending, companies are facing lower demand and households are seeing their income shrink. The lack of credit is forcing businesses into bankruptcy and forcing unexpected constraints on households. Instead of launching investment programmes — the EIR goes on — so as to take action on supply and demand, the ECB is suggesting that banks lend money anyway, transferring risk by securitising the loans, following the over-the-counter model which brought about the crisis.

Does the Commission not think that constantly injecting liquidity into the system, without contributing to development and growth, leads to inflation?

Does it not think that a return to the Glass-Steagall principles would be an effective way of helping to reform the system?

Would insisting on proposals that do not force the system into the real economy not mean going down the path already travelled and shown to be disastrous, and running into new crises?

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

The sovereign debt crisis has initiated a fragmentation of euro area credit markets. How the capacity of financial institutions to channel finance to the economy can be strengthened is an important part of the public consultation initiated by the Green Paper on long-term investment, which the Commisison issued 25 March 2013. A second important part of the public consultation targets the effectiveness of financial markets to offer long-term financing instruments. In this context, reshaping securitisation markets could help unlock additional sources of finance. Subject to appropriate oversight and data transparency, they can help financial institutions free capital, which can then be mobilised for additional lending, and manage risk.

Asset-backed securities cover a wide range of products. Some are very secure and similar to covered bonds. Others, popular until the start of the crisis, are less transparant and highly risky (a.o. due to maturity mismatch and high leverage), and were one of the causes of disruption in the financial markets. In Europe, even before the crisis, the bulk of the securitisations belonged to the first group of securitized assets.

The Commission is currently undertaking an Impact Assessment with the objective to evaluate the consequences of reforming the structure of banks that are too big or too important to fail. It covers three main areas of design: activities to be separated, type of separation, and scope of application and phase-in. The results of the impact assessment are foreseen for early autumn, and it is too early to anticipate the results.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005298/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) y Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: El canal de televisión público Telemadrid equipara el nacionalismo catalán con Hitler y Stalin: infracción del artículo 6 de la Directiva 2007/65/CE sobre servicios audiovisuales

El 30 de abril, el canal público de televisión Telemadrid emitió un video en el que se equipara el nacionalismo catalán con Hitler, Stalin y la organización terrorista ETA ([1]).

En su programa «Zoom Telemadrid», un espacio de los servicios informativos, Telemadrid presentó un vídeo en el que se identifica el nacionalismo catalán con el nazismo y el estalinismo. Según el vídeo, los tres movimientos pervierten el lenguaje para imponer sus ideologías totalitarias ([2]). El vídeo comienza con imágenes de Stalin, Hitler, y la organización terrorista ETA, y a continuación imágenes del presidente de la Generalitat, Artur Mas, Oriol Junqueras, líder de la oposición en el parlamento catalán, y Josep Antoni Duran i Lleida, líder del partido CiU en el Congreso español ([3]). El video empieza con el siguiente comentario: «La propaganda estalinista lo creó, los nazis lo perfeccionaron y hoy se apodera de nosotros y nos articula sin que muchos sean conscientes». Además el profesor Dr. Fernando Vilches del Departamento de Lengua de la Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, comenta y declara en el video que el lenguaje es una magnífica arma de manipulación. Los políticos catalanes y vascos, elegidos democráticamente, son acusados de manipular perversamente el lenguaje, y sus imágenes se entrelazan con las de Stalin y Hitler.

De conformidad con la Directiva 2007/65/CE sobre servicios audiovisuales, las autoridades en los países de la Unión Europea garantizarán que los servicios de comunicación audiovisual no contengan incitaciones al odio por razón de raza, sexo, religión o nacionalidad. Este es un asunto relevante para aquellos canales que aprueban la violencia contra las personas o grupos como solución a conflictos sociales o políticos. El artículo 6 de la Directiva 2010/13/EU (Directiva de servicios de comunicación audiovisual) indica que: «los Estados miembros garantizarán, aplicando las medidas idóneas, que los servicios de comunicación audiovisual ofrecidos por prestadores bajo su jurisdicción no contengan incitaciones al odio por razón de raza, sexo, religión o nacionalidad».

En vista de lo expuesto anteriormente,

¿Considera la Comisión que el contenido de este vídeo se ajusta a lo dispuesto en la Directiva 2007/65/CE y su artículo 3 ter?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de julio de 2013)

Pregunta Su Señoría a la Comisión si el contenido de un programa de televisión concreto es compatible con el artículo 6 de la Directiva de servicios de comunicación audiovisual ([4]).

El artículo 6 de dicha Directiva reza como sigue: «Los Estados miembros garantizarán, aplicando las medidas idóneas, que los servicios de comunicación audiovisual ofrecidos por prestadores bajo su jurisdicción no contengan incitaciones al odio por razón de raza, sexo, religión o nacionalidad». El artículo 3 *ter* de la Directiva 2007/65/CE está redactado en los mismos términos, ya que la Directiva de servicios de comunicación audiovisual es una mera codificación de las Directivas 2007/65 CE y 89/552/CEE.

El artículo 6 de la Directiva de servicios de comunicación audiovisual ha sido incorporado al ordenamiento jurídico español mediante los artículos 4.2 y 57 de la Ley 7/2010 de 31 de marzo de 2010. Corresponde a los Estados miembros velar por que los servicios de comunicación audiovisuales cumplan el artículo 6 de la Directiva. La Comisión no dispone de información que indique que las autoridades españolas no desempeñan plenamente el cometido que establece el artículo 6. Con todo, ello no excluye que la Comisión pueda evaluar las medidas adoptadas por los Estados miembros, en caso necesario, como parte de la tarea de supervisión de la aplicación de la Directiva.

([1]) http://www.helpcatalonia.cat/2013/05/telemadrid-public-news-station-owned-by.html?m=1
([2]) http://www.elsingulardigital.cat/cat/notices/2013/05/telemadrid_equipara_el_nacionalisme_catala_amb_hitler_i_stalin_93964.php
([3]) http://www.naciodigital.cat/noticia/54290/hitler/mas/son/iguals/telemadrid?utm_source=&utm_medium=&utm_campaign=
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010L0013:ES:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005298/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) and Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Public Spanish TV channel Telemadrid equates Catalan nationalism with Hitler and Stalin — violation of Article 6 of Directive 2007/65/CE on audiovisual services

On 30 April 2013, a video comparing and equating Catalan nationalism with Hitler, Stalin and terrorist organisation ETA was broadcasted on Public Spanish TV Channel Telemadrid ([1]).

In its 'Zoom' feature, part of the Daily News programme, Telemadrid presented a video in which Catalan nationalism is equated with Nazism and Stalinism. According to the video, all three 'pervert' the language, aiming to impose their totalitarian ideologies ([2]). The video, which begins with images of Stalin, Hitler and the terrorist organisation ETA, is followed by images of the President of the Catalan Government, Artur Mas; Oriol Junqueras, leader of the opposition in the Catalan Parliament; and Josep Antoni Duran Lleida, leader of the CiU party in the Spanish Congress ([3]). The video starts with the following comments: 'Stalin's propaganda came up with the idea, the Nazis perfected it, and nowadays it's everywhere and it defines our words without most of us knowing it'. Moreover, in the video, the professor, Dr Fernando Vilches, from the Department of Languages at the Rey Juan Carlos University, comments and declares that language is a fantastic weapon for manipulation. Catalan and Basque politicians, democratically elected, are accused of perversely misusing the language and are shown with no hesitation alongside images of Stalin and Hitler.

According to Directive 2007/65/EC on audiovisual services, the authorities in every EU country must ensure that audiovisual media services do not contain any incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality. This is an issue, for instance, with channels that endorse violence against individuals or groups as the solution to social or political conflicts. Article 6 of Directive 2010/13/EU (the Audiovisual Media Services Directive) affirms that: 'Member States shall ensure by appropriate means that audiovisual media services provided by media service providers under their jurisdiction do not contain any incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality'.

In the light of the above,

does the Commission believe that the content of this video complies with Directive 2007/65/CE and its Article 3b?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

The Honourable Members ask the Commission whether the content of a specific broadcast programme is compatible with Article 6 of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) ([4]).

Article 6 AVMSD provides: 'Member States shall ensure by appropriate means that audiovisual media services provided by media service providers under their jurisdiction do not contain any incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality'. Article 3b of Directive 2007/65/EC is worded identically, the AVMSD being a codification of Directive 2007/65/EC and Directive 89/552/EEC .

Article 6 AVMSD is transposed into Spanish law in Article 4.2 and Article 57 of Law No 7/2010 of 31 March 2010. It is the responsibility of Member States to ascertain the compliance of audiovisual media services with Article 6 AVMSD. There is no information available to the Commission to suggest that the Spanish authorities would not fully carry out their tasks under the article 6 AVMSD in Spain. This does not, however, preclude the Commission to eventually assess measures taken by the Member States, where necessary, as part of the task to monitor the implementation of the directive.

([1]) http://www.helpcatalonia.cat/2013/05/telemadrid-public-news-station-owned-by.html?m=1
([2]) http://www.elsingulardigital.cat/cat/notices/2013/05/telemadrid_equipara_el_nacionalisme_catala_amb_hitler_i_stalin_93964.php
([3]) http://www.naciodigital.cat/noticia/54290/hitler/mas/son/iguals/telemadrid?utm_source=&utm_medium=&utm_campaign=
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010L0013:EN:NOT

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005300/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja Prawosławnego Arcybiskupstwa Ochrydzkiego w Macedonii

Republika Macedonii znajduje się w zaawansowanym stadium procesu integracyjnego z Unią Europejską. Tymczasem w kraju tym wciąż nierozwiązana pozostaje kwestia swobody działania Prawosławnego Arcybiskupstwa Ochrydzkiego, zrzeszającego znaczną część macedońskich wyznawców prawosławia (religii dominującej). Arcybiskupstwo pozostaje pod jurysdykcją Patriarchatu Serbskiego i jest uznawane za kanoniczny kościół przez wszystkie inne kanoniczne cerkwie. Natomiast Komisja Religii Państwowych – faworyzująca autokefaliczny (i uważany za schizmatyczny) Macedoński Kościół Prawosławny – odmawia jego rejestracji.

Mając na uwadze naczelne zasady funkcjonowania Wspólnoty, w tym swobodę sumienia i wyznania, zwracam się z prośbą o ustosunkowanie się do poniższych problemów:

1. Czy w toku negocjacji akcesyjnych podejmowane są działania nakierowane na uregulowanie kwestii wyznaniowych i poszanowanie wolności funkcjonowania zgromadzeń religijnych w Macedonii?

2. Jakie stanowisko zajmuje Komisja w sprawie prześladowania metropolity Jovana Vraniskovskiego (wielokrotnie aresztowanego, a obecnie przetrzymywanego w zamkniętym zakładzie karnym), uznawanego przez Amnesty International za więźnia sumienia?

3. Czy podejmowane są jakieś działania celem wsparcia duchownych serbskich (Serbia również stara się o członkostwo w UE) zaangażowanych na rzecz umożliwienia nieskrępowanej działalności Arcybiskupstwa Ochrydzkiego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(15 lipca 2013 r.)

Była jugosłowiańska republika Macedonii jest państwem kandydującym do przystąpienia do Unii Europejskiej. Negocjacje w sprawie przystąpienia jeszcze się nie rozpoczęły.

Wolność wyznania jest prawem obywatelskim i podstawowym kryterium dla każdego państwa ubiegającego się o członkowstwo w Unii Europejskiej. Komisja podejmuje regularny dialog z byłą jugosłowiańską republiką Macedonii, aby zapewnić poszanowanie takich praw. W swoim rocznym sprawozdaniu z postępu prac Komisja składa sprawozdanie z rozwoju sytuacji i postępów. Ponadto Komisja oferuje instytucjom państwowym wsparcie w obszarze praw obywatelskich.

UE jest świadoma sprawy, którą porusza szanowny Pan Poseł. Nie ma jednak możliwości zajmowania stanowiska w indywidualnych sprawach. W swoim regularnym dialogu z rządem i instytucjami państwowymi Komisja podkreśla znaczenie niezależności, bezstronności, odpowiedzialności i profesjonalizmu sądownictwa, jak również poszanowania prawa w kwestiach związanych ze statusem prawnym kościołów, społeczności i grup wyznaniowych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005300/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Situation facing the Orthodox Archbishopric of Ohrid in the Republic of Macedonia

The Republic of Macedonia has reached an advanced phase in its integration process with the EU. However, the issue of the freedom to operate of the Orthodox Archbishopric of Ohrid — which represents a significant proportion of the country's Orthodox believers — remains unresolved. Orthodoxy is the dominant religion in the Republic of Macedonia, and the Archbishopric remains under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarchate. It is considered a canonical church by all other canonical Orthodox churches. However, the Macedonian committee of state religions, which favours the autocephalous and schismatic Macedonian Orthodox Church, is refusing its registration.

Given that the EU's guiding principles include freedom of conscience and religion, could the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. Were steps taken during accession talks to tackle religious issues and to ensure that Macedonian religious communities enjoy freedom to operate?

2. What is the Commission's position regarding the persecution of Archbishop Jovan Vraniškovski, who has been arrested on many occasions, is currently imprisoned, and is considered a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International?

3. Are any steps being taken to support Serbian clergy who are involved in trying to ensure that the Archbishop of Ohrid can go about his duties unhindered? Serbia is also keen to apply for EU membership.

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a candidate country to join the European Union; Accession negotiations have not yet started.

Freedom of religion is a civil right and a basic criterion for any aspirant Member State of the European Union. The Commission undertakes regular dialogue with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in order to ensure that such rights are respected and reports on progress in its annual Progress Report. The Commission also offers support to the state institutions in the area of civil rights.

The EU is aware of and has been following the case referred to by the Honourable Member. However, it is not in a position to comment on individual cases. In its regular dialogue with the government and state institutions, the Commission stresses the importance of the independence, impartiality, accountability and professionalism of the judiciary, as well as respect for the Law on the Legal Status of Churches, Religious Communities and Religious Groups.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005301/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Groźby Al-Kaidy wobec Francji

W związku z ujawnionym przez media (w dniu 7 maja br.) nagraniem, na którym Abu Obeida Yousef al-Annabi – terrorysta uznawany za czołową postać północnoafrykańskiej filii Al-Kaidy (AQIM) – wzywa muzułmanów do atakowania francuskich celów „wszędzie na świecie", proszę o informacje w poniższych kwestiach:

1. Czy właściwe instytucje Unii Europejskiej w jakiś sposób monitorują na bieżąco możliwe zagrożenia kolejnymi atakami terrorystycznymi w Europie, celem ich wyeliminowania, czy też pozostaje to w wyłącznej gestii krajów członkowskich?

2. W następstwie gróźb, prezydent François Hollande zaapelował do wszystkich Europejczyków o wspólne przeciwstawienie się terroryzmowi. Jak Komisja ocenia obecny stopień zagrożenia dla krajów członkowskich, w szczególności Francji, ze strony Al-Kaidy? Czy jest on wysoki?

3. Czy ze strony instytucji europejskich podjęte zostaną jakiekolwiek działania dla wzmocnienia ochrony francuskich przedstawicielstw dyplomatycznych, przedsiębiorstw oraz innych instytucji, bądź organizacji funkcjonujących w pozostałych krajach członkowskich Unii?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(19 lipca 2013 r.)

1. Komisja w pełni angażuje się we współpracę ze wszystkimi partnerami, których dotyczy podniesiona kwestia, w tym państwami członkowskimi i ESDZ, by móc stawić czoła groźbie terroryzmu w Europie. Komisja wspiera w szczególności inicjatywy podjęte w następstwie dyskusji prowadzonych w lutym i marcu br. na forum Stałego Komitetu Współpracy Operacyjnej w zakresie Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego oraz Komitetu Politycznego i Bezpieczeństwa na temat wpływu kryzysu w Mali na bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne UE. Grupy robocze działające w ramach sieci upowszechniania wiedzy o radykalizacji postaw angażują się w działania wspierające, które między innymi mają na celu zniechęcenie osób do wyjazdu z Europy do strefy konfliktu w charakterze zagranicznych bojowników i zapobieganie temu zjawisku, a także oferowanie pomocy państwom członkowskim w razie ewentualnego zagrożenia, jakie stwarzają takie osoby po swoim powrocie. Do konkretnych działań należy między innymi docieranie do zagrożonych społeczności, m.in. diaspor, opracowywanie komunikatów przeciwstawiających się radykalnym postawom oraz podejmowanie działań na rzecz odbudowy z udziałem lokalnych podmiotów, społeczności i rodzin; odpowiednie szkolenia dla policji na linii frontu oraz szerzenie wiedzy na temat sektorów zdrowia.

Komisja nie posiada uprawnień w zakresie dokonywania oceny zagrożeń związanych z terroryzmem. Komisja ułatwiła jednak opracowanie metodologii w dziedzinie oceny ryzyka bezpieczeństwa. Takie oceny są prowadzone szczególnie w zakresie ochrony lotnictwa, na podstawie modelu metodologicznego opracowanego wspólnie z państwami członkowskimi, i koncentrują się na zagrożeniach związanych z terroryzmem oraz ładunkami lotniczymi i płynnymi materiałami wybuchowymi. Rozważa się poszerzenie zakresu takiego podejścia metodologicznego o inne obszary ochrony lotnictwa.

2. Ocena stopnia zagrożenia w państwach członkowskich pozostaje w wyłącznej gestii tych państw.

3. UE nie posiada kompetencji w zakresie bezpośredniej ochrony urzędników służby cywilnej, przedsiębiorców, organizacji i organów w państwach członkowskich.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005301/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Al-Qaeda threats against France

In connection with the recorded message released on 7 May 2013 in which Abou Obeida Youssef Al-Annabi, a terrorist known to be a leading figure in the north-African offshoot of Al-Qaeda, AQIM, called on Muslims to attack French interests 'everywhere', can the Commission say:

1. whether the relevant EU bodies are doing anything to monitor the risk of further terrorist attacks being carried out in Europe, with a view to averting them, or whether such matters remain within the exclusive preserve of the Member States?

2. how great a threat it considers al-Qaeda to pose to Member States, in particular France, following the call on all Europeans to take a common stand against terrorism that was made by President Hollande in response to the above message? Is there a high threat level at present?

3. whether the EU institutions have taken any steps to upgrade protection for people working for the French diplomatic service, French businesses and other French organisations and bodies in the other Member States?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

1. The Commission is fully committed to working with all relevant partners, including Member States and the EEAS to confront the risk of terrorism in Europe. In particular, it supports the initiatives taken following the discussions in February/March 2013, both in the COSI and in the PSC , about the implications of the Mali crisis on EU internal security. Working groups of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) have been involved in supporting action such as aiming at preventing and discouraging people departing from Europe to conflict zones as foreign fighters, and offering assistance to MS on the possible threat posed by returnees. Specific actions identified include reaching out to the communities at risk including to Diasporas, construct counter messages and rehabilitation actions involving local actors, communities and families; appropriate training to frontline police, and increasing awareness of the health sectors.

The Commission has no mandate to conduct terrorism related threat assessment. However, in the Commission has facilitated the establishment of a methodological pattern in the field of security risk assessment. Notably in the field of aviation security, based on a methodological model developed jointly with Member States, risk assessment exercises have been conducted in the field of risks related to terrorism and air cargo as well as liquid explosives. Consideration is being given to the extension of this methodological approach to other domains of aviation security.

2. The threat level assessment in Member States is the exclusive prerogative of each Member State.

3. The EU has no competence for the direct protection of Member States' public servants, businessmen, organisations and bodies.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005302/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Konflikty na tle religijnym w Bangladeszu

Eskalacja krwawych manifestacji, będących następstwem działalności radykalnych grup islamskich w Bangladeszu kosztowała w ostatnim czasie życie kolejnych ponad dwudziestu osób. Prawdopodobnie zdecydowana większość aktów przemocy jest pokłosiem dyskryminacji mniejszości religijnych.

W oparciu o zalecenia rezolucji Parlamentu Europejskiego w sprawie sytuacji w Bangladeszu przyjętej w marcu br. chciałbym zapytać, czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych podjęła, bądź planuje podjęcie, stosownych działań dyplomatycznych w powyższej sprawie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(12 lipca 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca podziela zaniepokojenie gwałtownymi starciami pomiędzy zwolennikami radykalnie islamskiego ruchu Hefazat a osobami dążącymi do utrzymania w Bangladeszu świeckiego charakteru państwa. Opinie w tej kwestii ulegają polaryzacji, a starcia pociągają za sobą niestety ofiary śmiertelne. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jasno wyraziła swoje zaniepokojenie w niedawno wydanym oświadczeniu, w którym apeluje do wszystkich sił politycznych o współdziałanie w interesie kraju. Poruszała tę kwestię również w czasie niedawnego spotkania z ministrem spraw zagranicznych Bangladeszu Dipu Moni w dniu 1 czerwca 2013 r.

Niedawno w następstwie wyroków wydanych przez Trybunał ds. Zbrodni Międzynarodowych demonstracje rozpoczęła również partia Dżamaat-i-Islami.

UE wzywała wszystkie partie polityczne do użycia swoich wpływów w celu zmniejszenia napięć politycznych, starając się jednak nie wywierać wrażenia, że UE i inni członkowie wspólnoty międzynarodowej próbują ingerować w wewnętrzne sprawy Bangladeszu lub postępowania toczące się przed sądami.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005302/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Religious conflicts in Bangladesh

The recent escalation in violent demonstrations instigated by radical Islamic groups has cost the lives of more than 20 people. It is likely that most of the acts of violence were motivated by a desire to discriminate against religious minorities.

In view of the recommendations of Parliament's resolution on the situation in Bangladesh, which was adopted in March 2013, has the European External Action Service taken — or does it plan to take — appropriate diplomatic measures in this matter?

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

The HR/VP shares the concerns over the violent clashes between the Hefazat movement, which pursues a radical Islamic agenda, and those who wish Bangladesh to remain a secular state. Opinions have become polarized on this issue and sadly, lives have been lost. The HR/VP has made these concerns clear in her recent statement, appealing to all political forces to work together in the interests of the country, as well as during recent meeting with the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Dipu Moni, on 1 June 2013.

Demonstrations have also been launched by Jamaat-i-Islami lately as a result of sentences handed down by the International Crimes Tribunal.

The EU has called on all political parties to use their influence to reduce political tensions, without conveying the impression that the EU, and other members of the international community, intend to interfere in Bangladesh's internal affairs or in questions which are *sub judice*.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005303/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wypowiedź przewodniczącego Komisji Europejskiej

Pan przewodniczący Komisji Europejskiej José Manuel Barroso w wywiadzie dla brytyjskiego dziennika „The Telegraph" tłumaczył, że Europa w ciągu kilku lat powinna zostać sfederalizowana. W moim odczuciu, podzielanym przez wielu polskich obywateli, jest to wypowiedź bardzo niepokojąca, nosząca znamiona zagrożenia dla państwowości krajów członkowskich Wspólnoty. W nawiązaniu do powyższego zwracam się z prośbą o uściślenie:

1. Czy Komisja podziela powyżej przytoczone stanowisko pana przewodniczącego, czy też należy je odczytywać jedynie w charakterze prywatnej opinii członka najwyższych władz Unii Europejskiej?

2. Czy Komisja opracowuje strategię federalizacji krajów członkowskich i jaki jest stopień jej zaawansowania?

3. Pan przewodniczący zapowiedział przedstawienie szczegółowych informacji w maju przyszłego roku. Czy wcześniej zostaną one zaprezentowane posłom oraz czy planowana jest debata w Parlamencie Europejskim jeszcze w bieżącej kadencji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Przewodniczącego Komisji José Manuela Barroso w imieniu Komisji
(26 czerwca 2013 r.)

Komisja wzywa do utworzenia federacji państw narodowych, a nie superpaństwa. Innymi słowy, chodzi o utworzenie demokratycznej federacji państw narodowych, która będzie w stanie rozwiązywać nasze wspólne problemy, dokonując takiego podziału suwerenności, aby każde państwo i każdy obywatel byli lepiej przygotowani do kontrolowania swojego własnego losu.

Komisja nie opracowuje „strategii federalizacji państw członkowskich". W kontekście dalszej integracji politycznej, do której wezwano w „Planie działania na rzecz pogłębionej i rzeczywistej unii gospodarczej i walutowej", Komisja wspiera wysiłki na rzecz zwiększenia demokratycznej odpowiedzialności i demokratycznego umocowania, zarówno na szczeblu europejskim, jak i krajowym.

Na początku 2014 r., przed nadchodzącymi wyborami do Parlamentu Europejskiego, Komisja przedstawi wyraźne i konkretne propozycje zmiany Traktatu, które zostaną poddane dyskusji. Tak gruntowne zmiany trzeba będzie dobrze przygotować podczas debaty o prawdziwie europejskim wymiarze, w której udział wezmą liczne zainteresowane strony, w tym parlamenty narodowe i ich członkowie, jak również sami Europejczycy, będący głównymi uczestnikami serii dialogów obywatelskich prowadzonych już w całej UE. Kampania przed wyborami do Parlamentu Europejskiego będzie świetną okazją do takiej debaty.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005303/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: President of the Commission's statement

In an interview for the British newspaper *The Telegraph*, the President of the Commission, José Manuel Barroso, explained that Europe should be federalised over the next few years. I feel, as do many Poles, that this statement is extremely disconcerting, as it appears to threaten the statehood of the EU Member States.

1. Does the Commission share the view expressed by its President, or should it be viewed solely as the private opinion of a member of the EU's supreme institution?

2. Is the Commission working on a strategy to federalise the Member States? If so, how far has this strategy advanced?

3. President Barroso announced that detailed information would be released in May 2014.Will this information first be submitted to MEPs, and is a debate in Parliament planned for the current parliamentary term?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

The Commission is calling for a federation of nation states, not for a superstate. In other words, for a democratic federation of nation states that can tackle our common problems, through the sharing of sovereignty in a way that each country and each citizen are better equipped to control their own destiny.

The Commission is not working on 'a strategy to federalise the Member States'. In the context of the further political integration called for by the Blueprint 'Towards a Deep and Genuine EMU', the Commission is supporting efforts to strengthen democratic accountability and legitimacy, at both the European and national levels.

Early in 2014, before the next European elections, the Commission will put forward clear and specific ideas for Treaty change in time for a debate. Such fundamental changes have to be well prepared in a debate of a truly European dimension, involving numerous stakeholders including Parliaments and their members as well as Europeans who are at the heart of the series of Citizens' Dialogues already underway across the EU. The campaign leading up to the European elections will be an ideal occasion for that.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005304/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Direttiva sui nitrati: chiarimenti sulla situazione italiana

Considerando la sua risposta all'interrogazione «Direttiva Nitrati: Italia a rischio di una nuova procedura di infrazione» (E-001102/2013), può la Commissione indicare:

— in quale modo ha valutato la risposta che l'Italia le ha inviato in data 8 marzo, in seguito alla lettera di costituzione in mora?

— Quali sono le regioni italiane che ancora non hanno indicato, con apposito decreto regionale, la designazione delle zone vulnerabili ai nitrati (ZVN)?

— Qual è attualmente la sua posizione in merito alla situazione italiana, che vede, da un lato, la maggior parte delle regioni aver effettivamente designato una mappa delle ZVN e, dall'altro, la presenza della deroga prevista dalla normativa nazionale con la legge 221 del 17 dicembre 2012?

— La mancata applicazione della normativa europea in questione avrebbe un impatto sulla futura erogazione dei fondi PAC per l'Italia? In caso affermativo, in che termini e in che misura?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(21 giugno 2013)

Come già precisato nella risposta della Commissione all'interrogazione scritta E-001102/2013, le diciotto regioni che hanno designato almeno una zona vulnerabile ai nitrati hanno adottato decreti regionali che confermano l'effettiva designazione della zona vulnerabile ai nitrati riflettendo così la validità e l'applicabilità dei loro programmi d'azione. Le autorità italiane, nella loro risposta alla lettera di costituzione in mora, hanno confermato l'intenzione di abrogare l'articolo 36, paragrafo 7-quater, della legge n. 221 del 17 dicembre 2012. Tuttavia, essendo questa disposizione tuttora in vigore, la Commissione ritiene che il quadro legislativo nazionale italiano rimanga in violazione della direttiva sui nitrati e conta che l'Italia affronti questo problema quanto prima.

Poiché la direttiva sui nitrati è parte del quadro di riferimento per una serie di misure nell'ambito dei programmi di sviluppo rurale e fa anche parte della condizionalità (articoli 4 e 5 del regolamento (CE) N. 73/2009 ([1]) nonché articolo 51 del regolamento (CE) n. 1698/2005 ([2])), la sua mancata attuazione avrebbe ripercussioni sia sul primo sia sul secondo pilastro della politica agricola comune.

([1]) GU L 30 del 31.1.2009, pag. 16.
([2]) GU L 277 del 21.10.2005, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005304/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Nitrates Directive: clarifications on the situation in Italy

In view of the Commission's answer to the Question entitled 'Nitrates Directive: Italy at risk of another infringement procedure' (E-001102/2013):

— What did the Commission think of Italy's reply, dated 8 March 2013, to the letter of formal notice?

— Which Italian regions have still not drawn up the appropriate regional decrees to designate nitrate vulnerable zones (NVZs)?

— What is the Commission's current position on the situation in Italy, whereby, on the one hand, most regions have actually drawn up a map of NVZs and, on the other, there is the derogation under national legislation in the form of Law No 221 of 17 December 2012?

— Would failure to implement EC law in this area affect the granting of common agricultural policy funds to Italy in the future? If so, how and to what extent?

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

As already specified in the Commission's answer to the Written Question E-001102/2013, all eighteen regions which had designated at least one nitrates vulnerable zone have adopted regional decrees confirming their current nitrate vulnerable zone designation, thus reflecting the validity and applicability of their action programmes. In their reply to the Letter of Formal Notice, Italian authorities confirmed their intention to repeal Article 36, paragraph 7-quater, of law no 221 of 17 December 2012. However, given that this provision is still in force, the Commission considers that the Italian national legislative framework remains in breach of the Nitrates Directive and expects Italy to address this remaining issue as soon as possible.

Since the Nitrates Directive forms part of the baseline for several measures in Rural Development Programmes and is also a part of cross-compliance (Articles 4 and 5 of Regulation (EC) 73/2009 ([1]) as well as Article 51 of Regulation (EC) 1698/2005 ([2])), its non-implementation would have impacts on both the first and second pillars of the common agricultural policy.

([1]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009, p. 16-99.
([2]) OJ L277, 21.10.2005, p. 1-40.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005305/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Segnalazione da parte dell'agente immobiliare al proprio cliente del nominativo di un mediatore creditizio

È prassi diffusa che il cliente di un agente immobiliare, all'atto della sottoscrizione di una proposta di acquisto di un immobile, chieda all'agente immobiliare se sappia indicargli il nominativo di un mediatore creditizio al quale rivolgersi per la ricerca di un finanziamento occorrente per il perfezionamento dell'acquisto. Il D.lgs. 141/2010 che regola l'attività di mediazione creditizia, di recepimento della direttiva 2008/48/CE del Parlamento europeo relativa ai contratti di credito ai consumatori, non disciplina espressamente in alcuna sua disposizione l'attività di segnalazione dell'agente immobiliare, al proprio cliente, del nominativo di un mediatore creditizio.

Tale attività è svolta dall'agente immobiliare gratuitamente a favore del cliente-consumatore e consente a quest'ultimo di disporre di una più ampia scelta di prodotti ed opportunità finanziarie, beneficiando, e garantendo, una maggiore concorrenza del mercato ed un indiscutibile vantaggio economico per il cliente-consumatore. Anche in altri paesi europei tale prassi è riscontrata.

Alla luce di quanto finora esposto:

— ritiene la Commissione che la predetta attività di segnalazione sia condivisibile e conforme al diritto europeo?

— ritiene che, anche al fine di garantire un'uniformità di orientamenti e disposizioni legislative a livello comunitario, sia auspicabile che detta attività di segnalazione debba essere espressamente regolamentata dai soggetti interessati tramite la stipula di contratti scritti, contenenti l'espressa previsione della gratuità di tale attività a favore del consumatore?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2013)

La Commissione non dispone di una legislazione che riguardi la prassi della segnalazione informale di un mediatore da parte dell'agente immobiliare, indicata dall'onorevole parlamentare.

La Commissione conferma all'onorevole parlamentare che l'attività degli agenti immobiliari e dei mediatori creditizi nel settore del credito ipotecario non è disciplinata dalla direttiva 2008/48/CE, la quale non si applica ai contratti di credito garantiti da un'ipoteca oppure da un'altra garanzia analoga, né ai contratti di credito finalizzati all'acquisto o alla conservazione di diritti di proprietà su un terreno o un immobile.

Nell'aprile 2011 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di direttiva sui contratti di credito relativi a immobili residenziali (la cosiddetta direttiva sul credito ipotecario). Nell'aprile scorso è stato raggiunto un accordo politico in sede di negoziati a tre e la direttiva dev'essere ora adottata formalmente dai due colegislatori. La nuova direttiva non disciplina la prassi della segnalazione di un mediatore da parte di un agente immobiliare, ma contiene una serie di disposizioni destinate ai mediatori creditizi, in particolare sulle norme di comportamento, sui requisiti di conoscenza e competenza, sui servizi di consulenza e sui requisiti in materia di informazione, allo scopo di garantire comportamenti onesti, equi, trasparenti e professionali che tengano conto dei diritti e degli interessi dei consumatori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005305/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Estate agents recommending credit intermediaries to their clients

When signing an offer to buy a property, it is common practice for an estate agent's client to ask the estate agent whether he can recommend the name of a credit intermediary whom the client can approach to find the necessary financing to complete the purchase. Legislative Decree No 141/2010, regulating the activity of credit intermediation and transposing Directive 2008/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on credit agreements for consumers, does not contain any provisions expressly regulating the practice whereby an estate agent recommends a credit intermediary to his client.

This service is provided by the estate agent to the client/consumer free of charge and gives the client a wider choice of financial products and opportunities, promoting and ensuring greater competition in the market and giving the client/consumer an indisputable economic advantage. This practice is also common in other EU countries.

— Does the Commission think that the abovementioned practice of recommending an intermediary is acceptable and complies with EC law?

— Does it think that, in order to ensure that guidelines and legislative provisions are consistent across the EU, this practice of recommending an intermediary should be expressly regulated by the interested parties by drawing up written contracts, expressly stipulating that the service is provided to the consumer free of charge?

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

The Commission does not have in place legislation regarding the practice of recommending, an intermediary by a real estate agent on an informal basis, as mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The Commission confirms to the Honourable Member that the regulation of the activity of estate agents and credit intermediaries in mortgage credit is outside the scope of Directive 2008/48/EC. This legislation does not regulate credits secured by mortgage or any comparable security or credit granted to acquire or retain rights in land or buildings.

The Commission has adopted in April 2011 a proposal for a directive on Credit Agreements Related to Residential Immovable Property (currently known as the Mortgage Credit Directive). A political agreement has been reached in trilogue negotiations last April and it needs the formal adoption by the two co-legislators. The directive will not regulate the practice of recommending an intermediary by a real estate agent. Nevertheless, it contains a series of provisions dedicated to credit intermediaries, in particular on conduct of business, knowledge and competence, advisory services, information requirements, with the aim of ensuring honest, fair, transparent and professional behaviours taking into account the rights and interest of consumers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005306/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Mediazione creditizia — requisiti per l'accesso all'attività

Il decreto legislativo n. 141/2010, di recepimento della direttiva 2008/48/CE del Parlamento europeo relativa ai contratti di credito ai consumatori, ha introdotto, all'articolo 14, paragrafo 2, con riferimento alle figure dei mediatori creditizi e degli agenti in attività finanziaria, dei «requisiti di professionalità» assai rigorosi in quanto, tra l'altro, dispone che il presidente del consiglio di amministrazione, l'amministratore unico o l'amministratore delegato di dette società debbano essere scelti secondo criteri di professionalità e competenza fra persone che abbiano maturato un'esperienza complessiva di almeno un quinquennio attraverso l'esercizio di attività o di funzioni di adeguata responsabilità.

Si è quindi introdotta, con tale disposizione, una rigorosa barriera all'ingresso delle citate attività, in quanto colui che volesse intraprendere l'attività di mediazione creditizia, oltre a disporre di requisiti patrimoniali assai impegnativi (120 000,00 euro di capitale sociale minimo interamente versato) deve dimostrare di aver maturato un'esperienza dirigenziale per almeno un quinquennio, con la conseguenza che nessun giovane potrà mai decidere di intraprendere detta attività, pur se in possesso di titoli accademici e risorse economiche, qualora non sia in grado di dimostrare questa esperienza pluriennale con funzioni di responsabilità.

Ciò premesso, ritiene la Commissione che detta disciplina sia conforme al diritto europeo, con particolare riferimento ai principi della libertà e concorrenza del mercato e del libero accesso alle attività economiche?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(26 giugno 2013)

La direttiva 2008/48/CE ([1]) relativa ai contratti di credito ai consumatori non prevede nessun requisito di professionalità per gli intermediari e gli agenti finanziari.

Se il decreto n. 141/2010 conteneva tali disposizioni la Commissione non le ha sottoposte a un controllo di recepimento poiché esse esulavano dal campo di applicazione della direttiva così recepita.

Nel settore dei crediti al consumo e dei prestiti immobiliari garantiti la Commissione ha adottato, nel marzo 2011, una proposta di direttiva in merito ai contratti di credito relativi a immobili residenziali ([2]) su cui nell'aprile 2013 si è raggiunto un accordo politico. La futura direttiva è in corso di adozione formale da parte dei colegislatori e prevede un minimo di conoscenze e requisiti professionali da parte dei mediatori creditizi. In particolare gli Stati membri dovranno stabilire il livello appropriato di conoscenze e competenza in base alle qualifiche professionali e all'esperienza professionale possedute.

([1]) GU L 133/66 del 22.5.2008.
([2]) COM(2011)142 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005306/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Requirements for taking up the activity of credit intermediation

Article 14(2) of Legislative Decree No 141/2010, transposing Directive 2008/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on credit agreements for consumers, introduced 'professional proficiency requirements' for credit intermediaries and financial agents. The requirements are very strict as the article lays down, *inter alia*, that the chairman of the management board, the sole director or the managing director of such companies must be chosen according to professional proficiency and competence criteria from among candidates who have at least five years' experience in activities or roles with a suitable degree of responsibility.

This provision has thus introduced a significant barrier to taking up the aforementioned activities, since anyone who wants to take up the activity of credit intermediation, in addition to meeting the very onerous financial requirements (fully paid-up share capital of at least EUR 120 000.00), must show that they have at least five years' managerial experience, meaning that no young person will ever be able to decide to take up this activity, despite having the academic qualifications and financial means, if they cannot show that they have several years of experience in positions of responsibility.

Does the Commission think that this legislation complies with EC law, particularly as regards the principles of a free and competitive market and of free access to economic activities?

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

The directive 2008/48/EC ([1]) on credit agreement for consumers does not include any professional proficiency requirements of intermediaries and financial agents.

If the Decree No 141/2010 contained such provisions, they were not subject to transposition check for the Commission as being outside the scope of transposed Directive.

In the field of secured consumer credits and home loans, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on Credit Agreements Related to Residential Immovable Property ([2]) in March 2011, on which a political agreement was reached in April 2013. The future Directive is in the process of formal adoption by the co-legislators and will provide for minimum knowledge and professional requirements for staff of credit intermediaries. In particular Member States will have to determine the appropriate level of knowledge and competence on the basis of professional qualifications or professional experience.

([1]) OJ L 133/66, 22.5.2008.
([2]) COM(2011)142 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005307/13
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Combating invasive alien species

In the UK, there is a growing need to prevent the spread of certain invasive alien species, many of which are detrimentally impacting native species. In Scotland, the non-native plant species *Rhododendron ponticum* is causing significant damage to native oakwoods.

This alien species possesses dense thickets, which shade out indigenous plants, preventing regeneration of trees in woods and obliterating the ground vegetation on moors. It is poisonous to livestock and cannot be controlled by grazing. It also plays host to the disease organisms *Phytophthora ramorum* and *P. kernoviae*, which attack oak and beech trees. The costs of eradicating this species in the region of Argyll and Bute alone have been calculated at GBP 9 million, rising to a staggering GBP 64 million by 2028 if action is not taken promptly. Furthermore, similar scenarios have been noted across the EU, particularly in western France.

Is the Commission aware of the impact that invasive alien species are having in certain regions of the European Union? If so, what steps will the Commission take to ensure that effective legislative proposals are submitted to prevent the release of non-native plants into the environment?

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

The European Commission is well aware of the increasing environmental, social and economic negative impacts caused by invasive alien species (IAS) across the Union. Damage and control of IAS in Europe have been estimated to cost at least EUR 12 billion per year ([1]), and without more coordinated efforts those costs are expected to keep rising. The species mentioned, *Rhododendron ponticum* is indeed of concern because of its damage to biodiversity and because the current control measures in Great Britain have been estimated to cost approximately EUR 10 million per year ([2]).

As announced in the communication on an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ([3]), the Commission is developing a legislative proposal for the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species.

([1]) IEEP (2010) Assessment of the impacts of invasive alien species in Europe and the EU, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/docs/Kettunen2009_IAS_Task%201.pdf
([2]) CABI (2010) The Economic Cost of Invasive Non-Native Species on Great Britain, https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/index.cfm?sectionid=59
([3]) COM(2011) 244 final.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub P-005308/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' Mejju 2013)

Suġġett: Id-Direttiva Qafas 2002/21/KE tal-UE dwar it-Telekomunikazzjonijiet kif emendata mid-Direttiva 2009/140/KE

Fit-12 ta' Marzu 2013, il-Gvern ta' Malta kiteb lill-membri tal-bord tal-awtorità regolatorja nazzjonali tas-settur tal-komunikazzjonijiet f'Malta — l-Awtorità ta' Malta dwar il-Komunikazzjoni (MCA) — u tahom istruzzjonijiet biex joffru r-riżenja tagħhom mill-karigi rispettivi tagħhom u ddikkjara li "ċ-Chairpersons u l-Membri tal-Bord u tal-Kumitati mistennija joffru r-riżenja tagħhom lill-Ministru kkonċernat sabiex il-Gvern il-ġdid ikun jista' jagħmel xi bidliet li jitqiesu ta' siwi."

Fl-14 ta' Marzu 2013, dak li kien Chairman tal-MCA, Dr Antonio Ghio, ġie kostrett joffri r-riżenja tiegħu skont kif mitlub mill-gvern, filwaqt li rrimarka li dan kien jikkostitwixxi riżenja furzata, u b'hekk imur kontra l-leġiżlazzjoni rilevanti nazzjonali u tal-UE.

Fit-30 ta' April 2013, il-Gvern ta' Malta informa liċ-Chairman li "l-Gvern ta' Malta jqis li ma tistax tkompli twettaq dmirijietek bħala Chairman fid-dawl tal-bidla fl-amministrazzjoni tal-pajjiż."

B'kunsiderazzjoni tal-fatt li l-Artikolu 3 tad-Direttiva Qafas 2002/21/KE tal-UE dwar it-Telekomunikazzjonijiet jistipula li "l-Istati Membri għandhom jiżguraw li l-kap ta' awtorità regolatorja nazzjonali (…) ikunu jistgħu jitkeċċew biss jekk ma jissodisfawx iktar il-kundizzjonijiet mitluba għat-twettiq ta' dmirijiethom li jkunu stabbiliti minn qabel fil-liġi nazzjonali"; li l-Artikolu 3 tad-Direttiva Qafas 2002/21/KE tal-UE dwar it-Telekomunikazzjonijiet ġie traspost fid-dritt Malti permezz tal-Artikolu 3 tal-Att għat-Twaqqif ta' Awtorità ta' Malta dwar il-Komunikazzjoni (KAP 418), li jistipula li "membru tal-Awtorità jista' jitneħħa mill-kariga mill-Ministru jekk, fil-fehma tal-Ministru, dak il-membru ma jkunx idoneu biex ikompli f'dik il-kariga jew ikun sar inkapaċi milli jwettaq kif imiss dmirijietu bħala membru"; u li r-riżenja furzata inkwistjoni hija konsegwenza diretta tal-istruzzjoni perentorja mogħtija mill-Gvern ta' Malta u għalhekk titqies bħala ekwivalenti għal tneħħija mill-kariga, il-Kummissjoni tqis li bidla fl-amministrazzjoni tal-gvern ta' Stat Membru tikkostitwixxi raġuni għat-tneħħija tal-kap tal-awtorità regolatorja nazzjonali skont id-Direttiva Qafas 2002/21/KE tal-UE dwar it-Telekomunikazzjonijiet?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Ġunju 2013)

L-awtoritajiet regolatorji nazzjonali għandhom rwol importanti x'jaqdu sabiex jiġi żgurat il-funzjonament tajjeb tas-swieq tas-servizzi u tal-prodotti li ġew illiberalizzati. L-indipendenza tagħhom hija fundamentali sabiex tiġi żgurata regolazzjoni effettiva u imparzjali, li twassal għal swieq kompetittivi.

Ir-reviżjoni tal-2009 saħħet il-prinċipju tal-indipendenza tal-awtoritajiet regolatorji nazzjonali sabiex tiġi żgurata l-applikazzjoni aktar effettiva tal-qafas regolatorju u biex tiżdied l-awtorità tal-ARN u l-prevedibbiltà fid-deċiżjonijiet tagħhom. L-Artikolu 3(3a) tad-Direttiva Qafas jipprovdi li l-kap tal-awtorità regolatorja nazzjonali jew il-membri tal-korp kollegġjali li jkunu qed iwettqu dik il-funzjoni, ikunu jistgħu jitkeċċew "biss jekk ma jissodisfawx iktar il-kondizzjonijiet mitluba għat-twettiq ta' dmirijiethom li jkunu stabbiliti minn qabel fil-liġi nazzjonali". Il-Premessa 13 tad-Direttiva dwar Regolamentazzjoni Aħjar tispjega li "għandhom jiġu stabbiliti minn qabel regoli dwar ir-raġunijiet għat-tkeċċija tal-kap tal-awtorità regolatorja nazzjonali, sabiex jitneħħa kull dubju dettat mir-raġuni dwar in-newtralità ta' dik l-entità u l-kapaċità tagħha li ma tkunx influwenzata minn fatturi esterni."

Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja mill-iżviluppi riċenti f'Malta u bħalissa qed tinvestiga mal-awtoritajiet Maltin il-kwistjoni mqajma fid-domanda. Il-Kummissjoni hija impenjata sabiex issegwi mill-qrib l-implimentazzjoni korretta tad-dispożizzjonijiet ta' hawn fuq, u biex treġġa' lura tendenza fil-leġiżlazzjoni u l-prattika tal-Istati Membri li, jekk tiġi kkonfermata, tkisser is-suq uniku għall-komunikazzjonijiet elettroniċi u kapaċi twassal għal anqas kompetizzjoni fis-swieq, tendenza li taffettwa b'mod negattiv it-tkabbir u l-impjiegi.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005308/13
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: EU Telecoms Framework Directive 2002/21/EC as amended by Directive 2009/140/EC

On 12 March 2013, the Government of Malta wrote to the board of the national regulatory authority of the communications sector in Malta — the Malta communications Authority (MCA) — instructing them to offer their resignations from their respective posts and stating that 'Chairpersons and Members of Boards and Committees are expected to offer their resignation to the Minister concerned in order to enable the new Government to effect any changes that are considered desirable.'

On 14 March 2013, the then Chairman of the MCA, Dr Antonio Ghio, was constrained to submit his offer of resignation as per the request of the government, pointing out that this constituted a forced resignation, thereby breaching relevant EU and national legislation.

On 30 April 2013, the Government of Malta informed the Chairman that 'the Government of Malta considers that you can no longer perform your duties as Chairman in light of a change in the administration of the country.'

Considering that the EU Telecoms Framework Directive states in Article 3 that 'Member States shall ensure that the head of a national regulatory authority (…) may be dismissed only if they no longer fulfil the conditions required for the performance of their duties which are laid down in advance in national law'; that Article 3 of the EU Telecoms Framework Directive was transposed in Maltese law by means of Article 3 of the Malta communications Authority Act (CAP 418), which states that 'a member of the Authority may be removed from office by the Minister if, in the opinion of the Minister, such member is unfit to continue in office or has become incapable of properly performing his duties as a member'; and that the forced resignation in question is a direct consequence of the peremptory instruction given by the Government of Malta and thus tantamount to removal from office, does the Commission consider that a change in administration of the government of a Member State constitutes a ground for the removal of the head of a national regulatory authority under the EU Telecoms Framework Directive?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2013)

National regulatory authorities have an important role to play in ensuring the proper functioning of liberalised service and product markets. Their independence is key to ensure effective and impartial regulation, leading to competitive markets.

The 2009 review strengthened the principle of independence of national regulatory authorities to ensure a more effective application of the regulatory framework, to increase the NRA's authority and the predictability of their decisions. Article 3(3 a) of the framework Directive provides that the head of a national regulatory authority or members of the collegiate body fulfilling that function may be dismissed 'only if they no longer fulfil the conditions required for the performance of their duties which are laid down in advance in national law'. Recital 13 of the Better Regulation Directive explains that 'rules should be laid down at the outset regarding the grounds for the dismissal of the head of the national regulatory authority in order to remove any reasonable doubt as to the neutrality of that body and its imperviousness to external factors.'

The Commission is aware of the recent developments in Malta and is currently investigating with Maltese authorities the issue raised in the question. The Commission is committed to follow-up closely the correct implementation of the above provisions, and to reverse a trend in Member States legislation and practice which if confirmed would fragment the single market for electronic communications and may result in less competition on the markets, a trend that would negatively affect growth and jobs.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-005309/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Vertedero de Abanilla — Estado de la investigación

En su respuesta a la pregunta P-005736/2012 presentada por este diputado en junio de 2012 sobre «Delito ecológico y vertedero ilegal en Abanilla y Orihuela», la Comisión Europea anunciaba la puesta en marcha de una investigación sobre el cumplimiento por parte de las autoridades españolas del Derecho de la UE aplicable en este caso.

Dado que la respuesta estaba fechada en julio del mismo año:

¿Podría la Comisión dar información sobre el resultado de sus investigaciones?

¿Posee ya la Comisión la información sobre la posible financiación de las instalaciones de residuos consideradas?

¿Ha tenido la Comisión ocasión de valorar las posibles incidencias de las instalaciones sobre la LIC ES-6200027 Sierra de Abanilla?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2013)

Los servicios de la Comisión están evaluando actualmente la respuesta remitida por las autoridades españolas en el marco de la investigación iniciada. Una vez concluida esta evaluación, se comunicarán sus conclusiones al Estado miembro interesado.

En relación con la posible financiación de la UE, le comunico que el proyecto no ha recibido ninguna contribución de la UE (FEDER o Fondo de Cohesión).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005309/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Progress of investigations into Abanilla landfill site

In answer to Question P-005736/2012 of June 2012 entitled 'Environmental crime and illegal landfill in Abanilla (Murcia) and Orihuela (Valencia)', the Commission announced the launching of an investigation to ensure compliance by the Spanish authorities with the applicable EC law.

Given that the answer was dated July this year:

Can the Commission provide any insight into its findings?

Does the Commission have any information regarding possible funding for the landfill site in question?

Has the Commission been able to assess the possible environmental impact of the site on SCI ES-6200027 in Sierra de Abanilla?

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

The services of the Commission are currently assessing the reply sent by the Spanish authorities within the framework of the investigation that has been launched. Once this assessment is complete, its findings will be communicated to the Member State concerned.

In relation to the possible EU funding for this project, it has not received any EU contribution (ERDF or CF).

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-005311/13
till kommissionen
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(14 maj 2013)

Angående: Konsekvens i den nationella tillämpningen av inremarknadsbestämmelserna om sena betalningar

Sena betalningar är ett utbrett problem i EU och leder alltför ofta till konkurs och förlorade jobb. Direktivet om sena betalningar, som antogs 2011, är ett viktigt redskap för att hantera detta problem och undanröja ett viktigt hinder för den fria rörligheten för varor och tjänster på den inre marknaden.

Sverige hade vid fristens utgång den 16 mars 2013 införlivat bestämmelserna i den nationella lagstiftningen. Efter påtryckningar från oppositionen överväger dock Justitiedepartementet nu att ändra bestämmelserna och lägga till en bestämmelse som skulle begränsa betalningstiden för B2B-transaktioner till högst 30 dagar och därmed upphäva avtalsfriheten.

Små och medelstora företag bör visserligen inte agera bank för större bolag, men det är också viktigt att beakta bolagens olika resurser och kassaflöden och att ge utrymme för ömsesidiga överenskommelser om mest lämpliga betalningstid. Avtalsfriheten i samband med handelstransaktioner mellan företag är nämligen en av hörnstenarna i 2011 års direktiv.

Det råder dessutom allmän enighet om att en av nyckelfaktorerna för en framgångsrik inre marknad är en korrekt styrning, vilket inkluderar en enhetlig tolkning av bestämmelserna i hela EU för att undvika onödig fragmentering som skulle få negativa följder för företagen och konsumenterna.

— Anser kommissionen därför att den bestämmelse som i nuläget diskuteras i Sverige, det vill säga en högsta betalningstid på 30 dagar för B2B-transaktioner, är i linje med själva andan i direktivet?

— Tänker kommissionen genomföra en undersökning för att garantera en enhetlig tolkning av direktivet för sena betalningar i hela EU?

— Hur kommer kommissionen att samverka med medlemsstaterna för att främja en tillämpning av bestämmelserna som är förenlig med den inre marknaden?

Svar från Antonio Tajani på kommissionens vägnar
(19 juni 2013)

Med de uppgifter som kommissionen har tillgång till, och med förbehåll för granskningen av den svenska lagstiftningen när det väl har antagits, förefaller de bestämmelser som nu diskuteras i Sverige och som parlamentsledamoten hänvisar till (dvs. harmonisering av betalningstiden för handelstransaktioner mellan företag) följa direktiv 2011/7/EU om bekämpande av sena betalningar. Enligt direktivet får medlemsstaterna behålla eller sätta i kraft bestämmelser som är mer gynnsamma för borgenären än de bestämmelser som föreskrivs i direktivet. Harmoniseringen av betalningstiderna för handelstransaktioner mellan företag på nationell nivå är just en sådan bestämmelse. Två andra medlemsstater har redan beslutat att harmonisera betalningstiden för affärstransaktioner mellan företag (Frankrike och Spanien).

Kommissionen övervakar noga situationen för att se till att medlemsstaterna införlivar och genomför direktivet korrekt. Detta sker också genom den expertgrupp för frågor som rör sena betalningar och som kommer att sammankallas till ett tredje möte under de närmaste månaderna. Kommissionen kommer också att stödja ett korrekt genomförande av direktivet genom en informationskampanj om sena betalningar ([1]), som inleddes i oktober 2012 och ska genomföras i alla EU-länder ([2]) och Kroatien.

([1]) EU:s informationskampanj om sena betalningar syftar till att öka kunskaperna bland berörda parter i EU, särskilt små och medelstora företag, och offentliga myndigheter om de nya rättigheter som gäller enligt direktiv 2011/7/EU och om hur bestämmelserna i direktivet ska tillämpas i praktiska situationer.

([2]) I Sverige planeras kampanjen preliminärt till juni 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005311/13
to the Commission
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Coherence in the national application of internal market rules on late payments

Late payment is a widespread problem in the EU, leading all too often to bankruptcy and lost jobs. The Late Payments Directive, adopted in 2011, is an important tool for tackling this challenge and removing what constitutes a major obstacle to the free movement of goods and services in the single market.

Sweden transposed the rules into national law by the deadline of 16 March 2013. However, as a result of pressure from the opposition, the Ministry of Justice is now considering amending the rules and adding a provision that would restrict the timeframe for B2B transactions to an obligatory maximum of 30 days, thereby removing freedom of contract.

While SMEs should not act as banks for bigger companies, it is equally important to take into account the different resources and cash flows of companies and leave room for mutual agreement on the most appropriate timeframe. In fact, contractual freedom in business commercial transactions is one of the cornerstones of the 2011 directive.

Moreover, there is widespread understanding that one of the keys to success for our internal market is proper governance, including a coherent interpretation of rules across the EU in order to avoid any unjustified fragmentation that would be detrimental to business and consumers.

— Against this background, does the Commission consider that the provision currently under discussion in Sweden, i.e. a mandatory limit of 30 days for B2B transactions, is in line with the spirit of the directive?

— Does the Commission intend to conduct an analysis in order to ensure coherent interpretation of the Late Payments Directive across the EU?

— How will the Commission interact with Member States to promote an application that is consistent with the internal market?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

Based on the information at the Commission's disposal and without prejudice to the analysis of the Swedish legislation once adopted, the provision currently under discussion in Sweden which the Honourable Member refers to (i.e. the harmonisation of the payment period in business to business commercial transactions) appears to be in line with Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment. Indeed, the directive establishes that Member States may maintain or bring into force provisions which are more favourable to the creditor than those provided for in the directive. The harmonisation of the payment period in business to business commercial transactions at national level would be exactly such a provision. Two other Member States have already decided to harmonise the payment period in business to business commercial transactions (France and Spain).

The Commission is closely monitoring the correct transposition and implementation of the directive at national level, also through the Late Payment Expert Group that will be called for its third meeting in the following months. Additionally the Commission is supporting the correct implementation of the directive through the Late Payment Information Campaign ([1]) that has been running since October 2012 and will be carried out in all EU countries ([2]) and Croatia.

([1]) The European Late Payment Information Campaign aims to increase awareness amongst European stakeholders, in particular SMEs, and within public authorities on the new rights conferred by Directive 2011/7/EU and also how to apply its provisions in real life situations.

([2]) The campaign is provisionally scheduled to take place in Sweden in June 2014.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005312/13
an den Rat
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten des „Residence-Palace-Building“ — Weiteres Vorgehen

Die vorliegende Anfrage schließt an die Anfrage vom September 2011 zu den Kosten des „Residence-Palace-Building“ an. Der Bau des „Residence-Palace-Building“ soll im Jahr 2014 fertig gestellt werden.

1. Wann werden die Bauarbeiten voraussichtlich abgeschlossen sein? Werden sie zum ursprünglich festgelegten Zeitpunkt abgeschlossen werden können?

2. Auf welchen Betrag werden sich die Gesamtkosten des Gebäudes voraussichtlich belaufen? Wie hoch sind die Mehrkosten?

3. Wie hoch sind die bisher geleisteten Zahlungen? Welcher Betrag steht noch aus?

4. Welche Haushaltslinien sind mit welchen Beträgen betroffen?

Antwort
(11. September 2013)

1. Das vom Rat und vom belgischen Staat vertraglich festgelegte Übergabedatum ist der 15. April 2014. Die belgische Gebäudeverwaltung, die vom belgischen Staat mit den Bauarbeiten beauftragt wurde, prüft derzeit ein Ersuchen des Bauunternehmens, den Termin für die endgültige Übergabe zu verschieben. Bei der Festlegung des neuen Termins sollten alle nachträglich beauftragten Änderungen des Projekts berücksichtigt werden.

Das „Europa“-Gebäude wird voraussichtlich gegen Ende des ersten Halbjahrs 2015 bezugsfertig sein.

2. Die derzeitige gerundete Kostenschätzung (in Preisen von Januar 2004) beträgt 218 Mio. EUR bzw. (in Preisen von März 2013) 301 Mio. EUR.

3. Ein Betrag in Höhe von 275 164 147 EUR ist bereits an den belgischen Staat ausgezahlt worden.

Im einzelnen wurden folgende Beträge an den belgischen Staat ausgezahlt:

— 2009: 102 879 000 EUR

— 2010: 55 000 000 EUR

— 2011: 25 000 000 EUR

— 2012: 15 000 000 EUR

Im Rahmen des Haushalts des Europäischen Rates und des Rates für das Jahr 2013 ist eine zusätzliche Zahlung von 5 000 000 EUR an den belgischen Staat vorgeschlagen.

4. Der betreffende Haushaltsposten lautet „Einzelplan II — Titel 2 — Kapitel 20 — Artikel 200 — Haushaltsposten 2002“.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005312/13
to the Council
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Cost of the 'Residence Palace Building' — further procedure

This question is a follow-up to the question submitted in September 2011 concerning the cost of the 'Residence Palace Building'. Construction of the 'Residence Palace Building' should be complete in 2014.

1. When can we expect the construction work to conclude? Will it be possible to complete it by the originally set time?

2. How much is the total cost of the building likely to be? What are the additional costs involved?

3. How much has already been paid out? How much is still owing?

4. What budget lines are affected by which amounts?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

1. The handover date contractually established between the Council and the Belgian State is 15 April 2014. The Belgian Buildings Agency, charged by the Belgian State with the construction of the building, is analysing a request from the construction company to postpone the final handover date. The new date should take into account all the modifications of the project that have been requested since the construction contract was awarded.

The Europa building is expected to be delivered at the end of the first half of 2015.

2. The current rounded cost estimate, at January 2004 prices, is EUR 218 million or, at March 2013 prices, EUR 301 million.

3. The amount already paid to the Belgian State is EUR 275 164 147.

The amounts paid to the Belgian State were:

— in 2009 EUR 102 879 000

— in 2010 EUR 55 000 000

— in 2011 EUR 25 000 000

— in 2012 EUR 15 000 000

According to the European Council and Council budget for 2013 an additional payment of EUR 5 000 000 to the Belgian State is proposed.

4. The budget item concerned is Section II — Title 2 — Chapter 20 — Article 200 — item 2002.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005313/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Förderung eines deutsch-italienischen Mobilitätsprojekts im Rahmen des Leonardo-da-Vinci-Programms

Die Fachschule für Steintechnik München führt in der Zeit von 2010-2013 mit Partnerinstitutionen in Rom ein Mobilitätsprojekt zum interdisziplinären Wissensaustausch durch. Dieser soll künftig zur Verschönerung von Friedhöfen beitragen. Das Projekt wurde im Rahmen des Leonardo-da-Vinci-Programms mit 85 650 EUR gefördert.

1. Was genau beinhaltet dieser „Wissensaustausch"?

2. Worin liegt bei der Verschönerung des Friedhofsbilds der europäische Mehrwert?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juli 2013)

Das von der Frau Abgeordneten genannte Projekt wurde als Mobilitätsmaßnahme im Rahmen des sektoralen Programms Leonardo da Vinci des Programms für lebenslanges Lernen finanziert. Ein allgemeines Ziel von Mobilitätsmaßnahmen im Rahmen des Programms Leonardo da Vinci ist die Unterstützung der Teilnehmer bei Erwerb und Nutzung von Wissen, Fähigkeiten und Qualifikationen zur Förderung ihrer persönlichen Entwicklung, ihrer Beschäftigungsfähigkeit und ihrer Beteiligung am Arbeitsmarkt. Der Mobilität für transnationales Lernen wird weithin ein klarer Mehrwert zugesprochen, und sie kann nur auf europäischer Ebene wirksam gefördert werden.

Es stimmt nicht, dass sich das fragliche Projekt auf die Verschönerung von Friedhöfen konzentrierte. Im Rahmen des Projekts untersuchten deutsche Teilnehmer Natursteinarbeiten an historischen Gebäuden, Denkmälern und Skulpturen in Rom. Dabei arbeiteten sie auch mit ihren italienischen Partnern bei der Restaurierung historischer Grabdenkmäler zusammen. Als Lernergebnisse dieser Tätigkeit haben sich die Teilnehmer spezielle traditionelle Fertigkeiten und Techniken angeeignet und damit die Möglichkeit erworben, diese Kenntnisse an Steinmetz-Auszubildende weiterzugeben. Die Auszubildenden werden diese neu erworbenen technischen Kompetenzen bei Bau und Renovierung anwenden können.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005313/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Support for a German-Italian mobility project within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme

The Technical College for Natural Stone Technology (Fachschule für Steintechnik) in Munich has been running a mobility project with partner institutions in Rome on the interdisciplinary exchange of expertise in the period 2010 to 2013. This should lead to the aesthetic improvement of cemeteries in the future. The project received EUR 85 650 of support within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

1. What exactly does this 'exchange of expertise' entail?

2. What is the added value for Europe arising from the aesthetic improvement of cemeteries?

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

The project referred to by the Honourable Member was funded as a mobility action under the Leonardo da Vinci sectoral programme of the Lifelong Learning programme. A general objective of Leonardo da Vinci mobility actions is to support the participants to acquire and use knowledge, skills and qualifications in order to facilitate their personal development, employability and participation in the labour market. Mobility for transnational learning is widely considered to have a clear added value and can be promoted effectively only at European level.

It is not true that the project in question was focused on the aesthetic improvement of cemeteries. During the project, German participants studied the design of natural stone work on historic buildings, monuments and sculptures in Rome. In this context, they also cooperated with their Italian partners in the renovation of historical funeral monuments. As a learning outcome of this activity, the participants acquired specific traditional skills and techniques and thus the possibility to transfer such knowledge to stonemason apprentices. The newly acquired competencies will then empower the apprentices to apply such techniques in in construction and renovation.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005314/13
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(14. maj 2013)

Om: Insektgift i frugt

En helt ny undersøgelse fra Syddansk Universitet viser, at en række insektgifte (organofosfater) kan spores i danske børns urin — endda i mængder, der er større end for tilsvarende amerikanske børn. Undersøgelser har dokumenteret, at fostres hjerner påvirkes negativt, hvis de via deres mødre udsættes for insektgiftene. Danske forskere siger nu, at det bedste råd til gravide og småbørnsforældre er, at de skal købe økologisk eller danskproduceret frugt (hvor flere af insektgiftene allerede er forbudt).

Det er yderst bekymrende, at det er muligt at spore giftrester i børn. Og det er bekymrende, at det bedste råd til forbrugerne er at undlade at købe frugt og grønt fra andre EU-lande, når nu vi har det indre marked. Det er vores børns sundhed, der står på spil. Det må veje højere end hensynet til landbrug og kemiindustri.

Kommissionen bedes på den baggrund oplyse, hvornår den vil fremsætte forslag om et forbud mod de farlige organofosfater/insektgifte overalt i EU?

Desuden bedes den oplyse, hvornår der kommer nedsatte grænseværdier for de øvrige giftstoffer/pesticider?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(11. juli 2013)

Efter gennemgangen af de eksisterende pesticider, som er tilladt i henhold til direktiv 91/414/EØF, er der nu kun syv organofosfater tilgængelige på markedet i EU. Disse stoffer er godkendt efter en grundig risikovurdering, som har konkluderet, at de kan anvendes uden risiko for menneskers sundhed. I lovgivningen om pesticider kræves det desuden, at der regelmæssigt, nemlig hvert 10. år, foretages en gennemgang af alle stoffer på grundlag af nye videnskabelige resultater. Der foretages for øjeblikket en gennemgang af nogle af disse stoffer i henhold til de nye kriterier for godkendelse, der er fastsat i forordning (EF) nr. 1107/2009 ([1]).

For så vidt angår pesticidrester har Kommissionen ved forordning (EU) nr. 310/2011 ([2]) og forordning (EU) nr. 899/2012 ([3]) for nylig nedsat maksimalgrænseværdierne for en række organofosfater, som ikke er godkendt.

Alle maksimalgrænseværdier i forordning (EF) nr. 396/2005 ([4]) gælder i alle medlemsstater, og de har været underkastet en risikovurdering for at udelukke enhver uacceptabel risiko for menneskers sundhed. Desuden foretager Den Europæiske Fødevaresikkerhedsautoritet en gennemgang af disse i henhold til artikel 12 i forordning (EF) nr. 396/2005.

([1]) EFT L 309 af 24.11.2009, s. 1.
([2]) EUT L 86 af 1.4.2011, s. 1-50.
([3]) EUT L 273 af 6.10.2012, s. 1-75.
([4]) EFT L 70 af 16.3.2005, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005314/13
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Insecticide in fruit

A brand new study from the University of Southern Denmark shows that a number of insecticides (organophosphates) can be detected in Danish children's urine — in even amounts greater than those for corresponding children in the US. Studies have demonstrated that foetal brains are adversely affected if exposed to insecticides through their mothers. Danish researchers are now saying that the best advice for pregnant women and parents of young children is to buy organic or Danish-produced fruit (where several of the insecticides have already been banned).

It is extremely worrying that it is possible to detect toxic residues in children. It is also worrying that the best advice given to consumers is that they should avoid buying fruits and vegetables from other EU countries now that we have the internal market. It is our children's health that is at stake. That must take precedence over the interests of agriculture and the chemical industry.

In view of this, I would ask the Commission to inform us when it will propose a ban on dangerous organophosphates/insecticides throughout the EU?

In addition, I would ask the Commission to inform us when we can expect reduced limit values for all the other toxic substances/pesticides?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

Only 7 organophosphates are still on the market in the EU, after the review of existing pesticides under Directive 91/414/EEC. Those substances have been approved after a thorough risk assessment that concluded on safe uses for human health. In addition, the pesticide legislation requires all substances to be periodically reviewed, every 10 years, in the light of new scientific developments. Such a review is already currently ongoing for some of these substances and will be carried out under the new approval criteria laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]).

As regards pesticide residues, the Commission recently lowered the maximum residue levels (MRLs) of several not approved organophosphates through Commission Regulation (EU) No 310/2011 ([2]) and Commission Regulation (EU) No 899/2012 ([3]).

All MRLs set under Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 ([4]) apply to all Member States and have been subject to a risk assessment to exclude any unacceptable risk for human health and they are also undergoing a review carried out by the European Food Safety Authority in accordance with Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 396/2005.

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 86, 1.4.2011, p. 1-50.
([3]) OJ L 273, 6.10.2012, p. 1-75.
([4]) OJ L 70, 16.3.2005, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005315/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Riforma della pesca: divieto dei rigetti in mare

In vista dell'imminente riapertura della campagna del tonno rosso per la circuizione, dal 16 maggio al 14 giugno, così come indicato nel regolamento (CE) n. 302/2009 e successive modifiche, e considerando il sensibile tema dell'obbligo degli sbarchi, come previsto nell'articolo15 del testo di riforma della politica comune della pesca (PCP), molte sono le proteste che stanno giungendo in questi giorni dalle marinerie del bacino del Mediterraneo riguardo alle difficoltà applicative di tali norme sia a livello di sopravvivenza economica dei pescatori stessi e delle loro famiglie, sia dal punto di vista del disagio di tutta un'economia costiera basata sul settore pesca. I pescatori lamentano difatti troppa poca tolleranza in merito ai cosiddetti rigetti e l'obbligo invece di sbarco di pescato che, nella maggior parte dei casi, sarebbe formato da pesci ormai morti. Un inutile spreco che non giova né al ripopolamento del mare, né all'economia marittima, e che comporterebbe oltretutto impatti negativi sull'occupazione.

Per raggiungere il condivisibile obiettivo di un miglioramento e del recupero degli stock ittici nel Mediterraneo e un futuro sano per la pesca, è, prima di tutto, fondamentale evitare catture indesiderate, con l'adozione di opportune misure tecniche di gestione ed il raggiungimento di una maggiore selettività degli strumenti di cattura.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione comunicare quanto segue:

1. Come giustifica l'obbligo di sbarco di pesci sotto taglia od oltre quota ma oramai morti, che comporterebbe seri rischi di arretramento della politica comune della pesca, dato che risulterebbe contraddittoria rispetto alla salvaguardia degli stock marini e diseducativa per pescatori e i consumatori che, in periodo di crisi, vedrebbero rigettate a mare risorse economiche o alimentari?

2. Ha essa considerato che il rigetto in mare di pesci ormai morti potrebbe essere pericoloso per la conservazione delle risorse ittiche nonché potenzialmente dannoso per l'ambiente e la catena trofica?

3. Ha essa a disposizione una valutazione scientifica sui costi e sulle enormi difficoltà di attuazione tecniche che deriverebbero dall'applicazione della futura politica comune della pesca così come si prospetta ad oggi?

4. Ha essa valutato la possibilità di esentare i paesi del bacino Mediterraneo dall'obbligo di sbarco e dal divieto dei rigetti rinviando ai piani di gestione pluriennali la predisposizione di misure appropriate per la selettività degli attrezzi, intensificando tutte le attività necessarie per garantire il pieno rispetto delle regole vigenti?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2013)

La pratica dei rigetti in mare è uno spreco di risorse insostenibile. È diventata una questione evidente agli occhi dell'opinione pubblica che la considera un fallimento della politica comune della pesca (PCP). Su queste basi la Commissione ha proposto l'obbligo di sbarco nell'ambito della riforma della PCP, sulla quale il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio sono giunti ora a un accordo politico. L'applicazione dell'obbligo di sbarco inizierà nel 2015 e sarà a pieno regime entro il 2019 per tutte le attività di pesca nell'Unione europea.

Porre fine alla pratica dei rigetti contribuisce a una migliore conservazione: l'obbligo di sbarco incentiverà i pescatori a essere più selettivi, a evitare le catture indesiderate e a salvaguardare gli stock marini.

La valutazione di impatto realizzata per sostenere la riforma ([1]) della politica comune della pesca ha costituito la base della proposta della Commissione che introduce, tra l'altro, l'obbligo di sbarco. Le modifiche apportate dal Parlamento europeo e dal Consiglio non sono state prese in considerazione nella presente valutazione ma, in linea di principio, introducono una forma di flessibilità limitata che rende l'obbligo di sbarco praticabile ed efficace. La Commissione ha proposto un sostegno finanziario a favore dei pescatori, nell'ambito del FEAMP ([2]), per l'introduzione di metodi che consentono di ridurre le catture indesiderate.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/discards/index_en.htm
([2]) Fondo europeo per gli affari marittimi e la pesca.

Non vi è alcuna giustificazione per esentare i paesi del bacino del Mediterraneo dall'obbligo di sbarco, visto che la valutazione d'impatto della Commissione ha rilevato che la pratica dei rigetti è molto frequente in numerose attività di pesca nel Mediterraneo. Ad esempio, per alcune attività di pesca con sfogliare nelle zone costiere, si segnalano tassi di rigetto di pesci piatti del 70 %.

Il regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 ([3]) dispone che vengano elaborati piani di gestione regionalizzati per il Mediterraneo. Tali piani devono comprendere specifiche misure tecniche per migliorare la selettività e, possibilmente, misure intese a istituire zone di divieto e a rafforzare le misure di controllo.

([3]) GU L 409 del 30.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005315/13
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Fisheries reform: ban on discards

In view of the imminent opening of the bluefin tuna trawling season, which runs from 16 May to 14 June, as indicated in Regulation (EC) No 302/2009 and subsequent amendments, and in view of the sensitive issue of the obligation to land catches, as laid down in Article 15 of the text reforming the common fisheries policy (CFP), many protests have been heard in recent days from fleets in the Mediterranean basin regarding the difficulties of applying these rules, both in terms of the economic survival of fishermen and their families and from the point of view of disruption to the entire coastal economy based on the fisheries sector. Fishermen complain of not enough tolerance regarding so-called discards and of the obligation to land catches which, in the majority of cases, would be made up of fish that were now dead. This is an unnecessary waste which neither helps to restock the sea nor contributes to the maritime economy, and which would, above all, adversely affect employment.

In order to achieve the agreed aim of an improvement and recovery in fish stocks in the Mediterranean and a healthy future for fisheries, it is, first and foremost, vital to avoid unwanted by-catches, by adopting appropriate technical management measures and ensuring greater selectivity of fishing gear.

1. How does the Commission justify the obligation to land fish that are under size or over quota but now dead, which would entail serious risks of a retrograde step in the common fisheries policy, since it would undermine the safeguarding of marine stocks and send out the wrong message to fishermen and consumers who, at a time of crisis, would see financial or food resources thrown back into the sea?

2. Has it considered that discarding fish that are now dead into the sea could be dangerous for the conservation of fish resources and also potentially damaging to the environment and the food chain?

3. Does it have a scientific assessment available on the costs and the enormous difficulties of implementing techniques that would derive from the application of the future common fisheries policy, as it is currently envisaged?

4. Has it assessed the possibility of exempting countries in the Mediterranean basin from the obligation of landing catches and the ban on discards, by transferring to the multiannual management plans the drafting of appropriate measures for the selectivity of gear, stepping up all the activities that are necessary in order to ensure full compliance with the rules in force?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

Discarding is unsustainable and wastes resources. It has become a visible issue to the general public who see discarding as a failure of the common fisheries policy (CFP). This was the basis for the Commission proposing the landing obligation under the reform of the CFP, for which now political agreement has been reached by the European Parliament and the Council. Implementation of the landing obligation will begin in 2015 and be fully implemented by 2019 for all EU fisheries.

Stopping discarding contributes to improved conservation: the landing obligation will drive fishermen to be more selective, avoid unwanted catches and safeguard marine stocks.

The impact assessment carried out to support the CFP reform ([1]) formed the basis of the Commission's proposal, including introducing the landing obligation. The amendments introduced by the Parliament and the Council were not considered in this assessment but in principle introduce some limited flexibility to make the landing obligation workable and effective. The Commission has proposed financial support under the EMFF ([2]) to fishermen for the introduction of methods that reduce unwanted catches.

There is no justification for exempting countries in the Mediterranean from the landing obligation, the Commission's impact assessment showed discarding to be high in many Mediterranean fisheries. For instance in certain beam trawl fisheries in coastal areas discard rates for flatfish of 70% are reported.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/discards/index_en.htm
([2]) European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

The development of regionalised management plans for the Mediterranean is foreseen under Regulation (EC) 1967/2006 ([3]). These plans should include specific technical measures to improve selectivity. They may also include measures for the creation of closed areas and enhanced control measures.

([3]) OJ L 490, 30.12.2006.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005316/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Πτωχευτικό Δίκαιο και εργαζόμενοι

Στο πλαίσιο των τελευταίων αλλαγών στο Πτωχευτικό Δίκαιο των επιχειρήσεων στην Ελλάδα, πέρα από την πρότερη αναβάθμιση των απαιτήσεων των Ασφαλιστικών Ταμείων από την 5η στην 3η τάξη — μαζί με τους εργαζόμενους — σε περίπτωση σύνταξης πίνακα κατάταξης απαιτήσεων επί της πτωχευτικής περιουσίας και τη σύμμετρη ικανοποίησή τους με τις απαιτήσεις των εργαζομένων, θεσμοθετήθηκε η αναβάθμιση των απαιτήσεων του Δημοσίου στη 2η σειρά του εν λόγω πίνακα για ληξιπρόθεσμες απαιτήσεις από φόρους προστιθέμενης αξίας (ΦΠΑ) και τις προσαυξήσεις τους, γεγονός που καταργεί στην πράξη κάθε προνόμιο βιοποριστικού μισθού των εργαζομένων επί της πτωχευτικής περιουσίας.

Με δεδομένο ότι περίπου 900 χιλιάδες εργαζόμενοι του ιδιωτικού τομέα στην Ελλάδα παραμένουν απλήρωτοι ή λαμβάνουν ένα μικρό τμήμα του μισθού τους για χρονικό διάστημα μεγαλύτερο των 5 μηνών σε επιχειρήσεις, πολλές εκ των οποίων απειλούνται με οριστικό κλείσιμο, δημιουργείται έντονος κίνδυνος οι εργαζόμενοι των επιχειρήσεων που τελικώς θα υπαχθούν σε πτωχευτική διαδικασία να μην ικανοποιηθούν ως προς τις απαιτήσεις τους για δεδουλευμένα ακόμη και 2 ετών.

Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Πώς κρίνει την εν λόγω εξέλιξη, που δυσχεραίνει τη θέση των εργαζομένων μετακυλώντας έμμεσα σε αυτούς το κόστος ενδεχόμενης αφερεγγυότητας του εργοδότη;

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τη σειρά των απαιτήσεων σε αντίστοιχους πίνακες κατάταξης των κρατών μελών;

— Σκοπεύει να εκδώσει συστάσεις προς τα κράτη μέλη ώστε να διασφαλίζεται το προνόμιο βιοποριστικού μισθού των εργαζομένων επί της πτωχευτικής περιουσίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Ιουλίου 2013)

Το θέμα που έθεσε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος δεν ρυθμίζεται άμεσα από το δίκαιο της Ένωσης, ούτε διαθέτει η Επιτροπή τα δεδομένα που αναφέρει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος. Οι ειδικές διαδικασίες σχετικά με την πτωχευτική διαδικασία και η κατάταξη των απαιτήσεων επί της πτωχευτικής περιουσίας εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των ελληνικών αρχών. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή λαμβάνει υπόψη τη δύσκολη κατάσταση των εργαζομένων των επιχειρήσεων οι οποίες αποτελούν αντικείμενο πτωχευτικής διαδικασίας. Η Επιτροπή είναι της άποψης ότι οι πτωχευτικές διαδικασίες θα πρέπει να εφαρμόζονται κατά τρόπο που να διευκολύνουν την μακροπρόθεσμη οικονομική ανάπτυξη της χώρας.

Επιπλέον, τα κράτη μέλη έχουν την υποχρέωση να λάβουν μέτρα ώστε να εξασφαλίσουν ότι οι εκκρεμείς μισθολογικές απαιτήσεις των εργαζομένων σε περίπτωση αφερεγγυότητας του εργοδότη θα είναι εγγυημένες σύμφωνα με την οδηγία 2008/94/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 22ας Οκτωβρίου 2008, περί προστασίας των μισθωτών σε περίπτωση αφερεγγυότητας του εργοδότη ([1]).

([1]) ΕΕ L 283 της 28.10.2008, σ. 36.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005316/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Bankruptcy law and workers

If a table is drawn up ranking the priority of claims on bankrupt estates, the priority of the claims of insurance funds on bankrupt estates has already been upgraded from fifth to third place — i.e. on a par with workers. In this context, the latest changes to corporate bankruptcy law in Greece have upgraded claims by the State to second place for overdue claims by value-added tax (VAT) agencies and surcharges. This effectively eliminates any priority breadwinners' wages may have in claims if the company they work for goes bankrupt.

Given that approximately 900 000 private-sector workers in Greece remain unpaid or have been receiving but a fraction of their wages for over five months in enterprises, many of which are threatened with definitive closure, this creates a very real danger that workers in enterprises which will ultimately be subject to insolvency proceedings will not see their claims satisfied, even in they have been working for two years.

In this context, will the Commission say:

— How does it judge this development, which makes life difficult for workers, by indirectly passing on to them the cost of an employer going bankrupt?

— Does it have any data on the order of claims in corresponding ranking tables in the Member States?

— Will it make recommendations to Member States to ensure that workers' wages take precedence in claims on bankrupt estates?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

The issue raised by the Honourable Member is not directly regulated by Union law, nor does the Commission possess the data mentioned by the Honourable Member. Specific procedures for insolvency processes and the ranking of priority of claims on bankrupt entities are the responsibility of the Greek authorities. The European Commission takes note of the difficult situation of employees in enterprises which are subject to an insolvency procedure. The Commission is of the view that bankruptcy procedures should take a balanced approach to facilitate long term economic growth in the country.

Furthermore, Member States have an obligation to take measures to ensure that the outstanding wage claims of employees against insolvent employers are guaranteed in accordance with Directive 2009/94/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2008 on the protection of employees in the event of the insolvency of their employer. ([1])

([1]) OJ L 283, 28.10.2008, p. 36.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005317/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Comunicación a España sobre la Ley de la Función Social de la Vivienda

El pasado 10 de mayo se filtró a determinados medios de la prensa española la noticia de que la Comisión Europea había enviado una comunicación al Gobierno español en la que mostraba su preocupación porque el Decreto-ley sobre la Función Social de la Vivienda de la Junta de Andalucía podría suponer el incumplimiento de determinados puntos del memorando de entendimiento firmado para el rescate del sector bancario español.

El Decreto-ley de la Junta de Andalucía, aprobado el pasado 9 de abril, es una medida de emergencia aprobada sin ningún voto en contra por el Parlamento autonómico andaluz y que respeta la totalidad de la legislación española y comunitaria. Se trata de una medida desarrollada a raíz de la situación de emergencia habitacional que está sufriendo todo el país y que solo busca garantizar la función social de la vivienda para evitar la especulación con vivienda vacía en un momento en el que se condena a la exclusión social a miles de familias.

Los tribunales están llevando a cabo desahucios decretados bajo una ley que incumple la Directiva europea de cláusulas abusivas (93/13/CEE). La norma hipotecaria española, que ha sido aplicada a miles de personas, fue declarada ilegal por el Tribunal de la Unión Europea el pasado 14 de marzo, tras veinte años de haberse venido aplicando sin ningún tipo de queja o comunicación al Gobierno por parte de la Comisión Europea. Este nuevo decreto, pese a respetar toda la legislación española y comunitaria, ha sido supuestamente objeto de esta comunicación en menos de un mes de existencia.

¿Ha enviado la Comisión una comunicación al Gobierno español relativa a este Decreto-ley?

En caso afirmativo, ¿podría detallar su contenido?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión Europea remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta P-005366/2013 ([1]).

En lo que respecta a la declaración de Su Señoría en el sentido de que la Comisión no recabó la atención del Gobierno español sobre el hecho de que la legislación española sobre hipotecas no se ha ajustado durante veinte años a la Directiva 93/13/CEE sobre las cláusulas abusivas en los contratos celebrados con consumidores, la Comisión recuerda que el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea ha formulado su jurisprudencia sobre los requisitos de la Directiva 93/13/CEE en relación con las normas nacionales de procedimiento solo en los últimos años. Además, antes del asunto C-415/11 Aziz la Comisión no había recibido ninguna notificación, denuncia u otra información que indicara que no fuera posible para los consumidores españoles obtener la suspensión del procedimiento de ejecución hipotecaria para que un juez pudiera apreciar el carácter abusivo de las cláusulas de un contrato de crédito.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005317/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Communication to Spain regarding the Law on the Social Function of Housing

On 10 May, various Spanish media sources reported that the European Commission had sent a communication to the Spanish Government in which it raised concerns that the Andalusian regional government's Decree Law on the Social Function of Housing could represent a breach of some points of the memorandum of understanding signed on the bailout of the Spanish banking sector.

The Andalusian regional government's Decree Law, passed on 9 April 2013, is an emergency measure unanimously approved by the Andalusian parliament which respects all Spanish and EU legislation. It is a measure developed as a result of the emergency housing situation that the whole country is facing and seeks only to ensure the social function of housing in order to avoid speculation on empty housing at a time when thousands of families are being condemned to social exclusion.

The courts are carrying out evictions decreed under a law that does not comply with the European Directive on unfair terms (93/13/EEC). Spanish mortgage legislation, which has been applied to thousands of people, was declared illegal by the Court of Justice of the European Union on 14 March after 20 years of being applied without any complaints or communications from the Commission to the Spanish Government. This new decree, which complies with all Spanish and EU legislation, seems to have become the subject of a communication within less than a month.

Has the Commission sent a communication to the Spanish Government about this Decree Law?

If so, could it provide details of its content?

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

The European Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question P-005366/2013 ([1]).

With regard to the Honourable Member's statement, that the Commission did not draw the attention of the Spanish Government to the incompliance of the Spanish mortgage legislation with Directive 93/13/CCE on unfair contract terms in consumer contracts for 20 years, the Commission would like to point out that the Court of Justice of the European Union developed its case law on the requirements under Directive 93/13/EEC for the national rules of procedure only in recent years. Furthermore, the Commission had not received any notification, complaint, or other information indicating that it was not possible for Spanish consumers to obtain the suspension of mortgage enforcement proceedings to have the unfairness of contract terms in a credit contract checked by a judge, prior to Case C-415/11 *Aziz*.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005318/13
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(14 mei 2013)

Betreft: Projecten van EBRD in fiscale paradijzen

De EU (Europese Commissie, lidstaten en EIB) vertegenwoordigt 63 % van de stemmen in de EBRD, meer dan wat vereist is bij het goedkeuren van projecten.

De EBRD financiert ook projecten en bedrijven die (deels) gevestigd zijn in landen die bekend staan als fiscale paradijzen, zoals de Kaaimaneilanden. Op 16 april 2013 werden door de EBRD nog twee dergelijke projecten goedgekeurd, Vostok Finance Group Senior Secured Loan en Oasis Russia, met begunstigden in Cyprus en de Maagdeneilanden.

De projecten van de EBRD mogen dan wel voldoen aan de internationale minimumnormen inzake belastingpraktijken, maar dit is niet voldoende. De EU gaf onlangs nog uiting aan het krachtdadig beleid dat zij wil voeren. Zo zei commissaris Šemeta: „De eerste aanbeveling verlangt een krachtdadig optreden van de EU tegen belastingparadijzen dat de huidige internationale maatregelen overstijgt." Ook de Voorzitter van de Europese Raad, Herman Van Rompuy sprak zich uit: „Om dit probleem in al onze lidstaten en wereldwijd aan te pakken, moet Europa met één stem spreken."

1. Hoe staat de Commissie tegenover de verschillende, ook recente, projecten die de EBRD ondersteunt en die (deels) gevestigd zijn in landen die bekend staan om hun zeer voordelige belastingstelsels, zoals de Britse Maagdeneilanden, de Kaaimaneilanden, Cyprus en Mauritius?

2. Wat zijn de argumenten van de Commissie die kunnen verklaren dat, ondanks de meerderheid aan stemmen die de EU bezit in de EBRD, de twee recente projecten waarvan sprake op 16 april toch goedgekeurd werden?

3. Welke initiatieven en concrete stappen plant de Commissie om het door de EU uitgesproken gewenste, krachtdadig beleid inzake belastingparadijzen en belastingontwijking ook in de praktijk uit te voeren en te eisen binnen de werking van de EBRD?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(27 juni 2013)

In 2010 heeft de Europese Bank voor Wederopbouw en Ontwikkeling (EBWO) haar goedkeuring gehecht aan een ten aanzien van offshorejurisdicties te voeren beleid. Met het beleid wordt beoogd de internationale inspanningen te ondersteunen die erop gericht zijn belastingontwijking en andere schadelijke belastingpraktijken te ontmoedigen. Tegelijkertijd wordt erkend dat bij EBWO-operaties betrokken entiteiten soms in derde landen zijn gevestigd om andere dan louter fiscale redenen, zoals onvoldoende toegang tot financiering of een zwak wetgevingskader in de ontvangende landen. Ingeval er van een offshorejurisdictie wordt gebruikgemaakt, moet de EBWO zich ervan vergewissen dat zulks terdege gerechtvaardigd is en dat een transparante structuur wordt voorgesteld. Er wordt bijzondere aandacht besteed aan de vraag of de betrokken jurisdicties legitieme financiële activiteiten ontplooien, alsook aan de evaluaties van het Wereldforum inzake transparantie en inlichtingenuitwisseling voor belastingdoeleinden en van de Financiële-actiegroep. Dat geldt ook voor de projecten die de Raad van de EBWO op 16 april 2013 heeft goedgekeurd.

In december 2012 heeft de Commissie een actieplan ter versterking van de strijd tegen belastingfraude en belastingontduiking aangenomen. Daarin worden concrete maatregelen uiteengezet om de administratieve samenwerking te intensiveren en goed bestuur te ondersteunen. Het betreft onder meer de interactie met belastingparadijzen en de aanpak van agressieve fiscale planning. Op 22 mei 2013 heeft de Europese Raad benadrukt dat voorrang zal worden gegeven aan inspanningen ter verruiming van de automatische uitwisseling van informatie op EU-niveau en mondiaal niveau. Met dit doel voor ogen heeft de Commissie op 12 juni 2013 wijzigingen in de richtlijn betreffende de administratieve samenwerking voorgesteld en zal zij dezelfde beginselen ook op internationaal niveau verdedigen.

De EBWO is voornemens haar beleid ten aanzien van offshorejurisdicties te evalueren. Daarbij zal rekening worden gehouden met de Europese en mondiale ontwikkelingen op het gebied van de aanpak van schadelijke belastingpraktijken. Het is overigens onder impuls van de EU dat er binnen de Raad van de EBWO een discussie over dit gevoelige thema op gang is gekomen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005318/13
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: EBRD projects in tax havens

The EU (the European Commission, Member States and the European Investment Bank) represents 63% of the votes in the EBRD, which is more than what is required to approve projects.

The EBRD also finances projects and companies which are (partly) located in countries known to be tax havens, such as the Cayman Islands. On 16 April 2013 two more such projects were approved by the EBRD, 'Vostok Finance Group Senior Secured Loan' and 'Oasis Russia', with beneficiaries in Cyprus and the Virgin Islands.

Obviously, EBRD projects have to meet minimum international standards relating to tax practices, but this is not sufficient. The EU has recently given expression to a vigorous policy that it wants to pursue. Commissioner Šemeta put it in these words: 'The first recommendation calls for decisive EU action against tax havens which transcend current international measures.' The President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, too, has spoken out: 'In order to address this problem in all our Member States and worldwide, Europe needs to speak with a single voice.'

1. What is the Commission's position in relation to the various projects, including recent ones, which the EBRD supports and which are (partly) based in countries that are known for their very advantageous tax systems, such as the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Cyprus and Mauritius?

2. What arguments can the Commission give to explain the approval of the two recent projects on 16 April despite the majority vote that the EU holds in the EBRD?

3. What initiatives and specific steps is the Commission planning in order to carry out the vigorous policy on tax havens and tax avoidance in practice, which the EU says it desires, and in order to demand it within the EBRD?

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

The EBRD adopted an Offshore Jurisdictions Policy in 2010 designed to support international efforts to discourage tax evasion and other harmful tax practices, whilst recognising that entities involved in EBRD operations are sometimes established in third countries for reasons other than purely tax, such as insufficient access to finance or poor legislative environments in recipient countries. Where an offshore jurisdiction is used, the EBRD must satisfy itself that there is a sound business case for such use and a transparent structure is proposed. Close consideration is given to whether jurisdictions conduct proper financial activities and to the assessments of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes and the Financial Action Task Force. This was also the case for the projects approved by the EBRD Board on 16 April 2013.

The Commission adopted in December 2012 an Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion, which sets out concrete steps to enhance administrative cooperation and good governance policy, including interaction with tax havens and tackling aggressive tax planning. The European Council of 22 May 2013 stressed that priority would be given to extending the automatic exchange of information at the EU and international levels. To this effect, the Commission proposed on 12 June 2013 amendments to the directive on administrative cooperation and will be promoting the same principles also at the international level.

A review of the EBRD Offshore Jurisdiction Policy is underway, which will take account of EU and international developments on tackling harmful tax practices. The EU has been instrumental in the Board of the EBRD in instigating a discussion on this sensitive matter.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005319/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Informe secreto sobre las preferentes de la CNMV

El pasado 10 de abril apareció en determinados medios de comunicación españoles un informe secreto que supuestamente elaboró la Comisión Nacional del Mercado de Valores (CNMV) sobre las prácticas ilegales empleadas por diferentes entidades preferentes en la colocación de dichos instrumentos híbridos a clientes minoristas.

Este informe, con fecha de 13 de febrero de 2013, recoge en detalle los incumplimientos en los que incurrieron los bancos y cajas de ahorro españolas a la hora de colocar las participaciones preferentes entre sus clientes. El informe califica de «incumplimiento generalizado» las operaciones de colocación de participaciones preferentes entre clientes minoristas, tan solo tomando a modo de ejemplo seis emisiones de instrumentos híbridos.

El sector bancario español ha sido puesto en evidencia a través de este informe. Se trata de una operación generalizada de estafa que se ha producido con la completa permisividad de las autoridades españolas y europeas. El desastroso papel que la CNMV ha llevado a cabo en el control y la regulación de las emisiones de este tipo de productos financieros puede resultar incluso criminal, puesto que permitió cientos de miles de operaciones ilegales, lo que induce a pensar que incumplieron deliberadamente sus obligaciones como controladores del mercado.

Frente a estos incumplimientos masivos de los que la CNMV era consciente desde el pasado mes de febrero, el Gobierno ha continuado impulsando el arbitraje, lo que supone el reconocimiento de los contratos pese a conocer de su absoluta nulidad y de la legitimidad de acudir a la vía legal para recuperar el 100 % de los fondos estafados por las entidades bancarias.

— ¿Considera la Comisión que la citada CNMV podría haber incurrido en un comportamiento criminal al haber permitido cientos de miles de operaciones ilegales y haber omitido su obligación de vigilar el mercado?

— ¿Qué acciones dispondrá la Comisión para esclarecer responsabilidades legales y garantizar el respeto a la legislación vigente?

— ¿Conocía la Comisión la existencia de este informe secreto durante las reuniones mantenidas entre la Troika y las autoridades españolas?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de julio de 2013)

La Directiva 2004/39/CE ([1]) (DMIF) regula la prestación de servicios de inversión por parte de las empresas de inversión y las entidades de crédito en lo que respecta a los instrumentos financieros, incluidas las acciones preferentes y otros instrumentos de deuda subordinada.

En lo que respecta a la primera y la segunda preguntas planteadas por Su Señoría, incumbe a las autoridades y los tribunales españoles competentes velar por el respeto de toda la legislación pertinente en materia de protección de los inversores en la venta de estos productos financieros. Los servicios de la Comisión se han mantenido en contacto con las autoridades españolas y se han informado de varias iniciativas de regulación y supervisión de la CNMV en relación con la venta de acciones preferentes.

En cuanto a la conducta y la responsabilidad de la Comisión Nacional del Mercado de Valores, compete a los órganos jurisdiccionales nacionales decidir sobre cualquier posible responsabilidad del Estado e indemnizaciones por los daños provocados, siempre que se reúnan determinadas condiciones.

En lo referido a la tercera pregunta, a la Comisión no se le ha comunicado la existencia de este supuesto informe en ninguna de sus reuniones con las autoridades españolas en el contexto de la ayuda al sector financiero español.

([1]) DO L 145 de 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005319/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Secret report on CNMV preferred shares

On 10 April, certain Spanish media sources reported on a secret report supposedly drafted by the Spanish National Securities Market Commission (CNMV) on the illegal practices used by various bodies issuing preferred shares when selling these hybrid instruments to retail clients.

This report, dated 13 February 2013, provides a detailed account of the non-compliance by Spanish banks and building societies when selling preferred shares to their clients. The report describes 'widespread non-compliance' in transactions involving the sale of preferred shares to retail clients, using just six issues of hybrid instruments as examples.

This report has shone a light on the Spanish banking sector. This is a widespread scam which has taken place with the full permission of the Spanish and European authorities. The disastrous role that the CNMV has played in controlling and regulating issues of these kinds of financial products may even turn out to be a criminal act, as it allowed hundreds of thousands of illegal transactions to take place, which suggests that it deliberately chose not to comply with its market control obligations.

In the face of these massive cases of non-fulfilment which the CNMV has known about since February, the government has continued to promote stock trading, meaning that it has recognised the contracts despite knowing that they are in no way valid, and recognised the legitimacy of using legal means to recover 100% of the funds swindled by the banking institutions.

— Does the Commission believe that the CNMV could have been involved in criminal conduct by allowing hundreds of thousands of illegal transactions to take place and neglecting its market surveillance duty?

— What actions will the Commission take to clarify legal responsibilities and ensure respect for the legislation in force?

— Was the Commission aware of this secret report during the meetings held between the Troika and the Spanish authorities?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

Directive 2004/39/EC (MiFID) ([1]) regulates the provision of investment services by investment firms and credit institutions in relation to financial instruments, including preference shares and other subordinated debt instruments.

With respect to the first and second questions raised by the Honourable Member, it is for the competent Spanish authorities and courts to ensure that all the relevant investor protection legislation was adhered to when the sale of these financial products was carried out. The Commission services have been in contact with the Spanish authorities and have been informed about several supervisory and regulatory initiatives in relation to the sale of preference shares undertaken by CNMV.

Concerning the conduct and liability of CNVM, it is the competence of national courts to decide on any possible state liability and other compensation for such damages, provided that certain conditions are fulfilled.

With respect to the third question, the Commission has not been made aware of the existence of this alleged report during any of its meetings with Spanish authorities within the context of the Spanish financial-sector assistance.

([1]) OJ L 145, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005320/13
do Komisji
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(14 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Dyskryminacja polskiej żywności

Od kilku miesięcy obserwujemy intensywną kampanię skierowaną przeciw polskiej żywności w Czechach i na Słowacji, co niekorzystnie wpływa na wizerunek polskich producentów i przetwórców.

To kolejny tego typu atak na polskie artykuły spożywcze w ciągu ostatnich kilkunastu miesięcy. Pragnę przypomnieć, iż wcześniej mieliśmy do czynienia z zarzutami dotyczącymi polskiej koniny w Wielkiej Brytanii i Irlandii, które – jak wykazała kontrola Komisji Europejskiej – okazały się niesprawiedliwe.

Pod koniec stycznia Komisja Europejska zapowiedziała przeanalizowanie mechanizmów kontroli polskich produktów rolniczych i spożywczych dostarczanych na unijny rynek.

W związku z tym chciałbym zwrócić się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Czy Komisja dysponuje już wynikami wymienionej wyżej kontroli?

2. Jakie kolejne kroki Komisja planuje podjąć, by rozwiązać tę problematyczną kwestię?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(21 czerwca 2013 r.)

1. Komisja nie posiada wiedzy na temat wspomnianej przez Szanownego Pana Posła zapowiedzi przeprowadzenia analizy mechanizmów kontroli produktów rolnych i spożywczych dostarczanych przez Polskę na rynek UE. Sprawozdania ze wszystkich audytów sprawdzających, czy wymogi UE w zakresie bezpieczeństwa żywności są w Polsce przestrzegane, które planuje i przeprowadza Biuro ds. Żywności i Weterynarii (FVO) przy Dyrekcji Generalnej ds. Zdrowia i Konsumentów Komisji Europejskiej, są dostępne na stronie internetowej Komisji ([1]).

2. Komisja dokłada wszelkich starań, aby, w razie potencjalnego lub rzeczywistego naruszenia unijnych przepisów dotyczących łańcucha żywnościowego, które może wywołać skutki transgraniczne, zagwarantować funkcjonowanie kanałów skutecznej współpracy między właściwymi organami państw członkowskich, zgodnie z zasadami dotyczącymi pomocy i współpracy administracyjnej w dziedzinie żywności (tytuł IV rozporządzenia (WE) nr 882/2004 ([2])). Komisja jest również gotowa do udzielenia pomocy, jeśli wystąpi taka potrzeba.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm
([2]) Rozporządzenie (WE) nr 882/2004 Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 29 kwietnia 2004 r. w sprawie kontroli urzędowych przeprowadzanych w celu sprawdzenia zgodności z prawem paszowym i żywnościowym oraz regułami dotyczącymi zdrowia zwierząt i dobrostanu zwierząt – Dz.U. L 165 z 30.4.2004, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005320/13
to the Commission
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Discrimination against Polish food

Over the past few months an intensive campaign has been mounted in the Czech Republic and Slovakia against Polish food, with adverse consequences for the reputation of Polish producers and processors.

This is one more in a long line of similar attacks on Polish food products over the past year. It is worth remembering that Poland was previously accused of supplying horse meat to the United Kingdom and Ireland, even though checks carried out by the Commission proved these accusations to be false.

In late January, the Commission announced its intention to analyse the control mechanisms for agricultural and food products supplied by Poland to the EU market.

1. Has the Commission already received the results of the above analysis?

2. What steps does it plan to take next in order to resolve this difficult issue?

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

1. The Commission is not aware of the specific announcement referred to by the Honourable Member in relation to the analysis of the control mechanisms for agricultural and food products supplied by Poland to the EU market. Reports from all audits planned and carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO), to verify the implementation of EU requirements on food safety in Poland are available on the Commission's website ([1]).

2. The Commission is doing its utmost to ensure that efficient cooperation channels are put in place between the Member States' competent authorities in cases of potential or established violation of the Union's food chain rules which might have cross-border effects, pursuant to the rules governing administrative assistance and cooperation in the area of food (Title IV of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([2])). The Commission is also ready to provide its assistance should that prove necessary.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules — OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005321/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Sistema de ayudas en Turquía

El 24 de enero de 2012 se formuló por escrito una pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión (E-000421/2012) sobre la política de apoyo a las avellanas en Turquía.

En su última respuesta, de 8 de junio de 2012, se nos informa de la política de la avellana llevada a cabo en Turquía hasta abril de 2012. Se nos comunica, además, que nos mantendrán informados sobre los resultados de la evaluación de las políticas de apoyo a la avellanas y la posterior política adoptada. Desde entonces, parece ser que los productores turcos siguen recibiendo ayudas del Gobierno turco. No obstante, no hemos obtenido respuesta alguna de esta Comisión al respecto.

1. ¿Puede indicar la Comisión, en caso de existir, cuál es el nuevo sistema de ayudas a los agricultores, consensuado con el Gobierno turco, para la producción y/o exportación de avellana turca?

2. De las políticas de apoyo a la avellana turca llevadas a cabo en Turquía el año 2012, ¿qué resultados se han obtenido?

3. ¿No cree la Comisión que el sistema de ayudas adoptado en Turquía genera graves perjuicios para los productores comunitarios?

4. ¿No cree la Comisión que dicho mecanismo implica muy fácilmente el «dumping» de la avellana turca frente a la comunitaria?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de julio de 2013)

Turquía aplicó en 2009-2011 una estrategia para la avellana con dos instrumentos políticos principales, a saber, «Régimen de ayuda a la renta basado en la superficie» y «Pagos compensatorios para la producción alternativa».

En el ámbito de aplicación de la estrategia, en 2011 se registraron 354 000 productores y 472 000 hectáreas como superficies autorizadas de avellana. Entre 2009 y 2011 aumentó un 20 % el número de productores y un 9 % la superficie que recibe la ayuda.

En 2011, 561 productores se beneficiaron del régimen de pagos compensatorios, por un total de 629 hectáreas, lo que representa un aumento de aproximadamente el 20 % en comparación con 2009. Los agricultores que recibieron ayudas en virtud de este régimen han pasado a cultivar cereales, cultivos forrajeros, semillas oleaginosas, frutas y hortalizas.

A raíz de su evaluación interna, Turquía decidió ampliar su política de apoyo a la avellana al periodo 2012-2014 con los mismos principios e instrumentos políticos.

En lo que respecta a los aspectos de dumping, la Comisión, por regla general, puede contemplar abrir una investigación antidumping o antisubvención únicamente después de hacer recibido una denuncia debidamente documentada y que contenga pruebas suficientes de que existen subvenciones sujetas a medidas compensatorias o dumping, y perjuicio, tal como se dispone en el Reglamento (CE) n° 597/2009 del Consejo, de 11 de junio de 2009, sobre la defensa contra las importaciones subvencionadas originarias de países no miembros de la Comunidad Europea ([1]) y en el Reglamento (CE) n° 1225/2009 del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativo a la defensa contra las importaciones que sean objeto de dumping por parte de países no miembros de la Comunidad Europea ([2]). Hasta la fecha, la Comisión no ha recibido ninguna denuncia de los operadores europeos ni de las autoridades nacionales respecto a un posible dumping en las importaciones de avellanas de Turquía.

([1]) DO L 188 de 18.7.2009.
([2]) DO L 343 de 22.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005321/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Aid system in Turkey

On 24 January 2012, a written parliamentary question was submitted to the Commission (E-000421/2012) on the support policy for hazelnuts in Turkey.

In its latest reply, dated 8 June 2012, it provides us with information about the hazelnut policy applied in Turkey until April 2012. It also tells us that we will be kept informed of the results of the assessment of support policies for hazelnuts and the latest policy adopted. Since then, it seems that Turkish producers are still receiving aid from the Turkish Government. However, we have received no response from the Commission in this respect.

1. If there is a new aid system for farmers, agreed with the Turkish Government, for the production and/or export of Turkish hazelnuts, can the Commission state what it is?

2. What results were achieved as a result of the support policies for Turkish hazelnuts applied in Turkey in 2012?

3. Does the Commission not believe that the aid system adopted in Turkey causes serious harm to EU producers?

4. Does the Commission not believe that this mechanism simply involves the 'dumping' of Turkish hazelnuts to the detriment of Community hazelnuts?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

Turkey implemented in 2009-2011 a hazelnut strategy, which consisted in two main policy instruments, i.e. an 'Area Based Income Support Scheme' and 'Compensatory Payments for Alternative Production'.

Within the scope of the strategy 354 000 producers and 472 000 hectares were registered as authorised hazelnut areas in 2011. From 2009 to 2011 there has been an increase of 20% in the number of producers and 9% in the supported area.

In 2011, 561 producers were beneficiaries of the Compensatory Payments Scheme, for a total of 629 ha, representing an increase of approximately 20% compared to 2009. Farmers who were supported by this scheme have switched to cereals, fodder crops, oilseeds, fruit and vegetables.

As a result of its internal evaluation, Turkey decided to extend its hazelnut support policy to 2012-2014 with the same principles and policy instruments.

Regarding the dumping aspects, the Commission can as a general rule consider an anti-subsidy and/or antidumping investigation(s), only upon receipt of a properly documented complaint which contains sufficient evidence of countervailable subsidisation and/or dumping, and injury, according to Council Regulation (EC) No 597/2009 of 11 June 2009 on protection against subsidised imports from countries not members of the European Community ([1]) and Council Regulation (EC) No 1225/2009 of 30 November 2009 on protection against dumped imports from countries not members of the European Community ([2]). Until this date the Commission has not received any complaint from European operators or national authorities against dumped imports of Turkish hazelnuts.

([1]) OJ L 188, 18.7.2009.
([2]) OJ L 343, 22.12.2009.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005324/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Falta de competencia en las empresas españolas

El BCE afirma que «algunas empresas están obteniendo beneficios excesivos» porque están rebajando sus costes laborales pero no están rebajando sus precios al mismo tiempo ([1]). Denuncia ([2]) que la «resistencia de los precios» en el Estado español se explica por unas pocas «grandes empresas». Según el BCE, hay dos variantes de falta de competencia que explican los precios elevados en nuestro país: el primero es lo que describe como « efecto composición» por el que las empresas rentables que sobreviven a la crisis se hacen con la cuota de mercado de las que desaparecen y ganan capacidad para fijar precios. El segundo fenómeno se explica, simplemente, con la falta de competencia de algunos sectores.

En España la caída de los salarios ha sido del 7 %, según los datos del INE. Sin embargo, los precios de ciertos sectores con importantes barreras de entrada se han mantenido elevados o incluso han subido más. Según las cifras del Instituto Nacional de Estadística, mientras bajaban los costes laborales unitarios, han subido los precios de los alimentos con elaboración, las bebidas y el tabaco un 3,6 %, los carburantes y los combustibles un 3,3 %, y los productos energéticos un 1,3 %.

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Piensa la Comisión investigar esta situación de posible vulneración de la competencia por parte de las grandes empresas en el Estado español como apunta el BCE?

2. ¿Tiene en cuenta la Comisión estos datos cuando evalúa el grado de cumplimiento del MoU?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

En el contexto del semestre europeo de 2013, la Comisión ha llevado a cabo un análisis de la política económica española y ha propuesto al Consejo recomendaciones específicas para España. A fin de aumentar la competencia en distintos sectores, la Comisión recomendó la reducción de barreras de entrada y salida para las empresas y una mejora de la normativa. Para más información, sírvase consultar los documentos del Semestre Europeo de 2013, adoptados el 29 de mayo de 2013 por la Comisión, en:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_es.htm

El Memorando de Entendimiento sobre condiciones de política sectorial financiera de julio de 2012 prevé un seguimiento periódico de los progresos registrados en la aplicación de las recomendaciones específicas por país.

([1]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/economia/25117-el-bce-denuncia-beneficios-excesivos-y-falta-de-competencia-entre-algunas-grandes-empresas
([2]) http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/other/art2_mb201305en_pp85-101en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005324/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Lack of competition in Spanish companies

The ECB claims that 'some companies are earning excessive profits' because they are reducing their labour costs but not lowering their prices at the same time ([1]). It reports ([2]) that 'price resilience in Spain can be explained by a few large companies'. According to the ECB, there are two kinds of lack of competition which explain the higher prices in our country: the first is what it describes as the 'composition effect', whereby profitable companies which survive the crisis do so by using the market share of those that disappear, and therefore become more able to fix prices. The second phenomenon can be explained simply by the lack of competition in some sectors.

According to data from the Spanish National Statistical Institute (INE), salaries have fallen by 7% in Spain. However, prices in some sectors with significant barriers to entry have stayed high or have risen even higher. According to figures from INE, while unit labour costs have been falling, the price of prepared foods, beverages and tobacco has increased by 3.6%, fuel by 3.3% and energy products by 1.3%.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission plan to investigate this situation of a possible breach of competition by large companies in Spain, as stated by the ECB?

2. Does the Commission take these data into account when evaluating the degree of compliance with the MoU?

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

In the context of the 2013 European Semester, the Commission has carried out an analysis of Spain's economic policy and proposed to the Council specific recommendations for Spain. To enhance competition in different sectors, the Commission recommended reducing entry and exit barriers for firms and improving regulatory environment. For more information please refer to the 2013 European Semester documents adopted on 29 May 2013 by the Commission; available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm.

The Memorandum of Understanding on Financial Sector Policy Conditionality of July 2012 foresees a regular monitoring of progress in implementing the country-specific recommendations.

([1]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/economia/25117-el-bce-denuncia-beneficios-excesivos-y-falta-de-competencia-entre-algunas-grandes-empresas.
([2]) http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/other/art2_mb201305en_pp85-101en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005325/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 mai 2013)

Objet: Sanction en cas de fraude dans l'agroalimentaire

La Commission a proposé ce lundi 6 mai de légiférer sur les contrôles dans la filière agroalimentaire et d'uniformiser les sanctions en cas de fraude. La Commission a déclaré: «Lorsque cette série de mesures sera mise en œuvre, toute infraction à la législation communautaire devra être assortie d'une sanction qui sera à la hauteur du bénéfice réalisé par le biais de cette infraction».

1. Qu'entend la Commission par «à la hauteur du bénéfice réalisé par le biais de cette infraction»? 3 fois, 5 fois, 10 fois le montant du bénéfice?

2. Dans un cas de fraude, comme celui de la viande chevaline, comment la Commission compte-t-elle déterminer ce bénéfice à partir du moment où elle ne connaît pas nécessairement l'étendue de la fraude ni la date du début de celle-ci?

3. Comment la Commission va-t-elle opérer pour tendre vers l'harmonisation européenne en matière de sanctions?

4. Ce paquet législatif, qui concerne le deuxième secteur économique de l'Union, devrait entrer en vigueur en 2016. Pourrait-il avoir un effet rétroactif?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(24 juin 2013)

La proposition de règlement sur les contrôles officiels dans la filière agroalimentaire impose aux États membres de veiller à ce que les sanctions financières des violations délibérées des règles régissant ladite filière annulent, à tout le moins, les gains recherchés par les contrevenants. Il incombe également aux États membres de fixer le montant de ces sanctions et de mettre en place des procédures pour leur application.

La Commission n'a pas l'intention, à ce stade, d'harmoniser ces sanctions.

Le paquet de propositions n'aura pas d'effet rétroactif.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005325/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Penalties in case of fraud in the agri-food sector

On Monday 6 May, the Commission proposed to legislate on controls in the agri-food sector and to homogenise penalties in case of fraud. The Commission stated: 'When and if this package is approved, any pecuniary penalties relating to violation of EU legislation must be equal to the economic gain which has been made out of the violation of the EC law'.

1. What does the Commission understand by 'equal to the economic gain which has been made out of the violation of the EC law'? Three times, five times, 10 times the amount of the economic gain?

2. In cases of fraud, such as the horsemeat scandal, how does the Commission plan to determine this economic gain if it does not necessarily know the scale of the fraud or the date on which it started?

3. How will the Commission work towards European harmonisation in terms of penalties?

4. This legislative package, which deals with the second most important economic sector in the EU, is due to enter into force in 2016. Could it be applied retrospectively?

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

The proposal for a regulation on official controls along the agri-food chain requires Member States to ensure that financial penalties applicable to intentional violations of agri-food chain rules should at least offset the economic advantage sought through the violation. The responsibility to determine the amount of sanctions and to put procedures in place for their application lies with the Member States.

The Commission does not intend, at this stage, to harmonise penalties for violations of agri-food chain rules.

The Package of proposals will not benefit from retrospective application.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005326/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 mai 2013)

Objet: Football — la loi financière du 50 + 1

En Angleterre et en France, les investisseurs du Moyen-Orient font la pluie et le beau temps. En Allemagne, ce ne sera jamais le cas. La raison est simple: la loi du 50 + 1 empêche que des étrangers détiennent la majorité des parts d'un club. En conséquence, il faut trouver d'autres solutions de financement, et les budgets sont dès lors diversifiés.

À titre d'exemple, les revenus de Dortmund proviennent à 51 % des contrats commerciaux, à 17 % des recettes aux guichets et à 32 % des droits télé. Cette variété empêche les clubs de cultiver une dépendance vis-à-vis de l'un ou l'autre pôle.

Par conséquent, les clubs allemands (623 millions de dettes) sont en nettement moins mauvaise santé que leurs homologues italiens (2,6 milliards), anglais (2,8 milliards) et surtout espagnols (3,53 milliards).

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur cette règle du 50 + 1?

2. Cette règle est-elle en adéquation avec la législation européenne et la sacro-sainte ouverture du marché prônée par la Commission?

3. Comment la Commission lutte-t-elle contre l'endettement colossal des clubs de football?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(16 juillet 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à prendre connaissance de sa réponse à la question écrite n° E-6506/09 ([1]) concernant la règle du 50 + 1 appliquée dans le football allemand.

La Commission note que plusieurs mesures ont été adoptées par les instances de décision du football et les parties prenantes pour endiguer l'endettement excessif de certains clubs. Parmi ces mesures, les règles de l'UEFA en matière de fair-play financier, que la Commission considère comme un moyen efficace de réduire le niveau d'endettement des clubs de football. La Commission salue dès lors l'adoption de ces dispositions par l'UEFA, tout en rappelant qu'elles doivent respecter le marché intérieur et les règles de concurrence. Le 21 mars 2012, le vice-président de la Commission, M. Joaquín Almunia, et le président de l'UEFA, M. Michel Platini, ont fait une déclaration commune sur l'interaction entre l'application, par l'UEFA, des règles de fair-play financier au football professionnel et le contrôle, par la Commission, des aides d'État au football professionnel, soulignant que les deux mécanismes visaient à parvenir à une situation dans laquelle les clubs de football professionnels vivent en fonction de leurs moyens.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005326/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Football — 50+1 financial law

In England and France, investors from the Middle East call the shots. In Germany, this will never be the case. The reason is simple: the 50+1 law prevents foreigners from holding the majority of a club's shares. As a result, other financing solutions have to be found, and the budgets are therefore diversified.

For example, 51% of Dortmund's revenue comes from commercial contracts, 17% from ticket sales and 32% from television rights. This variety stops clubs from becoming dependent on one area or another.

Consequently, German clubs (with EUR 623 million of debt) are significantly better off than their counterparts in Italy (EUR 2.6 billion), England (EUR 2.8 billion) and particularly Spain (EUR 3.53 billion).

1. What is the Commission's opinion on this 50+1 rule?

2. Is this rule in line with European legislation and the sacrosanct opening up of the market advocated by the Commission?

3. How is the Commission tackling the colossal debts of football clubs?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-6506/09 ([1]) concerning the 50+1 rule applied in German football.

The Commission notes that various measures have been adopted by football governing bodies and stakeholders to rein in the excessive debts of some clubs. Amongst these measures, the Commission considers that UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules are an effective way to reduce the level of debt in football clubs. The Commission therefore welcomes the adoption of the Financial Fair Play rules by UEFA while recalling that these measures have to respect Internal Market and competition rules. On 21 March 2012, Commission Vice-President Joaquín Almunia and UEFA President Michel Platini issued a joint statement on the interaction between the application to professional football of Financial Fair Play rules by UEFA and the control of state aid in professional football by the Commission, highlighting that both mechanisms seek to achieve a situation in which professional football clubs live within their own means.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005328/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(14 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Ο Μαρουάν Μπαργούτι στις ισραηλινές φυλακές

Ο Μαρουάν Μπαργούτι, ο 53χρονος παλαιστίνιος πολιτικός ηγέτης, ο οποίος διετέλεσε και βουλευτής, βρίσκεται στις ισραηλινές φυλακές από το 2002, όταν απήχθη από τη Δυτική Οχθη. Ο Μπαργούτι είναι ο δημοφιλέστερος εκ των Παλαιστίνιων πολιτικών, μεταξύ όλων των παρατάξεων καθώς δεν σταμάτησε ποτέ να παλεύει για μια ενωμένη, κυρίαρχη και ελεύθερη Παλαιστίνη.

Είναι εις γνώσιν της ΕΕ η σημαντική αυτή προσωπικότητα, η οποία ενώνει τους παλαιστίνιους; Σε ποιές ενέργειες έχει προβεί η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος προκειμένου να πιέσει το Ισραήλ να απελευθερώσει τον Μαρουάν Μπαργούτι, έναν κοινά αποδεκτό ηγέτη, ο οποίος μπορεί πραγματικά να συμβάλλει στην συνένωση όλων των Παλαιστινίων και να δώσει ώθηση στις συνομιλίες μεταξύ Παλαιστίνης και Ισραήλ;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου κ. Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Ιουλίου 2013)

Ο Μαρουάν Μπαργούτι έχει καταδικαστεί από το ισραηλινό δικαστήριο για σοβαρά αδικήματα. Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος δεν έχει ζητήσει την αποφυλάκισή του.

Η ΕΕ στηρίζει την παλαιστινιακή συμφιλίωση υπό τον πρόεδρο Μαχμούντ Αμπάς.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005328/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Marwan Barghouti in Israeli prisons

Marwan Barghouti, the 53 year-old Palestinian political leader who was also a member of parliament, has been detained in Israeli prisons since 2002 when he was abducted from the West Bank. Barghouti is the most popular of all the Palestinian politicians, amongst all the political groups, as he never stopped fighting for unity, sovereignty and freedom in Palestine.

Does the EU know of this important figure who unites Palestinians? What actions has the Vice-President/High Representative taken to urge Israel to free Marwan Barghouti, a leader who is accepted by all and who can actually help in uniting all Palestinians and encourage talks between Palestine and Israel?

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

Marwan Barghouti has been sentenced by an Israeli court for serious offences. The HR/VP has not called for his release.

The EU supports Palestinian reconciliation behind President Mahmoud Abbas.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005329/13
à la Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(14 mai 2013)

Objet: Révision de la liste des matériels à risques spécifiés du règlement (CE) nº 999/2001

La règlementation communautaire (règlement (CE) nº 999/2001) a fixé la liste des matériels à risques spécifiés (MRS) chez les bovins de tout âge et, étant donné le risque qu'ils représentent pour la santé humaine, a prévu leur incinération.

En application de la feuille de route pour les encéphalopathies spongiformes transmissibles (EST) adoptée à Bruxelles le 15 juillet 2005, la liste des MRS doit être revue en fonction des nouveaux avis scientifiques et des données fournies par la surveillance EST.

Une actualisation de la liste est-elle envisagée? L'autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) a-t-elle été saisie par de nouveaux avis?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(28 juin 2013)

Les matériels à risque spécifiés (MRS) sont les organes considérés comme le siège de l'infectiosité chez les animaux atteints d'encéphalopathie spongiforme bovine (ESB). Ils peuvent présenter un risque pour la santé humaine s'ils sont consommés et leur retrait constitue la mesure de protection de la santé publique la plus importante.

Toute modification de la liste des MRS en vigueur doit se fonder sur des connaissances scientifiques nouvelles et sur leur évolution; en outre, il y a lieu de continuer à garantir une protection maximale des consommateurs dans l'Union. Ces éléments sont repris dans une communication, adoptée par la Commission le 16 juillet 2010 et intitulée «Feuille de route n° 2 pour les EST» ([1]), qui met en évidence les domaines dans lesquels des modifications pourraient être apportées aux mesures relatives aux EST.

En janvier 2012, la Commission a demandé à l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) de réévaluer le risque d'ESB lié à certains MRS (mésentère et intestins de bovins) et de fournir une estimation quantitative du risque d'ESB résultant de la consommation de ces tissus.

L'EFSA devrait rendre d'ici au 30 janvier 2014 un avis en fonction duquel la Commission déterminera s'il est opportun de modifier la liste des MRS en vigueur.

([1]) COM(2010) 384.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005329/13
to the Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Revision of the list of specified risk material in Regulation (EC) No 999/2001

EU legislation (Regulation (EC) No 999/2001) has established a list of specified risk material (SRM) in bovine animals of any age and provided for its incineration, given the risk that it represents to human health.

Pursuant to the road map for transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) adopted in Brussels on 15 July 2005, the list of SRM must be revised in accordance with new scientific opinions and data from TSE surveillance.

Are there plans to update the list? Has the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) been asked to give new opinions?

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

Specified Risk Materials (SRM) are the organs considered to harbour infectivity in an animal affected by bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Therefore they can pose a risk to human health if consumed and their removal is the most important public health protection measure against BSE.

Any amendment of the current list of SRM should be based on new evolving scientific knowledge while maintaining the existing high level of consumer protection within the EU. This approach is reflected in the TSE Roadmap 2 ([1]), a communication adopted by the Commission on 16 July 2010 and which outlines areas where future possible changes to EU TSE-related measures could be made.

In January 2012, the Commission requested the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to re-assess the BSE risk posed by certain SRM (bovine intestines and mesentery) and to provide quantitative estimates of the BSE risk arising from the consumption of these tissues.

EFSA should deliver its opinion by 30 January 2014. Depending on the conclusions of this opinion, the Commission will examine the opportunity to amend the current SRM list.

([1]) COM(2010) 0384.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005330/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Actuaciones para prevenir depresiones y suicidios en niños y otras personas más vulnerables

La difícil situación económica y social puede ser alguna de las causas del incremento de suicidios en muchos países de la Unión Europea, tal como han alertado algunos especialistas. En particular, resulta muy preocupante la situación de los niños, así como de personas que se sienten con riesgo de exclusión, ya que las estadísticas muestran un incremento notable de los estados depresivos.

Este Diputado es consciente de que las instituciones europeas han llevado a cabo actuaciones relevantes en el ámbito de la salud; tal es el caso del «Segundo programa de acción comunitaria 2008-2013».

Habiendo ya concluido el plazo para concurrir a la licitación «Salud 2013», me interesa conocer:

1. ¿Se han presentado proyectos o solicitudes para atender al cuidado de la salud mental, en concreto, de niños?

2. ¿No considera la Comisión Europea que deben incrementarse las ayudas para proteger la salud mental y aumentar las medidas preventivas con el objeto de evitar los suicidios?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de julio de 2013)

La convocatoria de propuestas de 2013 en el marco del programa Salud de la UE está cerrada, y la decisión se espera para otoño de 2013. No obstante, no se ha recibido ninguna propuesta de proyecto en el ámbito de la salud mental infantil.

En febrero de 2013 se puso en marcha una acción conjunta sobre salud mental y bienestar en el marco del programa de la UE en el ámbito de la salud, en la que participaron 24 Estados miembros y la Comisión. Uno de los paquetes de trabajo en el marco de dicha acción común aborda la prevención de la depresión y del suicidio, mientras que otro se centra en la salud mental y los centros de enseñanza.

Una serie de proyectos en el marco del programa de la UE sobre salud y el Séptimo Programa Marco de Investigación tienen por objetivo ayudar a prevenir los suicidios en los niños. Esto incluye, por ejemplo, los proyectos «Suicide Prevention through Internet and Media Based Mental Health Promotion (Supreme) — (Prevención del suicidio a través del fomento de la salud mental en internet y en los medios de comunicación)» ([1]) y «Saving and Empowering Young Lives in Europe (SEYLE) — (Proyecto para la prevención de conductas suicidas en jóvenes)» ([2]).

En el marco de la estrategia de la UE para la juventud, el informe de la UE sobre la juventud correspondiente a 2012 ([3]) incluía datos sobre el sufrimiento mental y psicológico, incluido el suicidio. El presente informe subraya que el sufrimiento mental y psicológico es menos frecuente entre los jóvenes que en el conjunto de la población. Sin embargo, los trastornos mentales cada vez más comunes entre los jóvenes, y la crisis también influyen en su salud mental. En el informe sobre la juventud se invitó a prestar más atención a la inclusión social, la salud y el bienestar de los jóvenes.

([1]) http://www.supreme-project.org/
([2]) http://www.seyle.org
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/publications/eu_youth_report_2012.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005330/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Actions to prevent depression and suicide in children and other more vulnerable people

Experts have warned that the difficult economic and social situation might be one of the causes of the increase in suicides in many EU countries. The situation of children is very worrying in particular, as is that of people who feel they are at risk of exclusion, as the statistics show a notable increase in cases of depression.

I am aware that the European institutions have undertaken significant measures in the field of health, including the 'Second programme of Community action (2008-13)'.

With the deadline for responding to the 'Health 2013' tender now behind us, I would like to know:

1. Have projects or applications been presented to care for the mental health of children in particular?

2. Does the Commission not believe that more assistance should be provided to protect mental health and increase preventive measures with the aim of avoiding suicides?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

The 2013 calls for proposals under the EU-Health Programme are closed and the award decision is expected for autumn 2013. However, no specific proposal for a project in the area of child mental health has been received.

A Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being under the EU-Health Programme was launched in February 2013 bringing together 24 Member States and the Commission. One of work packages under this Joint Action addresses the prevention of depression and suicide, while another focuses on mental health and schools.

A number of projects under the EU-Health Programme and the 7th Framework Research Programme aim to help prevent suicides in children. These include, for instance, the projects 'Suicide Prevention through Internet and Media Based Mental Health Promotion (SUPREME)' ([1]) and 'Saving and Empowering Young Lives in Europe (SEYLE)' [(2)].

Under the EU Youth Strategy, the EU Youth report 2012 ([3]) included data on mental and psychological distress including suicide. This report underlined that mental and psychological distress is less prevalent among young people than within the population as a whole. Mental disorders are, however, increasingly common among young people as well and the crisis also influences their mental health. The Youth Report called for an increased focus on social inclusion, health and well-being of young people.

([1]) http://www.supreme-project.org/
([2]) http://www.seyle.eu/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/publications/eu_youth_report_2012.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005331/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Falta de restauración tras graves daños derivados de explotaciones mineras a cielo abierto

Ahora se cumple un año desde que la Comisión Europea respondió a mi preocupación sobre los graves daños originados por explotaciones mineras a cielo abierto. Oportunamente habían sido denunciados ante el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea que, en su sentencia del día 24 de noviembre de 2011, condenó al Reino de España por incumplir la normativa de protección ambiental y autorizar unas explotaciones mineras muy agresivas en espacios catalogados como lugar de interés comunitario y zona de especial protección para las aves (preguntas número E-000325/2012 y E-002859/2012). A pesar del tiempo transcurrido, el entorno afectado no ha sido recuperado y la situación económica de la empresa causante permite sospechar que no se realizarán labores de restauración. Tampoco las administraciones locales ni la regional, con competencias en esa materia, han promovido actuaciones para remediar el daño generado ni tratar de recuperar ese lugar de interés comunitario.

En la respuesta que recibí hace ahora un año, la Comisión afirmó que supervisaría «la plena ejecución de la sentencia del Tribunal» y que no dudaría «en tomar las medidas necesarias en caso de que se presenten pruebas relacionadas con el incumplimiento de la sentencia mencionada».

Por ello pregunto a la Comisión:

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento de la falta de restauración de ese lugar de interés comunitario y de la no ejecución de la citada sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea? ¿Piensa solicitar información a las autoridades españolas?

2. ¿Qué medidas concretas va a adoptar para conseguir que ese entorno sea restaurado?

3. ¿No considera la Comisión que también debería exigir las adecuadas medidas compensatorias ante el daño generado?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de julio de 2013)

Para cumplir la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea de 24 de noviembre de 2011 es preciso restaurar la zona afectada en las minas que estaban siendo explotadas antes de que se dictara dicha sentencia, con excepción de «Ladrones», que nunca empezó a funcionar.

En el caso de las demás explotaciones, la situación varía de una a otra. Por lo que se refiere a las minas «Ampliación del Feixolín» y «Nueva Julia», España tiene la intención de restaurarlas utilizando el material excavado durante la explotación de las nuevas minas que puedan llegar a autorizarse en el marco de un futuro plan para la minería del carbón en la zona de cara a 2020.

En relación con las minas de «Feixolín» y «Salguero-Prégame-Valdesegades», las autoridades españolas han declarado que la restauración está en curso, pero que el titular del proyecto tendrá que acometer actividades suplementarias de restauración.

Por último, la rehabilitación de la mina «Fonfría» se realizará cuando se lleve a cabo el cierre exigido de la explotación.

La Comisión sigue de cerca la situación y tomará cuantas medidas sean necesarias, incluso acciones coercitivas, para que no siga retrasándose la ejecución de la sentencia.

En cuanto a las medidas compensatorias, los Estados miembros están obligados a reparar los daños causados a personas por infracciones al Derecho europeo que puedan serles imputadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005331/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Failure to restore the serious damage caused by open-cast mining

A year has now passed since the Commission responded to my concern over the serious damage caused by open-cast mining. It was accordingly reported to the Court of Justice of the European Union which, in its ruling of 24 November 2011, condemned Spain for not complying with environmental protection legislation and authorising very aggressive mining in areas designated as sites of Community importance and special protection areas for birds (Questions E-000325/2012 and E-002859/2012). In spite of the time that has passed, the affected area has not been restored and the economic situation of the company at fault is reason to suspect that restoration work will not be carried out. Neither the local nor regional governments, which have competence in this area, have taken action to repair the damage caused or to try to restore this site of Community importance.

In the reply that I received last year, the Commission stated that it would monitor 'the full implementation of the Court judgment' and that it would not hesitate 'to take the necessary steps should evidence be produced in relation to lack of compliance with the referred ruling'.

I would therefore like to ask the Commission:

1. Is it aware of the failure to restore this site of Community importance and to implement the abovementioned judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union? Does it plan to ask the Spanish authorities for information?

2. What specific measures will it adopt to ensure that this area is restored?

3. Does the Commission not believe that it should also demand appropriate compensation for the damage caused?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

Restoration of the affected area is necessary to implement the European Union Court of Justice ruling of 24 November 2011 in the mines that were operational before the judgment. This would exclude '*Ladrones*', which never entered into operation.

As for the remaining mines, the situation varies. Regarding '*Ampliación del Feixolín*' and '*Nueva Julia*', Spain intends to restore them by making use of the excavated material resulted from the exploitation of new mines eventually authorised in the framework of a future 2020 mining coal plan for the area.

As regards the mines of '*Feixolín*' and '*Salguero-Prégame-Valdesegades*', Spain has stated that restoration is in progress, but further additional restoration measures will have to be implemented by the project operator.

Finally, the restoration of *Fonfría* mine should follow during the implementation of the ordered closure of the mine.

The Commission is carefully monitoring the situation and will take all the necessary measures, including enforcement action, to address the delay to implement the judgment.

As regards compensation measures, Member States are obliged to make good the damage caused to individuals because of breaches of European law for which they can be held responsible.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-005332/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(14 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Νομιμότητα και συμφωνία με τα Διεθνή Λογιστικά Πρότυπα των ισολογισμών της ΑΤΕ

Μετά από πολύμηνη καθυστέρηση δημοσιεύτηκαν τα οικονομικά αποτελέσματα της Αγροτικής Τράπεζας της Ελλάδας, για τη χρήση του 2011, του α' εξαμήνου του 2012 και για το διάστημα από 1.1.2012 έως 27.7.2012.

Με έκπληξη διαπιστώνεται ότι οι οικονομικές καταστάσεις υπογράφονται μόνο από τον ειδικό εκκαθαριστή της ΑΤΕ, ο οποίος διορίστηκε από την Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος στις 27.7.2012.

Δεδομένου ότι αρμόδια και αποκλειστικά υπεύθυνα όργανα για τη λειτουργία της Τράπεζας και τη σύνταξη των οικονομικών καταστάσεων, μέχρι και τις 27.7.2012, ήταν ο Διοικητής, ο Υποδιοικητής καθώς και ο Προϊστάμενος των Οικονομικών Υπηρεσιών της Τράπεζας,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γιατί δεν υπέγραψαν τα οικονομικά αποτελέσματα των ανωτέρω περιόδων τα αναφερθέντα αρμόδια όργανα της Τράπεζας;

2. Πώς δικαιολογείται η τεράστια διαφοροποίηση των οικονομικών στοιχείων της 31.12.2011 έναντι των δημοσιευμένων αποτελεσμάτων της 30.9.2011 που τα αρμόδια αυτά όργανα είχαν υπογράψει;

3. Γιατί τα αποτελέσματα από την 1.1.2012 έως τις 27.7.2012 συντάχθηκαν σε φορολογική βάση και όχι σύμφωνα με τα Διεθνή Λογιστικά Πρότυπα, όπως, σύμφωνα με την κείμενη νομοθεσία, εφαρμόζουν όλες οι Τράπεζες; Πώς είναι δυνατόν να γίνεται αξιόπιστη εκτίμηση της εξέλιξης των οικονομικών μεγεθών της Αγροτικής Τράπεζας της Ελλάδας, όταν δεν υπάρχουν συγκρίσιμα μεγέθη;

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

Σύμφωνα με την τέταρτη οδηγία, τα κράτη μέλη προβλέπουν ότι τα μέλη των διαχειριστικών, διοικητικών και εποπτικών οργάνων μιας εταιρείας έχουν συλλογικό καθήκον να διασφαλίζουν ότι οι ετήσιοι λογαριασμοί καταρτίζονται και δημοσιεύονται σύμφωνα με τις απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας και, κατά περίπτωση, σύμφωνα με τα σχετικά διεθνή λογιστικά πρότυπα που έχουν εκδοθεί βάσει του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1606/2002. Τα διαχειριστικά και εποπτικά όργανα ενεργούν βάσει των αρμοδιοτήτων που τους έχουν ανατεθεί από την εθνική νομοθεσία. Επιπλέον, η τέταρτη οδηγία διευκρινίζει ότι τα στοιχεία που εμφανίζονται στους ετήσιους λογαριασμούς είναι δυνατόν να αποτιμώνται σύμφωνα με την οδηγία βάσει της παραδοχής ότι η επιχείρηση θεωρείται ότι διεξάγει τη δραστηριότητά της ως υφιστάμενη επιχείρηση.

Κανένας από τους κανόνες αυτούς δεν ισχύει για επιχειρήσεις που τελούν υπό διαχείριση.

Η Επιτροπή είναι αναρμόδια για να ασχοληθεί με ζητήματα που άπτονται ευθυνών σε επιχειρήσεις υπό έκτακτη διαχείριση. Το θέμα αυτό αφορά τις οικείες εθνικές αρχές.

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στοιχεία που να της επιτρέπουν να παράσχει περαιτέρω επεξηγήσεις όσον αφορά τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία που ανέφερε το αξιότιμο μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005332/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Compliance by ATE balance sheet presentation with statutory requirements and international accounting standards

After a delay of many months, the Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE) financial performance figures for 2011 and for the first half of 2012 (1 January to 27 July) have finally been published.

Surprisingly, the financial statements have only been signed by the ATE administrator appointed by the Bank of Greece on 27 July 2012.

Up to that date, responsibility for running the bank and drawing up financial statements lay solely and exclusively with the bank's CEO, Deputy CEO and Head of Financial Services.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say why their signatures did not appear below the financial performance figures in respect of the above periods?

2. What is the explanation for the massive disparity between the figures published on 31 December 2011 and the performance results published on 30 September 2011, which bore the signatures of those responsible?

3. Why were the results for the period from 1 January 2012 to 27 July 2012 drawn up on the basis of fiscal data and not in accordance with the international accounting standards applicable to all banks by law? How is it possible to make a reliable assessment of financial performance trends for the Agricultural Bank of Greece in the absence of comparable data?

Answer given by M. Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

In accordance with the Fourth Directive, Member States shall foresee that members of the administrative, management and supervisory bodies of a company have a collective duty to ensure that the annual accounts are drawn up and published in accordance with the requirements of the directive and, where applicable, in accordance with the relevant international accounting standards adopted in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1606/2002. Management and supervisory bodies shall act within the competences assigned to them by national law. In addition, the Fourth Directive specifies that items shown in the annual accounts may be valued in accordance with the directive based on the assumption that the company is presumed to be carrying on its business as a going concern.

None of those rules are applicable to companies going into administration.

The Commission has no competence to deal with questions around responsibilities in companies under receivership, which is a matter for the national authorities concerned.

The Commission does not have information that would allow it to provide further explanations about the figures mentioned by the Honourable Member.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005333/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Comissão confirma hipótese de estender o denominado «imposto sobre depósitos» a outros Estados-Membros II

Considerando que:

— O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-003481/2013;

— Na resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão, é dito que «é necessário adotar urgentemente a proposta de enquadramento para a resolução bancária, que virá clarificar as regras e procedimentos aplicáveis no futuro à resolução dos bancos em dificuldades. Conseguir-se-á assim uma segurança jurídica para todas as partes interessadas. Quando a diretiva estiver em vigor, todos os Estados-Membros disporão dos instrumentos necessários para intervir de forma decisiva numa crise bancária. Para minimizar o impacto sobre os contribuintes, o instrumento de resgate interno ("*bail-in*") previsto nesse enquadramento permitirá a um banco ser recapitalizado através da anulação ou diluição das participações acionistas e da redução ou conversão em ações dos créditos dos credores. Os depósitos inferiores a 100 000 euros continuarão a ser plenamente garantidos e são explicitamente excluídos deste instrumento»;

— Convém conhecer os termos exatos da proteção a conferir a estes depósitos inferiores a 100 000 euros, certamente em relação a dúvidas muito concretas;

Assim pergunto à Comissão:

— A proteção será conferida em cada Banco, por titular, ou seja, se uma conta tiver vários titulares, cada um deles ficará protegido até 100 000 euros?

— A proteção será conferida em cada banco para uma única conta, isto é, se num mesmo banco um cliente tiver várias contas, só uma será protegida, ou será conferida para todas elas?

— A proteção será conferida para cada banco, isto é, se um titular tiver uma conta inferior a 100 000 euros em diferentes bancos, todas elas ficarão protegidas?

— A proteção será conferida a todos os tipos de depósitos, sejam à ordem, ou a prazo?

— A proteção abrange os demais produtos comercializados pelos bancos e de entre estes, em concreto, as obrigações, os fundos e as ações?

— Outros produtos poderão ser afetados pela necessidade de recapitalização de um banco? E em caso afirmativo quais?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(2 de julho de 2013)

O teor exato da diretiva relativa à recuperação e resolução de instituições de crédito dependerá dos resultados do processo legislativo.

Nos termos do artigo 36.° da proposta da Comissão, os depósitos cobertos por garantias seriam excluídos do instrumento de resgate interno («*bail-in*»). Existe um acordo claro entre os colegisladores relativamente a este princípio.

Caso um banco entre em dificuldades, a Diretiva 94/19/CEE relativa aos sistemas de garantia de depósitos é aplicável. No que respeita aos depósitos, esta diretiva prevê uma cobertura de até 100 000 euros por pessoa e por banco, independentemente do número de contas abertas nesse banco. No caso de uma conta coletiva, a cobertura é concedida a cada titular relativamente à parte que lhe é imputável e até 100 000 euros. A definição do conceito de «depósitos» na Diretiva relativa aos sistemas de garantia de depósitos não faz qualquer referência ao prazo do depósito, pelo que se pode aplicar a um depósito a prazo. Os produtos de investimento que são abrangidos pelo âmbito de aplicação da proteção prevista na Diretiva 97/9/CE relativa aos sistemas de indemnização dos investidores não podem ser classificados como depósitos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005333/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Commission that confirms that the 'tax on deposits' could be applied to other Member States — II

This Member submitted a previous written question to the Commission on this subject (P-003481/2013).

In his reply, Michel Barnier wrote that the Commission considers it 'necessary to urgently adopt the proposal for a bank resolution framework which will clarify the rules and procedures applicable to the resolution of ailing banks in the future. This will provide legal certainty to all stakeholders. Once the directive is in place, all Member States will have the necessary tools to intervene decisively in a banking crisis. To minimise taxpayer involvement, the bail-in tool enshrined in that framework will allow a bank to be recapitalised by wiping out or diluting shareholders and by reducing or converting the claims of creditors into shares. Deposits below EUR 100 000 will continue to be fully guaranteed and are explicitly excluded from this tool'.

It would be useful to know the exact measures which will be taken to protect deposits below EUR 100 000, particularly in relation to a number of specific queries:

— Will protection be afforded in each bank for each account holder? In other words, if an account has more than one account holder, will each of them be protected up to the EUR 100 000 limit?

— Will protection be assured by each bank for each individual account, i.e., if a client has several accounts at one bank, will just one of these be protected, or will they all be covered?

— Will protection be granted per bank, i.e. if an account holder has accounts containing less than EUR 100 000 in several banks, will all these accounts be protected?

— Will all types of deposits be protected, whether accessible or fixed term?

— Will protection be extended to other products marketed by banks, including bonds, funds and shares?

— Are bank recapitalisation requirements likely to affect other products? If so, which ones?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

The exact content of the directive on the recovery and resolution of credit institutions will depend on the outcome of the legislative process.

According to Article 36 of the Commission's proposal, covered deposits would be excluded from the bail-in tool. There is clear agreement between the colegislators on this principle.

In case a bank gets into difficulties, Directive 94/19/EEC on deposit guarantee schemes is relevant. As regards deposits,. this directive provides coverage of up to EUR 100 000 per person and per bank, regardless of the number of accounts held in the given bank. In case of a joint account, coverage is granted to each holder for his/her relative share and up to EUR100 000 each. The definition of deposits in the DGS Directive refers to the term of the deposit and may therefore apply to a term deposit. Investment products which fall under the scope of protection provided in Directive 97/9/EC on Investor Compensation Schemes do not qualify as deposits.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005334/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Livello di arsenico nell'acqua nella provincia di Viterbo

L'Autorità per l'energia ha avviato un'istruttoria conoscitiva sull'erogazione del servizio di acquedotto nei comuni della provincia di Viterbo che sono interessati da limitazioni all'uso di acque destinate al consumo umano con contenuti di arsenico e fluoro non conformi ai previsti limiti di legge.

Le analisi dell'Istituto superiore della sanità (ISS) sono state condotte su campioni di unghie e urine di 269 soggetti sani, da 1 a 88 anni di età, residenti nelle aree a rischio. Nei viterbesi la concentrazione della sostanza nelle unghie è risultata pari a 200 nanogrammi per grammo, contro gli 82 nanogrammi di un gruppo di controllo della popolazione generale. Conformemente alle direttive dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS), l'arsenico è un elemento cancerogeno per il quale l'UE ha disposto, già dal 2001, precisi limiti.

Inoltre, considerato che lo scorso 31 dicembre 2012 è scaduta la terza deroga europea che consentiva di erogare acqua con livelli di arsenico superiori a dieci microgrammi per litro, appare evidente come la situazione della provincia di Viterbo sia di chiara emergenza.

Infine non va dimenticato che, nei comuni del Lazio interessati dall'emergenza arsenico nell'acqua, a rischio è pure la catena alimentare. Concentrazioni di arsenico superiori ai livelli consentiti sono state infatti rilevate, ad esempio, nel pane prodotto nell'area del viterbese. Lo dimostrano gli ultimi dati dello studio per valutare l'esposizione all'arsenico nelle aree a rischio condotto dall'ISS con la collaborazione dell'Ordine dei medici. Sono in corso analisi su vari tipi di prodotti alimentari, ma dai dati preliminari emerge appunto un livello di arsenico nel pane superiore a quello di aree con livelli di fondo, mentre sono in corso le analisi di ortaggi coltivati in tali aree. Alla luce di quanto detto, occorre pertanto che l'acqua utilizzata nella provincia di Viterbo per il lavaggio, la preparazione, la produzione e il trattamento degli alimenti sia sicura e cioè contenga arsenico e fluoruri in quantità rispettivamente compresa entro 10 microgrammi/litro e 1,5 mg/litro.

Tutto ciò premesso, voglia la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— reputa la Commissione che sia necessario istituire un approvvigionamento alternativo di acqua da utilizzare per la produzione, la preparazione e il trattamento dei prodotti alimentari forniti al consumatore?

— reputa la Commissione che sia necessario impedire la concessione futura di deroghe europee riguardo all'erogazione di acqua con livelli di arsenico superiori ai limiti consentiti dalla legislazione europea?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(8 luglio 2013)

La terza deroga concessa dalla Commissione non riguardava l'acqua potabile utilizzata negli impianti di produzione di generi alimentari, il che significa che la conformità alla direttiva sull'acqua potabile avrebbe dovuto essere assicurata a partire dal 28.10.2010 e, rispettivamente, dal 22.3.2011, per quanto riguarda gli impianti di produzione di generi alimentari ([1]).

Per quanto riguarda le forniture di acqua potabile oggetto di tali deroghe, recentemente le autorità italiane hanno presentato una relazione sullo stato di avanzamento e sulla situazione concernente le deroghe: da una sua ricognizione preliminare risulta che per gli impianti di produzione di generi alimentari sia stato predisposto un approvvigionamento idrico alternativo. Una volta esaminata la relazione la Commissione trarrà le sue conclusioni finali in base alle quali deciderà misure adeguate di intervento.

La Commissione ha concesso la terza deroga in base all'articolo 9 della direttiva, al parere del suo comitato scientifico ([2]) e avendo riguardo alla particolare situazione delle regioni interessate in Italia. Il diritto dell'Italia a richiedere una terza deroga è scaduto e non possono più essere concesse altre deroghe.

([1]) https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/docs/scher_o_120.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005334/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Arsenic level in the water in the province of Viterbo

The Italian energy authority has launched a fact-finding investigation into the mains water supply in the communes of the province of Viterbo affected by restrictions on the use of water for human consumption containing levels of arsenic and fluorine that breach the limits laid down by law.

The analyses of the Istituto superiore della sanità (ISS) (Italian health institute) were carried out on nail and urine samples taken from 269 healthy individuals, aged from 1 to 88, living in at-risk areas. Among residents of Viterbo the concentration of the substance in nails was 200 nanograms per gram, as compared with 82 nanograms in a control group from the general population. Under World Health Organisation (WHO) directives, arsenic is a carcinogenic element in respect of which the EU laid down specific limits as long ago as 2001.

In addition, since the third European derogation permitting the supply of water with levels of arsenic higher than 10 micrograms per litre expired on 31 December 2012, it is clear that the situation in the province of Viterbo is an emergency.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that in the communes of Lazio affected by the arsenic in the water emergency, the food chain is also at risk. Concentrations of arsenic higher than the permitted levels have in fact been detected, for example, in bread produced in the Viterbo area. This is shown by the latest data from the study to assess exposure to arsenic in the at-risk areas, conducted by the ISS in conjunction with the Order of Doctors. Analyses are under way on various types of food products, but preliminary data show a level of arsenic in bread higher than that in areas with background levels, while vegetables grown in these areas are also being analysed. In light of the above, it is therefore necessary for water used in the province of Viterbo to wash, prepare, produce and process foods to be safe, meaning it should contain quantities of arsenic and fluorides lower than 10 micrograms/litre and 1.5 mg/litre respectively.

— Does the Commission believe it is necessary to set up an alternative supply of water to be used to produce, prepare and process food products supplied to consumers?

— Does it believe it is necessary to prevent European derogations being granted in the future regarding the supply of water with levels of arsenic higher than those permitted by European law?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

The third derogations granted by the Commission did not cover drinking water used in food production facilities, which means therefore that compliance with the Drinking Water Directive should have been ensured since 28.10.2010 and, respectively 22.3.2011 ([1]) for the food production facilities.

As regards drinking water supplies covered by these derogations, the Italian authorities have recently submitted a progress report on the status of derogations. Preliminary information in the report indicates that alternative water supplies have been established for the food production facilities. Depending on the final conclusions of its analysis of the report, the Commission will decide on appropriate follow-up action.

The Commission granted the third derogations based on Article 9 of the directive, its Scientific Committee's advice ([2]) and considering the particular situation in affected regions in Italy. Italy's right to apply for third derogations has expired and no further derogation can be granted.

([1]) https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/docs/scher_o_120.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005335/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Trasparenza, pluralismo e libertà della proprietà dei mezzi di comunicazione

Il pluralismo e la libertà dei media è stato argomento di recenti dibattiti politici, per la necessità di lottare contro la concentrazione dei media e favorire sia il diritto dei cittadini a ricevere informazioni provenienti da fonti diverse e indipendenti sia l'autonomia giornalistica contro le influenze politiche.

Il pluralismo può essere definito come un concetto di diritto della concorrenza, che mira a facilitare l'accesso al mercato dei media di una molteplicità di fornitori. Il pluralismo politico, d'altro canto, fa parte della politica governativa dei media che si incentra sull'aumento delle possibilità per tutti i movimenti politici e sociali di avere accesso ai media.

Casi recenti in alcuni Stati membri (Repubblica Ceca, Ungheria e Italia, per esempio) hanno portato l'attenzione su vari studi che hanno evidenziato scarsa libertà e pluralismo dei media dovuta a scarsa assegnazione di proprietà.

Il problema è percepito, soprattutto nei paesi dell'Europa orientale, come elemento essenziale per la promozione di un vero e proprio ambiente mediatico democratico e pluralista. Si tratta di un pilastro essenziale del diritto protetto dall'UE all'informazione e alla libertà di espressione, nonché alla libertà di opinione e di ricevere o comunicare informazioni o idee, che da quella derivano.

L'articolo 11 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea sancisce che:

(1) Ogni individuo ha diritto alla libertà di espressione. Tale diritto include la libertà di opinione e la libertà di ricevere o comunicare informazioni o idee senza che vi possa essere ingerenza da parte delle autorità pubbliche e senza limiti di frontiera.

(2) La libertà dei media e il loro pluralismo sono rispettati.

Nel 2008, una risoluzione del Parlamento europeo (PE) ha osservato che «le grandi imprese mediatiche hanno posizioni sostanziali e spesso dominanti in alcuni Stati membri». La concentrazione della proprietà è vista come una possibile minaccia per la qualità, l'indipendenza dei professionisti dei media e la concorrenza. Inoltre, per la situazione economica in Europa, molti media si sono trovati a dare la priorità alle pressioni del «bottom line», piuttosto che alla qualità e credibilità dei contenuti violando così i principi fondamentali della comunicazione delle informazioni.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere se, in relazione alla situazione attuale dei media, vi è spazio per un intervento dell'UE, onde generare una maggiore trasparenza della proprietà dei media negli Stati membri, nonché il pluralismo dei media?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(26 giugno 2013)

Incaricato di esaminare i rischi per la libertà e il pluralismo dei mezzi di informazione, il Gruppo indipendente di alto livello sulla libertà e il pluralismo dei media ha presentato la propria relazione nel gennaio 2013, formulando 30 raccomandazioni. Nella raccomandazione n. 25 propone che sia fatto obbligo a tutte le organizzazioni dei media di rendere pubblici, in modo chiaramente identificabile, i codici di condotta e le linee editoriali, pubblicandoli anche sui rispettivi siti web. I codici di condotta dovrebbero assicurare che i nominativi dei proprietari finali dei media e i loro interessi nel settore dei media siano divulgati in modo trasparente. Nel marzo 2013 la Commissione ha lanciato due consultazioni pubbliche, una sulle raccomandazioni del gruppo e una specifica sull'indipendenza degli organismi nazionali di regolamentazione dei media audiovisivi.

La decisione di avviare eventuali azioni di follow-up entro i limiti delle competenze dell'Unione europea, tra cui un'azione legislativa in materia di indipendenza dei suddetti organismi e qualsiasi intervento relativo ai codici di condotta, terrà conto delle risposte a tali consultazioni e delle più recenti relazioni del Parlamento europeo, in particolare le relazioni Weber e Schaake.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005335/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Media ownership transparency, pluralism and freedom

Media pluralism and freedom has been a topic of recent political discussion, due to the need to combat media concentration and to foster both the right of citizens to receive information from diverse and independent sources and journalistic autonomy against political influence.

Pluralism can be defined as a competition law concept which aims at facilitating a multiplicity of providers to access the media market. Political pluralism, on the other hand, is part of the governmental media policy focus on increasing the possibilities for all political and social movements to have access to the media.

Recent cases in certain Member States (the Czech Republic, Hungary and Italy, for instance) have brought attention to various studies which have highlighted poor media freedom and pluralism due to scarce media ownership allocation.

The issue is perceived, mainly in Eastern European countries, as being an essential element for the promotion of a true democratic and pluralistic media environment. It is an essential pillar of the EU-protected right to information and freedom of expression, as well as its derived freedoms to hold opinions, to receive and impart information and ideas.

Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states that:

'(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.

(2) The freedom and pluralism of the media shall be respected.'

In 2008, a Resolution of the European Parliament (EP) noted that 'large media enterprises have built substantial and often dominant positions in some Member States'. The concentration of ownership is viewed as a possible threat to quality, the independence of media professionals and competition. Furthermore, due to the economic situation in Europe, many media outlets have found themselves prioritising the 'bottom line' pressure rather than content quality and credibility, thereby infringing the core principles of information reporting.

In light of the above, could the Commission state whether, in respect to the current media situation, there is scope for EU intervention in order to foster greater transparency of media ownership in the Member States as well as media pluralism?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

The independent High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism had been tasked to examine risks for freedom and pluralism of the media and presented its report with 30 recommendations in January 2013. Recommendation 25 of the report proposes that it should be mandatory for all media organisations to make clearly identifiable codes of conduct and editorial lines publicly available, including by publication on their website. Those codes of conduct should ensure transparency in divulging final ownership along with a listing of other media interests held by the same owners. The Commission launched in March 2013 two public consultations, one on the recommendations of the group and one specifically on the independence of National Audiovisual Regulatory Authorities.

The decision on any possible follow-up actions within the limits of the competences of the European Union, including a possible legislative action in the field of independence of audiovisual authorities, as well as any potential action concerning codes of conduct, will take account of the responses to those consultations, as well as the most recent reports by the European Parliament, especially the Weber and the Schaake reports.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005336/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Regolamentazione delle slot machine

È necessario migliorare i meccanismi di protezione nel settore dei video poker e delle slot machine, in particolare nei confronti dei minori, per evitare l'acuirsi di forme di dipendenza e ludopatie. Nel mondo tradizionale dei giochi «fisici», le slot machine sono ancora dominanti, accaparrandosi una fetta pari al 30 % del mercato, seguite dalle classiche lotterie di Stato (37 %). Le sale giochi stanno proliferando e non vi sono strumenti normativi adeguati per limitarle, nemmeno quando si collocano vicino a scuole, circoli ricreativi e chiese. Mentre altri esercizi commerciali come le farmacie o le edicole hanno dei limiti imposti a livello nazionale, non è così per le sale giochi; inoltre, qualsiasi bar o circolo può installare liberamente le slot machine. Il tema della regolamentazione dei giochi d'azzardo va affrontato sia a livello di governi nazionali che a livello delle istituzioni europee, perché le amministrazioni locali non possono intervenire per limitarne la diffusione. Pur considerando il principio di sussidiarietà che rimanda agli Stati membri la competenza legislativa riguardo la disposizione geografica degli esercizi commerciali, è evidente come vi sia un'emergenza economica e sociale che non può essere ignorata dal legislatore europeo.

Va infine considerato che dotare le slot machine di un lettore di codice fiscale appare come una delle soluzioni possibili e più facilmente attuabili al fine di impedire l'accesso al gioco d'azzardo da parte dei minorenni o per impedire che il gioco degeneri in un vizio depauperante tanto economicamente quanto socialmente. In questo modo, si può conoscere immediatamente chi gioca per una volta e chi invece del gioco ha fatto una malattia e si può intervenire in modo mirato anche dal punto di vista sanitario.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— reputa la Commissione che sia arrivato il momento di una omologazione tra le legislazioni degli Stati membri al fine di regolamentare la diffusione sul territorio dell'Unione delle slot machine?

— Reputa la Commissione che sia necessario introdurre un controllo nell'accesso alle slot machine attraverso l'inserimento del codice fiscale, come già avviene per le macchine erogatrici di sigarette?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(17 luglio 2013)

1. Spetta agli Stati membri organizzare l'offerta di giochi d'azzardo, nel pieno rispetto dei principi stabiliti dalla Corte di giustizia dell'UE, compresi gli obiettivi della loro politica in materia e il livello di protezione perseguito nell'interesse generale. Gli Stati membri possono pertanto fissare le regole concernenti l'installazione delle slot machine, regole che tuttavia devono essere conformi al diritto dell'UE, in particolare per quanto riguarda la condizione che le politiche nazionali in materia di giochi d'azzardo siano coerenti e non discriminatorie ([1]).

Nella sua comunicazione «Verso un quadro normativo europeo approfondito relativo al gioco d'azzardo on-line» ([2]) la Commissione propone una serie di iniziative che affrontano una gamma di questioni. Tra queste figura l'impegno a studiare la possibilità di uno standard UE sull'attrezzatura di gioco, al fine di garantire un livello di sicurezza analogo nel gioco d'azzardo in tutta l'UE.

2. Come stabilito dalla giurisprudenza della Corte, in particolare nella causa C-65/05, in mancanza di regole armonizzate a livello di UE nel settore dei giochi, la libera circolazione degli stessi è garantita dagli articoli 34 e 36 del TFUE.

([1]) Sentenza dell'8.9.2010 Stoß & Altri, C-316/07 Raccolta della Giurisprudenza 2010 pag. I-8069.
([2]) COM(2012) 596 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005336/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Regulation of slot machines

Protection mechanisms in the video poker and slot machines sector must be improved, particularly in relation to children, to prevent an increase in forms of addiction and compulsive gambling. In the traditional world of 'physical' games, slot machines are still dominant, with a 30% slice of the market, followed by the traditional State lotteries (37%). Gambling halls are increasing in number, and there are no appropriate legislative instruments for restricting them, not even when they are located close to schools, leisure clubs or churches. While national limits are imposed on other commercial buildings, such as pharmacies and news kiosks, this is not true for gambling halls; moreover, any bar or club is at liberty to install slot machines. The issue of regulating gambling should be tackled both by national governments and by the European institutions, because local administrations cannot act to restrict the spread of gambling. While keeping in mind the principle of subsidiarity, which returns legislative responsibility regarding the geographical distribution of commercial buildings to the Member States, it is clear that there is an economic and social emergency that the European legislature cannot ignore.

Finally, it should be borne in mind that equipping slot machines with tax code readers might be one of the possible solutions that would be easiest to implement with a view to preventing children from accessing gambling, or preventing gambling from degenerating into a vice that causes financial and social impoverishment. This would make it possible to find out immediately who is an occasional gambler and who is instead addicted to gambling, and targeted measures could be taken, including from a health point of view.

— Does the Commission consider that the time has come to harmonise the laws of the Member States with a view to regulating the spread of slot machines in the EU?

— Does it believe it is necessary to introduce controls on access to slot machines by requiring a tax code to be entered, as is already the case for cigarette vending machines?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

1. It is for the Member States, in full compliance with the principles established by the Court of Justice of the EU — to determine the organisation of the gambling offer, including the objectives of their gambling policy and the level of protection sought in the public interest. Member States can therefore establish rules governing the installation of slot machines. These rules must, nonetheless, be in line with EC law and in particular with the requirement of consistency and non-discriminatory nature of national gambling policies ([1]).

In its communication 'Towards a Comprehensive European Framework for Online Gambling' ([2]), the Commission proposes a series of initiatives covering a range of issues. Among them is the commitment to explore the possibility of an EU standard on gambling equipment, in order to ensure a comparable level of security of gambling across the EU.

2. As stated by the Court's case law, in particular judgment in Case C-65/05, in the absence of harmonised rules at EU level in the games sector, the free movement of games is guaranteed by Articles 34 TFEU and 36 TFEU.

([1]) Judgment of 08/09 2010 Stoß & Others, C-316/07 ECR [2010] I-8069.
([2]) COM(2012) 596 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005337/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EEAS drivers

Can the EEAS please provide details of drivers and vehicles in EU delegations, special representatives' offices and other representations and sub-offices as follows:

1. How many drivers are currently employed in EU delegations, special representatives' offices and other representations and sub-offices?

2. What is the highest salary paid to any driver in an EU delegation, special representative's office or other representation or sub-office?

3. In 2012, on how many occasions and in which delegations were drivers authorised to travel outside the host city of the delegation in order to transport heads of delegations or in-country and visiting officials who were travelling by plane (for example a driver from an Ankara delegation driving to Istanbul while the head of delegation travels by plane)? Please estimate the total mileage driven by drivers on missions such as these. If data is not available for 2012, please provide data from the most recent year available.

4. In 2012, how many hours of overtime were paid to drivers in EU delegations, special representatives' offices and other representations and sub-offices?

5. What was the maximum price paid for a vehicle in an EU delegation, special representative's office or other representation or sub-office in the period 2009-2012?

6. Also for the period 2009-2012, how many derogations were there to the EEAS's rules and guidelines on procurement of vehicles? How were these derogations justified?

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

1. There are 468 drivers recruited as Local Agents currently working (31.5.2013) in the 141 EU delegations. EU Special Representative (EUSR) missions also employ drivers for the duration of their mission. Out of the 12 EUSR missions, seven EUSR missions have contracts with a total of 16 drivers.

2. The highest basic salary (without any allowances and before deduction for taxes and social security requested by local law) is paid to a Local Agent in the Geneva Delegation for an amount equivalent to EUR 6 050. The monthly average salary for drivers is of around EUR 1 000.

3. In 2012, 51 business trips were recorded corresponding to the requested criteria, amounting to an estimated 48 400 kilometres in the following Delegations: Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Laos, Lesotho, Madagascar, Namibia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine.

4. From the information collected from 102 Delegations, there were 110 000 hours of overtime that have been paid to drivers in EU delegations.

5. The maximum price paid for a vehicle in an EU Delegation in the period 2009-2012 was EUR 49 050.

In a limited number of high risk countries, transport arrangements are made in armoured vehicles. The current framework contract for the purchase of such cars amounts to EUR 213 000 per unit.

6. For the period 2009-2012:

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Derogations requested	6	7	14	24
Requests rejected	2	2	3	12
Derogations granted	4	5	11	12

The main reasons for derogations are the technical, road and security conditions in some third countries and/or the non-availability of cars within the maximum cylinder capacity.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005338/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Commission funding for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Commission announced on 8 May that it was providing EUR 10 million to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to cover three-quarters of its funding shortfall. Can the Commission please justify why EU taxpayers must face the double burden of funding the agency both through Member State contributions (EU contributions to the UN's budget already account for nearly 40%) and now through a frivolous top-up from the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2013)

Since 2007, the EU has supported the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) through annual contributions from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) which are additional to the Member States' contributions to the UN budget. Such support is directly foreseen in the legal text of the instrument adopted by the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament.

Moreover, with its wide network of regional and country offices, the OHCHR provides valuable monitoring and reporting on priority areas for cooperation in the field of human rights. The OHCHR has developed its country presence over the past years, and particularly after the Arab Spring, it has been faced with a growing amount of work, but on the other hand increased opportunities to promote human rights in this region For the third year in a row, the budget of the OHCHR has been reduced, preventing the Office from optimally ensuring more than needed field presence and investigations in such countries as Syria, Mali or Myanmar.

The global economic downturn has affected the budget and functions of the Office, as donors have had to cut the support compared to previous years. Similarly, there has been no growth in the UN general budget, impeding the Office to optimally ensure the more than needed field presence in over 20 countries in all regions and investigations in such countries as Syria, South Sudan and Mali, as well as setting up new country offices such as in Tunisia and Myanmar.

The EU contribution referred to will allow the Office to ensure its mandate in promoting human rights worldwide, support states in their effort to promote human rights for their citizens and the impunity of the perpetrators of such violations.

The recently announced EU contributions to the UN OHCHR are long term planned support included in the EIDHR Annual Action Plans for 2012 and 2013 that have both been endorsed by EU Member States and the European Parliament.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005339/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: The Commission's Visitor Centre and the proliferation of new EU institution visitor centres

Can the Commission please provide details of the cost of moving the Commission's Visitor Centre to the Charlemagne Building?

Can the Commission please provide figures on the number of visitors who visited the old centre on Rue van Maerlant (annual figures for the past five years) and provide an estimate of the number of visitors it expects at the new centre?

Does the Commission think that these visitor centres are the best use of taxpayers' money at a time of austerity?

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

1. Set up in 1960, the Commission's Visitors' Centre has a long tradition, in fact it is the oldest of the European institutions' visitors' centres. Its recent relocation allows for closer and easier cooperation with Commission services, particularly with Commissioners and the Spokespersons' Service. The one-off relocation costs amounted to approximately EUR 1 million.

This cost will gradually be offset by savings made through terminating the lease on the premises occupied by the Commission's Belgian Representation ([1]) and its subsequent relocation to the Charlemagne building, again creating synergies with the Visitors' Centre by using its meeting rooms for Belgian visitors. Furthermore, the facilities in the former Visitors' Centre's premises ([2]) will continue to be used by the Commission's Directorate-General for Interpretation.

2. Visitor numbers for the former Visitors' Centre:

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
43 492	46 213	47 659	53 245	50 576

The Commission expects visitor numbers to stabilise at around 50 000 visitors per year.

3. The Commission considers its Visitors' Centre an integral part and key instrument of its communication strategy. It provides an opportunity for citizens, including high-profile groups and key multipliers, to visit the Commission at its headquarters. The Centre aims to give visitors an insight into how the Commission works and also explain its policies and programmes. Its particular added value is that it provides specific visit programmes, tailored to the interests of the visitors. In 2012, 95% of visiting groups gave their visit a 'very satisfied' rating, with 97% feeling the visit had improved their knowledge of the EU.

([1]) 73, Rue Archimède.
([2]) 18, Rue Van Maerlant.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005340/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(14 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανάκτηση της κρατικής ενίσχυσης για την πώληση των μεταλλείων της Χαλκιδικής

Στις 23.2.2011, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή εξέδωσε την απόφαση 2011/452/ΕΕ με την οποία αποφαίνεται ότι η πώληση των Μεταλλείων Κασσάνδρας (Σκουριές, Στρατώνι και Ολυμπιάδα) από την Ελλάδα στην εταιρία «Ελληνικός Χρυσός» που πραγματοποιήθηκε το 2003 συνιστά παράνομη κρατική ενίσχυση καθώς α) τα μεταλλεία πωλήθηκαν σε τιμή κάτω της αγοραίας αξίας, χωρίς ανοιχτό διαγωνισμό και χωρίς καμία προηγούμενη εκτίμηση των στοιχείων ενεργητικού και β) γιατί με τον νόμο 3220/2004 που κύρωσε την πώληση, η εταιρία «Ελληνικός Χρυσός» απαλλάχθηκε από την καταβολή οιουδήποτε φόρου.

Με την παραπάνω απόφαση και με πολύ συντηρητικές εκτιμήσεις, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή υπολόγισε την κρατική ενίσχυση στο ύψος των 15,34 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ και ζήτησε από την Ελλάδα να ανακτήσει το ποσό συν τόκους εντός 4 μηνών.

Με δεδομένο ότι στις 25.5.2012 η Επιτροπή προσέφυγε κατά της Ελλάδας στο Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο (υπόθεση C-263/12) γιατί δεν είχε ακόμα ανακτήσει την παράνομη κρατική ενίσχυση και τους τόκους,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει μέχρι σήμερα ανακτήσει, έστω αυτό το ποσό της κρατικής ενίσχυσης και τους τόκους η Ελλάδα;

2. Με τον νόμο 4042/2012 προβλέφθηκε από την ελληνική νομοθεσία η επιβολή τελών στα μεταλλεία από 1.1.2013. Για την εφαρμογή της παραπάνω ρύθμισης πρέπει να εκδοθεί Υπουργική Απόφαση. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή αν η υπουργική απόφαση έχει εκδοθεί και τι ύψος τελών προβλέπει; Τα τέλη αυτά θα επιβληθούν και στις υπάρχουσες πριν την 1.1.2013 συμβάσεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Ιουνίου 2013)

Στις 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2011, η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε απόφαση με την οποία διατάσσεται η ανάκτηση παράνομης ενίσχυσης ύψους 15,34 εκατ. ευρώ που χορηγήθηκε στην εταιρεία «Ελληνικός Χρυσός ΑΕ» με τη μορφή:

— της διαφοράς μεταξύ της αγοραίας αξίας των στοιχείων ενεργητικού των Μεταλλείων Κασσάνδρας και της τιμής στην οποία αυτά αγοράστηκαν από την εταιρία «Ελληνικός Χρυσός ΑΕ»·

— των φόρων που θα έπρεπε να είχε καταβάλει η εταιρία «Ελληνικός Χρυσός ΑΕ» για την αγορά των στοιχείων ενεργητικού (δηλ. μεταλλείων και γης), αλλά δεν έχει καταβάλει.

Η εταιρία «Ελληνικός Χρυσός» αμφισβήτησε την απόφαση της Επιτροπής ενώπιον του Γενικού Δικαστηρίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ([1]), αλλά αυτή η προσφυγή δεν έχει ανασταλτικό αποτέλεσμα και οι ελληνικές αρχές όφειλαν να ανακτήσουν την ενίσχυση εντός της προθεσμίας που ορίζεται στην απόφαση της Επιτροπής.

Δεδομένου ότι οι ελληνικές αρχές δεν ανέκτησαν την ενίσχυση, στις 25 Μαΐου 2012 ([2]), η Επιτροπή κατέθεσε προσφυγή κατά της Ελλάδας στο Δικαστήριο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για μη συμμόρφωση προς την απόφαση της Επιτροπής. Αυτή η δικαστική προσφυγή εκκρεμεί.

Μέχρι σήμερα, οι ελληνικές αρχές δεν έχουν αναφέρει εάν η ενίσχυση έχει ανακτηθεί.

Όσον αφορά τον εθνικό νόμο 4042/2012, η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει εάν έχει εκδοθεί υπουργική απόφαση για την εφαρμογή του εν λόγω νόμου, και ποιο θα ήταν το επίπεδο των τελών που αυτός θα καθόριζε. Το ζήτημα της επιβολής τελών στα μεταλλεία από την ελληνική νομοθεσία και η εφαρμογή της στην εταιρία «Ελληνικός Χρυσός» είναι χωριστό από την ανάκτηση της ενίσχυσης η οποία συνδέεται με την πώληση των Μεταλλείων Κασσάνδρας στην εταιρία «Ελληνικός Χρυσός», και την οποία η Επιτροπή προσπαθεί τώρα να επιβάλει.

([1]) Υπόθεση T-262/11.
([2]) Υπόθεση C-263/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005340/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Repayment of state aid for the sale of mines in Halkidiki

On 23 February 2011, the Commission adopted Decision 2011/452/EC which concludes that the sale of the Cassandra Mines (Skouries, Stratoni and Olympias) from Greece to the company 'Ellinikos Xrysos' which took place in 2003 constitutes unlawful state aid as a) the mines were sold below market value, without any open tender and without any evaluation of the assets, and b) through Law 3220/2004 which established the sale, 'Ellinikos Xrysos' was exempted from any kind of tax.

Through this decision and several conservative estimates, the Commission calculated that the state aid amounted to EUR 15.34 million and asked Greece to repay this sum, including interest, within 4 months.

Given that the Commission appealed to the European Court of Justice on 25 May 2012 against Greece (Case C-263/12) as it had not yet repaid the state aid and the interest,

Will the Commission say:

1. Has Greece now repaid this state aid and interest?

2. Law 4042/2012 provided for the collection of fees for mines in Greek legislation from 1 January 2013. In order for this regulation to be implemented, a Ministerial Decision must be issued. Does the Commission know whether the Ministerial Decision has been issued and what level of fees have been set out by this decision? Will these fees also be collected for contracts existing before 1 January 2013?

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

On 23 February 2011, the Commission adopted a decision ordering the recovery of EUR 15.34 million in illegal aid granted to Ellinikos Xrysos SA in the form of:

— the difference between the market value of the Cassandra Mines' assets and the price at which Ellinikos Xrysos SA bought them;

— the taxes which Ellinikos Xrysos SA should have paid to buy the assets (i.e. mines and land) but did not pay.

Ellinikos Xrysos challenged the Commission's decision before the General Court of the European Union ([1]), but this action has no suspensive effect and the Greek authorities had to recover the aid within the deadline set in the Commission decision.

In the absence of recovery, the Commission filed an action against Greece on 25 May 2012 ([2]) with the Court of Justice of the European Union for failure to comply with the Commission decision. This legal action is currently pending.

To date, the Greek authorities have not reported whether the aid has been recovered.

Regarding national law 4042/2012, the Commission is not aware if a Ministerial Decision implementing this law has been adopted and what would be the level of fees that it would set. The issue of fees' collection for mines in the Greek legislation and its application to Ellinikos Xrysos is separate from the recovery of aid linked with the sale of the Cassandra Mines to Ellinikos Chrysos which the Commission is currently trying to enforce.

([1]) Case T-262/11.
([2]) Case C-263/12.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005341/13
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Mitreisende bei Delegationen der Kommissionsmitglieder

Medienberichten zu folge wurde das für Handel zuständige Mitglied der Kommission, Karel de Gucht, jüngst vom Vorsitzenden des European Services Forum begleitet. Dabei soll die Kommission alle angefallenen Kosten der Reise übernommen haben.

1. Wie viele Delegationsreisen fanden in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 statt?

2. Wann fanden diese Reisen statt? Zu welchem Zweck?

3. Wie viele weitere Mitreisende haben die Mitglieder der Kommission in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 bei den jeweiligen Reisen im europäischen In- und Ausland mitgenommen?

4. Welche Mitglieder der Kommission waren für die einzelnen Delegationen zuständig?

5. Wie viele Dritte (andere als Kommissionsbedienstete) waren bei der Reise vertreten? Aus welchem Grund?

6. Wie hoch waren die Erstattungen für die Kosten dieser Gäste insgesamt bei den einzelnen Reisen?

7. Wurden aufgrund der mitreisenden Dritten bestimmte Vorkehrungen getroffen (bspw. Anreise mit einem eigens für die Reise gecharterten Flugzeug, …)?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juni 2013)

Die derzeit in Betrieb befindlichen IT-Systeme erlauben nicht die Extraktion von Daten, anhand derer sich Mitreisende bei Delegationsreisen der Kommissionsmitglieder identifizieren lassen.

Die zeitaufwändigen manuellen Recherchen, die für eine ausführliche Beantwortung der Frage der Frau Abgeordneten erforderlich wären, kann die Kommission derzeit nicht durchführen.

Delegationsreisen der Kommissionsmitglieder unterliegen dem Leitfaden für Dienstreisen (Beschluss der Kommission vom 18.11.2008) und dem Verhaltenskodex für Kommissionsmitglieder (K(2011)2904). Die Anzahl von Bediensteten, die für eine Dienstreise vorgesehen sind, ist strikt auf das Nötigste beschränkt. Dies gilt insbesondere im Kontext von Sparmaßnahmen und der jüngsten Kürzungen des Verwaltungshaushalts der Kommission.

Generell übernimmt die Kommission — abgesehen von begründeten Ausnahmefällen — nicht die Kosten von Dritten, die ein Kommissionsmitglied begleiten.

Reisen mit einem gecharterten Flugzeug unterliegen einer strengen Kontrolle. Sie werden unmittelbar vom Präsidenten genehmigt und müssen den folgenden Bedingungen entsprechen:

— Gewerbliche Flüge sind aufgrund der Tagesordnung oder der Sicherheitserfordernisse nicht möglich.

— Es gibt keine tragbaren kommerziellen Alternativen für die Reise.

Charterreisen werden nur im Ausnahmefall und nach sorgfältiger Analyse der genannten Kriterien durch die zuständigen Dienststellen der Kommission gebilligt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005341/13
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Personnel accompanying delegations of Members of the Commission

According to media reports, Trade Commissioner Karel de Gucht was recently accompanied on a trip by the Chair of the European Services Forum. The reports state that the Commission covered all the costs associated with the trip.

1. How many delegation visits were there in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. When did the visits take place? What was their purpose?

3. How many other people have accompanied Members of the Commission in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 on visits both within Europe and further afield?

4. Which Member of the Commission were responsible for each of the various delegations?

5. How many third parties (other than Commission staff) were represented on these visits? For what reasons?

6. What is the total amount of expenses refunded for these guests in terms of each visit?

7. Were certain arrangements made to accommodate the accompanying third parties (e.g. travel by an aeroplane specially chartered for the visit, etc.)?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

The current IT systems in operation do not permit the extraction of data allowing for the identification of the composition of delegations of staff members travelling on a mission with a Commissioner.

At the present time the Commission is not in a position to undertake the lengthy manual research that a detailed answer to the Honourable Member's question would require.

Missions performed by the Commissioners are governed by the Guide to Missions (Commission decision of 18.11.2008) and the Code of Conduct of Commissioners (C(2011)2904). The number of staff required to go on a mission is strictly limited to those who are necessary. This is especially the case within the context of austerity and the recent cuts in the Commission's administration budget.

As a general rule, the Commission does not cover the cost of third parties accompanying a Commissioner, only under exceptional and duly justified circumstances are such expenses reimbursed.

The use of chartered air transport is strictly controlled and authorised directly by the President and must meet the following conditions:

— Agenda or security constraints do not permit the use of commercial flights;

— There are no viable commercial alternatives available for the trip.

The use of chartered air transport is only authorised as an exception and after careful analysis of the above criteria by the relevant Commission services.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005342/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(14 mai 2013)

Objet: Prix élevés du gaz européen

L'industrie européenne ainsi que les consommateurs européens paient quotidiennement les frais de la différence croissante entre les coûts du gaz en Europe et ceux en Amérique du Nord. Le prix du gaz naturel pour l'industrie était en moyenne 241 % plus élevé dans les pays européens qu'aux États-Unis pour le premier trimestre 2012. Concernant les industries, les entreprises européennes semblent ainsi faire face à une véritable concurrence déloyale puisque leurs frais de fonctionnement sont largement plus élevés qu'ils ne le sont aux États-Unis. En période notamment de crise économique, cette situation pourrait pousser certaines entreprises à se délocaliser hors de l'Union européenne voire même vers les États-Unis.

Cette différence croissante de coûts s'explique principalement par le développement aux États-Unis de l'exploitation du gaz de schiste. Malgré la consultation publique organisée par la Commission sur l'évolution des combustibles fossiles non conventionnels, il n'existe pas encore de solution commune européenne aux défis induits par l'exploitation du gaz de schiste. Alors que certains pays membres y sont totalement opposés, d'autres comme la Pologne se sont récemment lancés dans son exploitation afin de faire baisser les coûts du gaz.

Conformément à l'article 194 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne, l'ensemble des mesures relevant de la politique européenne dans le domaine de l'énergie sont prises selon la procédure législative ordinaire. La Commission est ainsi compétente pour prendre les mesures nécessaires à la résolution du problème des prix très élevés du gaz.

1. Afin notamment d'assurer le fonctionnement du marché de l'énergie et d'assurer la sécurité de l'approvisionnement énergétique de l'Union, la Commission a-t-elle l'intention de prendre d'urgence les mesures nécessaires pour soutenir les entreprises de nos territoires confrontées à un coût élevé de l'énergie?

2. Afin de réduire les prix du gaz européen, la Commission prévoit-elle notamment d'achever le marché européen du gaz, en ouvrant réellement le secteur à la concurrence et en supprimant les frais frontaliers de transport de gaz à l'intérieur de l'UE?

3. Le gaz de schiste pouvant représenter des solutions aux prix élevés du gaz dans l'Union, la Commission envisage-t-elle de soutenir plus activement la recherche pour mesurer le réel impact de l'exploitation du gaz de schiste et des différentes méthodes d'extraction, ainsi que de prendre une position européenne commune quant à l'exploitation ou non du gaz de schiste sur le territoire européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(10 juillet 2013)

1. Un certain nombre de politiques de l'Union européenne dans le domaine de l'énergie pourraient permettre de réduire les coûts énergétiques. Il s'agit essentiellement de la création d'un marché intérieur de l'énergie et de l'amélioration de l'efficacité énergétique. La Commission européenne œuvre notamment en faveur de l'achèvement du marché intérieur de l'énergie d'ici à 2014, conformément à la demande du Conseil européen du 4 février 2011, confirmée par le Conseil européen du 22 mai 2013. La Commission ne prévoit pas de mettre en œuvre des mesures visant à soutenir directement les entreprises de l'Union européenne confrontées à une augmentation de leurs coûts énergétiques.

2. La Commission est résolue à poursuivre ses travaux en vue d'achever le marché intérieur du gaz. À cette fin, elle s'attachera en particulier à assurer la bonne transposition de la directive «gaz» et à harmoniser les règles régissant le marché de l'Union par l'adoption de codes de réseau. La mise en place, au niveau de l'Union, d'un marché du gaz parfaitement intégré et interconnecté ainsi que la suppression des entraves nationales aux échanges transfrontaliers de gaz et à la concurrence sont essentielles pour proposer aux consommateurs un choix plus vaste et des prix équitables, tout en garantissant la sécurité d'approvisionnement.

3. La Commission estime qu'il revient avant tout à l'industrie de financer des projets d'exploration et des travaux de recherche sur les incidences de l'exploitation du gaz de schiste et, le cas échéant, d'améliorer les méthodes d'extraction.

La Commission étudie également avec attention les avantages et risques potentiels liés à ces nouvelles sources de gaz naturel ainsi que leurs implications possibles pour la politique européenne, notamment en ce qui concerne la recherche. Dans ce contexte, la Commission a prévu, dans son programme de travail pour 2013, la mise en place d'un «cadre d'évaluation des questions liées à l'environnement, au climat et à l'énergie visant à permettre une extraction sûre et sécurisée des hydrocarbures non conventionnels».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005342/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Higher European gas prices

Both European industry and European consumers are, on a daily basis, paying the price for the growing difference between the cost of gas in Europe and the cost in the United States. The price of natural gas for industry was on average 241% higher in European countries than in the United States for the first quarter of 2012. With regard to industries, European companies therefore seem to be faced with truly unfair competition, as their operating costs are considerably higher than those in the United States. At a time of economic crisis, this situation could push some companies to relocate outside the European Union, or even to the United States.

This growing difference in costs can mainly be attributed to the development of shale gas exploitation in the United States. Despite the public consultation organised by the Commission on the development of unconventional fossil fuels, there is still no common European solution to the challenges associated with shale gas exploitation. While some Member States are totally opposed to the idea, others such as Poland have recently started their exploitation in order to lower the cost of gas.

In accordance with Article 194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, all measures relating to Union policy on energy shall be taken in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure. The Commission is therefore in a position to take the necessary measures to resolve the problem of very high gas prices.

1. In order to ensure the functioning of the internal energy market and the security of energy supply in the EU, does the Commission intend as a matter of urgency to take the necessary measures to support companies within the EU which are facing higher energy costs?

2. In order to lower European gas prices, does the Commission plan to complete the European gas market by genuinely opening up the sector to competition and by removing border costs for transporting gas into the EU?

3. Given that shale gas could represent a solution to higher gas prices in the EU, does the Commission intend to play a more active role in supporting research to measure the real impact of shale gas exploitation and the different extraction methods, and to establish a common European position on the exploitation of shale gas in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

1. A number of EU energy policies have the potential to reduce energy costs. These include above all the establishment of an Internal Energy Market (IEM) and the increase of energy efficiency. The European Commission promotes amongst others the completion of the IEM by 2014 as requested by the European Council of 4 February 2011 and confirmed by the European Council of 22 May 2013. There are no plans of the Commission to directly support companies within the EU which are facing higher energy costs.

2. The Commission is determined to continue its work to complete the internal market in gas. This is done in particular by ensuring the correct transposition of the Gas Directive and the work to harmonise EU market rules through the adoption of Network Codes. Creating a seamlessly integrated and interconnected EU gas market and with it removing national barriers to cross-border gas trade and competition provides the basis for greater choice and fair prices for consumers while also ensuring secure supplies.

3. The Commission considers that it is primarily for industry to fund exploration projects and research into impacts of shale gas exploitation as well as to improve extraction methods if necessary.

The Commission is also carefully studying the possible benefits and risks of such new sources of natural gas as well as their possible implications, including as regards research, for European policy. In this context the Commission included in its 2013 Work Programme an 'Environmental, Climate and Energy Assessment Framework to Enable Safe and Secure Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction'.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005343/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Luftfahrtaußenpolitik in Bezug auf die Türkei

In Punkt 48 ihrer Mitteilung KOM(2012)0556 zur Luftfahrtaußenpolitik der EU betont die Kommission die Bedeutung einer Zusammenarbeit mit der Türkei im Luftverkehrsbereich. Dabei gibt es nach Darstellung der Kommission einige „schwierige Luftverkehrsprobleme" in der Region, die gelöst werden müssen. Die Kommission schlägt vor allem ein bilaterales Abkommen zur Flugsicherheit vor. Sollte man bei einigen akuten Problemen zu einer Lösung kommen, kann laut der Mitteilung auch ein umfassendes Abkommen ins Auge gefasst werden.

1. Welche schwierigen Luftverkehrsprobleme gibt es in der Region?

2. Welche Maßnahmen zur Lösung dieser Probleme unternimmt oder unterstützt die Kommission derzeit?

3. Welche Schritte wurden bei dem von der Kommission vorgeschlagenen Abkommen zur Flugsicherheit unternommen, und welche Fortschritte wurden bisher erzielt?

4. Welche Themen und spezifischen Regelungen sollte das „umfassende Abkommen" mit der Türkei nach Ansicht der Kommission beinhalten, und wurden schon Schritte zur Vorbereitung eines solchen Abkommens unternommen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juli 2013)

Die Kommission verweist auf den Standpunkt der Europäischen Union auf der Tagung des Assoziationsrates EU-Türkei am 27. Mai 2013: Die EU weist erneut darauf hin, dass hinsichtlich der erheblichen Sicherheitsrisiken im südöstlichen Mittelmeerraum dringend Abhilfe geschaffen werden muss. Die Aushandlung eines Flugsicherheitsabkommens mit der Türkei sollte starke Impulse für Bemühungen zur Ausarbeitung einer operativen Lösung geben, um die fehlende Kommunikation zwischen den Flugsicherungsbehörden in der Türkei und der Republik Zypern anzugehen. Eine solche operative Lösung im Einklang mit dem geltenden internationalen Recht, auch mit dem Chicagoer Übereinkommen, sollte dringend gefunden werden. Ein Flugsicherheitsabkommen mit der Türkei wird seinen Zweck nur dann vollständig erfüllen, wenn eine operative Lösung für dieses schwerwiegende Sicherheitsproblem gefunden wird. Daher sollte mit verdoppelten Anstrengungen auf dieses Ziel hingearbeitet werden. Die EU fordert die Türkei auf, die Beseitigung der Sicherheitsrisiken im südöstlichen Mittelmeerraum zu unterstützen, damit eine sofortige Lösung gefunden wird.

Der Rat begrüßt die Absicht der Kommission, ein Mandat zur Aushandlung eines umfassenden Luftverkehrsabkommens mit der Türkei zu beantragen. Durch ein solches Abkommen würde die Marktöffnung mit einem Prozess der Angleichung an die EU-Luftverkehrsvorschriften kombiniert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005343/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: External aviation policy in relation to Turkey

Point 48 of the Commission's communication COM(2012)0556 on the EU's external aviation policy emphasises the importance of cooperation with Turkey in the aviation sector. According to the Commission, there are some 'difficult aviation issues' in the region that need to be resolved. Above all, the Commission proposes a bilateral agreement on aviation safety. If a solution can be found to a number of acute problems, then, according to the communication, a comprehensive agreement should be envisaged.

1. What are the difficult aviation issues in the region?

2. What steps is the Commission taking or supporting to resolve these issues?

3. What steps have been implemented in the agreement on aviation safety proposed by the Commission and what progress has been achieved so far?

4. In the view of the Commission, what topics and specific arrangements should the 'comprehensive agreement' with Turkey contain, and have steps already been taken to prepare such an agreement?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

The Commission refers to the position of the European Union at the Association Council with Turkey on 27 May 2013: the EU reiterates the urgent need to address the serious safety risk in the South-East Mediterranean region. The negotiation of an aviation safety agreement with Turkey should provide a strong impetus for efforts aimed at developing an operational solution to address the absence of communication between air control centres in Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus. Such an operational solution in line with applicable international law, including the Chicago Convention, should be found urgently. An Aviation Safety Agreement with Turkey will only fully achieve its purpose with an operational solution to this serious safety problem. Efforts in support of that objective should therefore be redoubled. The EU invites Turkey to support the process of addressing the safety risk in the South-East Mediterranean region with a view of achieving an urgent solution.

The Council has welcomed the Commission's intention to seek a mandate to negotiate a comprehensive air transport agreement with Turkey. Such an agreement would combine a market opening with a process of regulatory convergence towards EU rules in the field of aviation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005344/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Drosselung des Internetzugangs und Gefährdung der Netzneutralität

Neben einigen Kommunikations-Dienstleistern in Deutschland hat nun auch die Deutsche Telekom angekündigt, Beschränkungen bei Internet-Flatrates einzuführen. Konkret sind Datenvolumengrenzen für Internetpauschaltarife geplant, ab deren Erreichen die Geschwindigkeit des Internetzugangs automatisch deutlich reduziert wird. Die Nutzung einiger weniger Internetdienste soll dabei nicht auf das Datenvolumen angerechnet werden. Eine solche Bevorzugung einzelner Dienste könnte gegen das Prinzip der Netzneutralität, welches die Kommission unter Anderem in ihrer Mitteilung KOM(2011)0222 erneut betonte, verstoßen.

1. Plant die Kommission bezüglich der differenzierten Anrechnung unterschiedlicher Internetdienste auf das Datenvolumen Maßnahmen gegen Verstöße, die dem Grundsatz der Netzneutralität zuwiderlaufen, und wie könnten diese aussehen?

2. Plant die Kommission, die Pläne der Deutschen Telekom dahin gehend zu untersuchen, ob das Unternehmen seine marktbeherrschende Stellung ausnutzt?

3. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission einleiten, sollte sie zu dem Ergebnis kommen, dass die Deutsche Telekom ihre marktbeherrschende Stellung ausnutzt?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(24. Juni 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass die Deutsche Telekom öffentlichen Ankündigungen zufolge Beschränkungen bei Internet-Flatrates in ortsfesten Netzen einführen will.

Die Kommission setzt sich uneingeschränkt für den Grundsatz der Netzneutralität ein, was erst kürzlich bei Reden am 30. Mai und 4. Juni 2013 im Europäischen Parlament erneut bekräftigt wurde. Sie erarbeitet derzeit Vorschläge, mit denen die Netzneutralität durch eine größere Transparenz, einen einfacheren Anbieterwechsel und den verantwortlichen Einsatz von Datenmanagement-Instrumenten sichergestellt werden soll. Datenmanagement-Maßnahmen wie ein diskriminierendes Blockieren und Drosseln konkurrierender Dienste sollen in diesem Zusammenhang verboten werden. Gleichzeitig sollen die Betreiber ihren Kunden eine garantierte Dienstqualität bieten können.

Die Preisgestaltung marktbeherrschender Betreiber unterliegt stets der Überwachung nach dem europäischen und nationalen Kartellrecht, und die Kommission achtet auf die Durchsetzung der wettbewerbsrechtlichen Bestimmungen des Vertrages in diesem Bereich. Auch die Bundesnetzagentur und das Bundeskartellamt können das fragliche Verhalten überprüfen. Die Kommission nimmt nur dann Stellung zu Fragen, die in ihre Zuständigkeit als Wettbewerbsbehörde fallen, wenn ein förmliches Untersuchungsverfahren eingeleitet wurde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005344/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Restrictions on Internet access and threats to network neutrality

Along with a number of communication service providers in Germany, Deutsche Telekom has now also announced plans to introduce restrictions on Internet flat rates. In specific terms, data volume limits are planned for Internet flat rate tariffs that will automatically lead to a significant reduction in Internet access speed once reached. The use of a small number of Internet services will have no impact on the data volume available. Such preferential treatment for individual services could violate the principle of network neutrality, a principle that is once again emphasised by the Commission in its communication COM(2011)0222, as well as elsewhere.

1. Is the Commission planning measures against violations in relation to the differentiated calculation of various Internet services in terms of data volume, which runs counter to the principle of network neutrality, and what might the nature of these measures be?

2. Is the Commission planning to examine Deutsche Telekom's plans to establish whether the company is exploiting its dominant position?

3. What steps does the Commission plan to introduce if it finds that Deutsche Telekom is exploiting its dominant position?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of public announcements concerning Deutsche Telekom's plans to introduce restrictions on Internet flat rates in fixed networks.

The Commission is fully committed to defending the net neutrality principle, as stressed again in two recent speeches delivered on 30 May and 4 June 2013 at the European Parliament. The Commission is currently working on proposals to ensure net neutrality through enhanced transparency, easier switching and the responsible use of traffic management tools. This means that management practices consisting of discriminatory blocking and throttling of competing services should be prohibited. At the same time, operators should be able to offer guaranteed quality of service to their customers.

The pricing behavior of dominant operators is always subject to review under EU and national antitrust law, and the Commission is vigilant in enforcing the Treaty rules on competition in this sector. The German national regulatory authority (Bundesnetzagentur) and the German competition authority (Bundeskartellamt) are also in a position to review the conduct in question. The Commission does not comment on matters within its remit as a competition authority unless and until formal investigative procedures have been launched.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005345/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Regulierung von Online-Bezahlsystemen und mobilen Bezahlsystemen

Verschiedenen Medienberichten zufolge entwickeln sich aufgrund des dynamischen Marktes bei Onlinebestellungen und der Zunahme von Kartenzahlungen zunehmend alternative Systeme zur Zahlungsabwicklung im Onlinebereich. Auch die Anzahl externer mobilfunkbasierter Bezahlsysteme nimmt stetig zu. Da sich etablierte Geldinstitute durch diese branchenfremden Angebote in ihrem Kerngeschäft bedroht sehen, ist zu vermuten, dass der Wettbewerb in diesem Bereich weiter zunehmen wird.

1. Welche Maßnahmen sind geplant, um diesen dynamischen Markt zu regulieren und die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit für alle Anbieter zu garantieren, insbesondere in Bezug auf die gezielte Zusammenarbeit von Dienstleistern mit einzelnen Telekommunikationsanbietern?

2. Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission, um den Verbraucher- bzw. den Datenschutz in diesem Bereich zu garantieren, insbesondere in Bezug auf Bezahlungen per Handy und Tablet-Computer?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(9. August 2013)

1. Die Kommission ist sich der Entwicklungen bewusst, die sich auf den Wettbewerb im Zahlungsverkehrsmarkt auswirken. Anfang 2012 erfolgte die Verabschiedung des Grünbuchs zu Karten-, Internet- und mobilen Zahlungen, an die sich eine öffentliche Konsultation anschloss. Man gelangte zu dem Schluss, dass der Rechtsrahmen, auch die Richtlinie 2007/64/EG über Zahlungsdienste, modernisiert werden muss, damit besser integrierte Zahlungsverkehrsmärkte möglich sind. Dies wurde im Oktober 2012 von der Kommission in ihrer Mitteilung „Binnenmarktakte II“ bestätigt.

Angesichts der Dynamik des Zahlungsverkehrsmarkts wird der aktualisierte Rechtsrahmen Innovationen berücksichtigen und dabei die Besorgnis der Verbraucher nicht vernachlässigen. Die Kommission begrüßt neue innovative Partnerschaften zur Vergrößerung des Wettbewerbs und zur Verbreiterung des Angebots für die Verbraucher wie das Jointventure, dessen Machbarkeit im vergangenen Jahr von Telekommunikationsanbietern eruiert wurde mit dem Ziel, im Vereinigten Königreich eine mobile Geldbörse („mobile wallet“) anzubieten.

Die Kommission wird einen Vorschlag für eine neue Richtlinie über Zahlungsdienste verabschieden, in der auch neue Arten von Zahlungsdiensten berücksichtigt werden, die eine alternative und häufig günstigere Lösung für Internetzahlungen bereitstellen. Diese Änderung wird Rechtssicherheit schaffen und zum Verbraucherschutz beitragen und es den Anbietern leichter machen, auf dem Markt Fuß zu fassen.

2. Die Zunahme des elektronischen Zahlungsverkehrs, insbesondere bei den Onlinezahlungen, erfordert von den Anbietern von Zahlungsdiensten die Umsetzung strenger Sicherheitsmaßnahmen. In der Richtlinie über Verbraucherrechte wird bereits der Schutz von Verbrauchern berücksichtigt, die online einkaufen. Außerdem müssen die Anbieter von Zahlungsdiensten die persönlichen Daten ihrer Kunden nach der Richtlinie 95/46/EG behandeln, die derzeit überarbeitet wird. Der neue Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über Zahlungsdienste wird im Sinne sichererer Onlinezahlungen Regeln für eine zuverlässige Authentifizierung der Kunden enthalten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005345/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Regulation of online payment systems and mobile payment systems

According to various reports in the media, the dynamic market for online orders and the rise in card payments is encouraging the development of an increasing number of alternative systems for handling payments in the online area. The number of external mobile telephone-based payment systems is also continually rising. Because established banks regard these offers from outside their industry as a threat to their core business, it seems likely that competition in this area will increase further.

1. What steps are planned to regulate this dynamic market and to guarantee competitiveness for all providers, in particular in relation to targeted cooperation between service providers and individual telecommunications providers?

2. What steps is the Commission planning to guarantee consumer and data protection in this sector, in particular in relation to payments by mobile telephone and tablet computer?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of developments which impact competition in the payment market. Beginning 2012, the Green Paper on card, Internet and mobile payments was adopted, followed by a public consultation. It was concluded that the regulatory framework, including Directive 2007/64/EC on payment services (PSD), needs to be modernised to allow for a better integrated payments market. This was confirmed by the Commission in October 2012 in its communication on 'Single Market Act II'.

Given the dynamic nature of the market for payment solutions, the updated regulatory framework shall allow for innovation, while addressing consumer concerns. The Commission welcomes new innovative partnerships to increase competition and more choice for consumers, such as the joint venture which was explored last year between a number of telecom providers to offer a mobile wallet in the UK.

The Commission will adopt a proposal for a new PSD, which will also address new types of payment services which provide an alternative and often, cheaper, payment solution for Internet payments. This change will provide legal certainty and consumer protection and will make it easier for these providers to gain a foothold in the market.

2. Increasing volumes of electronic payments, in particular in the area of online payments call for strong security measures to be implemented by payment service providers. The Consumer Rights Directive already provides protection for customer shopping online. Furthermore, payment service providers are obliged to process personal data of their customers in accordance with Directive 95/46/EC, currently under revision. The new PSD proposal will contain rules on strong customer authentication for more secure and safer online payments.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005346/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Mögliche Abschaffung des 500-Euro-Scheins

Große Geldscheine werden Experten zufolge häufig als Alternative zu elektronischen Überweisungen genutzt, um illegale Geldgeschäfte und Steuerhinterziehung zu verschleiern. Verschiedenen Medienberichten zufolge diskutiert die Europäische Zentralbank die Abschaffung des 500-Euro-Scheins, um diese Möglichkeit der Steuerflucht zu bekämpfen.

1. Unterstützt die Kommission einen solchen Schritt?

2. Wenn ja, welche Vorteile sieht die Kommission in der Abschaffung des 500-Euro-Scheins?

3. Wenn nein, welche Vorbehalte hat die Kommission gegen die Abschaffung des 500-Euro-Scheins?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juli 2013)

Gemäß dem Vertrag hat die Europäische Zentralbank das ausschließliche Recht, die Ausgabe von Euro-Banknoten zu genehmigen und deren Stückelung festzulegen. Daher kann die Kommission weder eine Änderung der Stückelung beschließen noch einen entsprechenden Legislativvorschlag vorlegen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005346/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Possible abolition of the EUR 500 banknote

According to experts, large banknotes are often used as an alternative to electronic transfers in an effort to conceal illegal monetary transactions and tax evasion. Various media reports indicate that the European Central Bank is discussing the abolition of the EUR 500 banknote in order to close off this avenue for tax evasion.

1. Does the Commission support such a move?

2. If so, what advantages does the Commission foresee in the abolition of the EUR 500 banknote?

3. If not, what concerns does the Commission have concerning the abolition of the EUR 500 banknote?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

According to the Treaty, the European Central Bank has the exclusive right to authorise the issue and determine the denomination of euro banknotes. Against this background, the Commission cannot decide or make any legislative proposal to change their denomination.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005347/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Volkswirtschaftlicher Schaden durch den 500-Euro-Schein

Große Geldscheine werden Experten zufolge häufig als Alternative zu elektronischen Überweisungen genutzt, um illegale Geldgeschäfte und Steuerhinterziehung zu verschleiern. Verschiedenen Medienberichten zufolge diskutiert die Europäische Zentralbank die Abschaffung des 500-Euro-Scheins, um diese Möglichkeit der Steuerflucht zu bekämpfen.

Liegen der Kommission Daten vor, die belegen, dass durch den Gebrauch des 500-Euro-Scheins ein Schaden für die europäische Volkswirtschaft entstanden ist?

Wenn ja, auf welche Summe kann dieser Schaden beziffert werden?

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

Das Ausstellen von Banknoten — einschließlich des 500-Euro-Scheins — fällt nicht in den Verantwortungsbereich der Kommission sondern der EZB.

Für einschlägige Erhebungen und Daten ist daher die EZB zuständig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005347/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Economic damage caused by the EUR 500 banknote

According to experts, large banknotes are often used as an alternative to electronic transfers in an effort to conceal illegal monetary transactions and tax evasion. Various media reports indicate that the European Central Bank is discussing the abolition of the EUR 500 banknote in order to close off this avenue for tax evasion.

Does the Commission have access to data that demonstrate that the use of the EUR 500 banknote has caused damage to the European economy?

If so, what value can be placed on this damage?

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

The issuance of banknotes including the 500 Euro banknote is not a competence of the Commission, but of the ECB.

The ECB is therefore in charge with relevant research and data.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005348/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Sicherheitsmerkmale der neuen Fünf-Euro-Scheine

Anfang Mai 2013 hat die Europäische Zentralbank mit der Ausgabe neuer Fünf-Euro-Scheine begonnen. Insgesamt sollen in den kommenden Jahren drei Milliarden neue Fünf-Euro-Scheine ausgegeben werden. Die neuen Scheine enthalten neue Sicherheitsmerkmale und sind auf der Oberfläche mit einem Speziallack überzogen, der zu einer verlängerten Haltbarkeit führen soll.

1. Haben sich die Kosten für die Herstellung eines Fünf-Euro-Scheins durch die Einführung neuer Sicherheitsmerkmale und den Einsatz des Speziallacks verändert? Wenn ja, ist die Herstellung der neuen Fünf-Euro-Scheine teurer als die Herstellung der alten Scheine?

2. Mit welcher Nutzungsdauer rechnet die Kommission bezüglich der Haltbarkeit der neuen Fünf-Euro-Scheine? Inwiefern verändert sich die Haltbarkeit im Gegensatz zu den alten Scheinen?

3. Welche Kosten sind für die Entwicklung der neuen Sicherheitsmerkmale und die Erforschung des Speziallacks aufgewendet worden? Welche Kosten waren für die Entwicklung und Erforschung ursprünglich vorgesehen?

4. Wer trägt die Kosten für Forschung und Entwicklung der neuen Sicherheitsmerkmale?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juli 2013)

Für die Ausgabe von Geldscheinen wie des neuen Fünf-Euro-Scheins ist nicht die Europäische Kommission, sondern die Europäische Zentralbank (EZB) zuständig.

Demnach ist die EZB verantwortlich für die Forschung und Entwicklung in diesem Bereich, die Herstellung, die Merkmale und die Haltbarkeit der Geldscheine sowie die damit zusammenhängenden Kosten und die Kostenaufteilung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005348/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Security features of the new EUR 5 banknotes

The European Central Bank started issuing new EUR 5 banknotes in early May 2013. Over the coming years a total of three billion new EUR 5 banknotes are to be issued. The new banknotes include new security features and have a special surface coating that should make them more durable.

1. Have the introduction of the new security features and the use of the special coating led to a change in the cost of producing a EUR 5 banknote? If so, are the new EUR 5 banknotes more expensive to produce than the old ones?

2. How long does the Commission expect that the new EUR 5 banknotes will last in use? To what extent is durability expected to change in comparison with the old banknotes?

3. What costs have been expended on developing the new security features and researching the special coating? What research and development costs were originally planned?

4. Who is to bear the costs for researching and developing the new security features?

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

The issuance of banknotes including the new 5 Euro banknote is not a competence of the Commission, but of the ECB.

The ECB is therefore in charge with research, development and production of these banknotes including their features, durability and the related costs/distribution of costs.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005349/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten der Ausgabe neuer Fünf-Euro-Scheine

Anfang Mai 2013 hat die Europäische Zentralbank mit der Ausgabe neuer Fünf-Euro-Scheine begonnen. Insgesamt sollen in den kommenden Jahren drei Milliarden neue Fünf-Euro-Scheine ausgegeben werden.

1. Welche Kosten entstehen für die Herstellung eines neuen Fünf-Euro-Scheins?

2. Wie viel kostet die Ausgabe der drei Milliarden neuen Fünf-Euro-Scheine insgesamt?

3. Wer trägt die Kosten für den Druck der neuen Banknoten?

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

Gemäß Artikel 128 AEUV liegt die alleinige Zuständigkeit für die Ausstellung von Euro-Banknoten bei der EZB und den nationalen Zentralbanken. Die Europäische Kommission hat keinerlei Befugnis hinsichtlich Herstellung und Druck von Euro-Banknoten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005349/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: The costs of issuing the new EUR 5 banknotes

The European Central Bank started issuing new EUR 5 banknotes in early May 2013. Over the coming years a total of three billion new EUR 5 banknotes are to be issued.

1. What are the costs associated with the production of the new EUR 5 banknote?

2. What will be the total cost of issuing the three billion new EUR 5 banknotes?

3. Who is going to bear the costs of printing the new banknotes?

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

Pursuant to Article 128 of the TFEU, the issuing of euro banknotes lies exclusively with the ECB and the national central banks. The European Commission has no competence with regard to producing and printing of euro banknotes.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005350/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Insuficiencia renal crónica en los cañaverales

La enfermedad conocida en Centroamérica como «mal de los cañaverales», que en la comunidad médica toma el de insuficiencia renal crónica, está adquiriendo en dicha área geográfica la dimensión de verdadera epidemia.

Las causas de esta enfermedad son todavía ignoradas por la comunidad científica, pero el hecho de que afecte tan solo a los trabajadores de monocultivos de caña puede indicar que existe una relación directa con el uso de determinados productos químicos en dichos cultivos. Pese a que aún no existen pruebas concluyentes sobre la vinculación con los agroquímicos empleados en los cañaverales, la comunidad científica considera que es una relación más que posible y continúan realizando pruebas. Las diferentes autoridades sanitarias de los países de la región se han reunido para aunar esfuerzos en la búsqueda de las causas de una enfermedad que está alcanzando el grado de epidemia.

El desarrollo de esta epidemia va unido al del sector del bioetanol, que ha extendido los monocultivos de caña por la región para abastecer a los mercados de combustibles en los países del primer mundo. La Unión Europea, con su fuerte apuesta por el uso de biocombustibles, es un gran consumidor del bioetanol procedente de la región y su empleo puede estar directamente relacionado con el incremento del uso de agroquímicos en estas plantaciones y, por tanto, potencialmente, con la epidemia de insuficiencia renal crónica que padecen los pueblos centroamericanos.

¿Considera la Comisión que el convenio 155 de la OIT sobre seguridad y salud de los trabajadores y medio ambiente en el trabajo se está aplicando correctamente a los cultivos de caña centroamericanos, ante la falta de estudios concluyentes sobre la relación entre el uso de agroquímicos y el «mal del cañaveral»?

¿Está colaborando en las investigaciones sobre la relación del uso de agroquímicos en los monocultivos de caña con esta epidemia?

¿Considera que la importación de bioetanol desde estos países a la Unión Europea puede estar poniendo en riesgo a los trabajadores de dichas plantaciones?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de las cuestiones planteadas por Su Señoría en relación con el «mal del cañaveral» en Centroamérica.

La UE trabaja en estrecha colaboración con la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) para promover la ratificación y aplicación efectiva de las normas internacionales del trabajo y, en particular, de los convenios fundamentales de la OIT. El Acuerdo de Asociación entre la UE y Centroamérica (que incluye a Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua y Panamá) tiene un capítulo sobre comercio y desarrollo sostenible, en el que se establece una obligación clara para los países signatarios de aplicar efectivamente los convenios fundamentales de la OIT en sus leyes y prácticas.

El Convenio sobre seguridad y salud de los trabajadores (n° 155) de la OIT es un acuerdo técnico actualizado que solo ha ratificado, hasta la fecha, El Salvador de entre los países centroamericanos. En 2011 la Comisión de Expertos en Aplicación de Convenios y Recomendaciones de la OIT, el órgano de control de esta organización, pidió al Gobierno de El Salvador que siguiera facilitando información sobre la aplicación en la práctica del Convenio n° 155 en este país, en particular en lo referente a los trabajadores de la agricultura.

La UE ha colaborado estrechamente con la OIT en materia de seguridad y salud en el trabajo en un proyecto de desarrollo conjunto UE-OIT titulado «Mejorar la Salud y la Seguridad en el Trabajo a través del Programa de Trabajo Decente» (1,6 millones de euros, 2010-2012) que se llevó a cabo en cinco países diana: Honduras, Moldavia, Ucrania, Malaui y Zambia. Con el proyecto se apoya el desarrollo de enfoques sistemáticos hacia la seguridad y la salud en el trabajo y la incorporación de la seguridad y la salud en el trabajo a las agendas políticas nacionales, con el objetivo último de reducir los accidentes de trabajo y las enfermedades profesionales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005350/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Chronic kidney failure in sugar cane fields

The illness known in Central America as 'cane field disease' and in the medical community as chronic kidney failure is becoming a real epidemic in this geographical area.

The scientific community is still unsure about the causes of this disease, but the fact that it only affects sugar cane monoculture workers may indicate that there is a direct relationship with the use of certain chemical products on these crops. There is no conclusive evidence as yet of the link with agrochemicals used on sugar canes, but the scientific community believes it is an entirely plausible relationship and tests are still being carried out. The health authorities of the countries in the region have come together to join forces in the search for the causes of an illness that is reaching epidemic levels.

The evolution of this epidemic has gone hand in hand with that of the bioethanol sector, which has boosted the region's sugarcane monocultures to sustain fuel markets in first world countries. The European Union, with its strong commitment to the use of biofuels, is a heavy consumer of bioethanol from the region and its use could be directly related to the increase in the use of agrochemicals in these plantations, and therefore potentially with the chronic kidney failure epidemic that is affecting Central American populations.

Does the Commission believe that ILO Convention 155 concerning occupational safety and health and the working environment is being applied correctly to Central American sugar cane crops, given the lack of conclusive studies on the relationship between the use of agrochemicals and 'cane field disease'?

Is it taking part in research on the link between the use of agrochemicals on sugar cane crops and this epidemic?

Does it believe that imports of bioethanol from these countries to the European Union could be putting workers in these plantations at risk?

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

The Commission is aware of the concerns raised by the Honourable Member regarding 'cane field disease' in Central America.

The EU works closely with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in promoting the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards, and in particular the ILO's Fundamental Conventions. The Association Agreement between the EU and Central America (comprising Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama) has a chapter on trade and sustainable development which clearly makes it an obligation for the signatory countries to effectively implement the ILO's Fundamental Conventions in their laws and practice.

The ILO's Occupational Safety and Health Convention No 155 is an up-to-date technical convention which El Salvador is the only country in Central America to have ratified to date. In 2011 the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, the ILO monitoring body, requested the Salvadorian Government to continue providing information on the application in practice of Convention No 155 in El Salvador, including with regard to workers in agriculture.

The EU has closely worked with the ILO in the area of Occupational Safety and Health under a joint EC-ILO development project 'Improving safety and health at work through a Decent Work agenda' (EUR 1,6 million, 2010-2012). The project was implemented in five target countries: Honduras, Moldova, Ukraine, Malawi and Zambia. It supported the development of systematic approaches to occupational safety and health and the incorporation of OSH in national political agendas, with the ultimate goal of reducing occupational accidents and work related diseases.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005351/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Autorización de ataques a tierra de la UE-Navfor en Somalia

El pasado 23 de marzo los Ministros de Defensa de los 27 países de la Unión Europea aprobaron la extensión de la misión Atalanta hasta finales de 2014. Desde 2008, dicha operación militar conjunta lleva invadiendo las aguas internacionales vecinas a Somalia, con el objetivo de «disuadir, prevenir y reprimir» las acciones de los «piratas».

Si bien éste es el objetivo formal de la misión, en realidad supone una operación militar de escolta de compañías privadas de pesca, que están esquilmando los recursos marinos de la zona. Esta misión ha sido la primera operación conjunta de los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea, mostrando la verdadera naturaleza de la política exterior de la UE. Son muchas las voces que, desde la sociedad civil y la comunidad científica, están señalando como culpables de la aparición de los «piratas» a los pesqueros europeos que sobreexplotan los recursos de las aguas somalíes, aprovechando el vacío que supone la ausencia de autoridades y privando a los pobladores locales de su capacidad para ganarse la vida.

No obstante a las críticas a esta misión de expropiación de los recursos naturales de los somalíes, la extensión del mandato aprobado no es solo de carácter temporal, sino que también permite que las fuerzas de la Navfor ataquen por aire y mar las posiciones terrestres de los «piratas». Esta misión, que carece de mandato alguno de la ONU, supone un verdadero acto de violación del Derecho internacional, aprovechando el vacío que supone el no reconocimiento de ninguna autoridad política somalí por la comunidad internacional. De esta forma, la UE actúa unilateralmente como potencia militar invasora en la zona. Con la autorización de los ataques a tierra por parte de la Navfor, se produce un vacío legal que puede permitir que los crímenes de guerra que cometa dicha fuerza en sus ataques al antiguo territorio somalí no sean perseguidos.

¿Dispone de una autorización para realizar dichas operaciones en tierra? ¿Qué institución ha dado dicha autorización a la UE-Navfor? ¿Considera dicha institución un representante legítimo del pueblo somalí?

¿De qué forma controla la Unión Europea los crímenes de guerra que cometa la UE-Navfor en sus operaciones en territorio anteriormente como Somalia?

Ante la inexistencia de un Estado reconocido por la comunidad internacional, ¿cómo se garantiza que las víctimas de los ataques de la UE-Navfor puedan acudir a un tribunal a denunciar posibles crímenes de guerra?

Respuesta
(9 de julio de 2013)

La operación Eunavfor se estableció en 2008 con el fin de contribuir a la protección de los buques del Programa Mundial de Alimentos que entregan ayuda alimentaria a los desplazados en Somalia, de conformidad con el mandato establecido por la Resolución 1814(2008), del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas, y para la protección de buques vulnerables que naveguen frente a las costas de Somalia, así como a la disuasión, a la prevención y a la represión de los actos de piratería y del robo a mano armada frente a las costas de Somalia, con arreglo al mandato definido en la Resolución 1816(2008) del CSNU. La Operación Eunavfor «Atalanta» se estableció en virtud de la Acción Común 2008/851/PESC, adoptada por el Consejo el 10 de noviembre de 2008, y fue modificada más recientemente por la Decisión 2012/174/ PESC de 23 de marzo de 2012. La operación de la UE se realiza en apoyo de las Resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas 1814(2008), 1816(2008), 1838(2008), 1846(2008), 1851(2008) y subsiguientes.

En consecuencia, no hay base para las alegaciones que realiza Su Señoría en su pregunta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005351/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Authorisation for EU-Navfor ground attacks in Somalia

On 23 March, Defence Ministers from the 27 EU countries gave their approval to extend the Atalanta mission until the end of 2014. Since 2008, this joint military operation has been invading the international waters neighbouring Somalia with the aim of 'discouraging, preventing and repressing' acts of 'piracy'.

While this may be the formal objective of the mission, in reality it is a military escort operation for private fishing companies, which are exploiting marine resources in the area. This mission was the first joint operation of the EU Member States, demonstrating the true nature of the EU's foreign policy. Many members of civil society and the scientific community claim that European fishermen who overexploit resources in Somali waters, taking advantage of the vacuum represented by the lack of authorities and depriving local populations of their ability to earn a living, are responsible for the appearance of these 'pirates'.

Despite the criticisms regarding this mission to expropriate natural resources from the Somalis, the extension of the mandate not only grants more time but also allows Navfor forces to attack 'pirate' positions by air or by sea. This mission, which lacks any UN mandate, is a real violation of international law, taking advantage of the vacuum represented by the international community's refusal to recognise any Somali political authorities. The EU is therefore acting unilaterally as an invading military force in the area. Authorising the Navfor ground attacks creates a legal vacuum that could allow the war crimes committed by this force in its attacks on former Somali territory to go unpunished.

Does it have authorisation to carry out these operations on the ground? What institution has given this authorisation to EU-Navfor? Is this institution considered a legitimate representative of the Somali people?

How does the European Union monitor the war crimes committed by EU-Navfor in its operations in former Somali territory?

Given that there is no government recognised by the international community, how can it be ensured that victims of the EU-Navfor attacks are able to approach a court to denounce possible war crimes?

Reply
(9 July 2013)

In 2008, operation EUNAVFOR was established in order to contribute to the protection of vessels of the World Food Programme delivering food aid to displaced persons in Somalia, in accordance with the mandate laid down in UNSC Resolution 1814 (2008), and for the protection of vulnerable vessels cruising off the Somali coast, and the deterrence, prevention and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast, in accordance with the mandate laid down in UNSC Resolution 1816 (2008). Operation EUNAVFOR 'Atalanta' was established by Joint Action 2008/851/CFSP, which was adopted by the Council on 10 November 2008, and amended more recently by Council Decision 2012/174/CFSP of 23 March 2012. The EU's operation is in support of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1814 (2008), 1816 (2008), 1838 (2008), 1846 (2008), 1851 (2008) and subsequent resolutions.

There is therefore no basis to the allegations made by the Honourable Member in his question.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005352/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(14 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Necessità di un intervento della Commissione contro l'obsolescenza programmata dei prodotti industriali

È in corso un'indagine promossa dal Comitato economico e sociale sull'obsolescenza programmata dei prodotti elettrici ed elettronici. In pratica, le aziende produttrici creano difetti nei prodotti commercializzati in modo da ridurre la durata di funzionamento e costringere il consumatore a comprare nuovi prodotti.

Alcuni anni or sono un documentario spagnolo, *Comprar, tirar, comprar — La historia segreta de la obsolescencia programada*, aveva già denunciato che molte stampanti in commercio contengono al loro interno un chip che le fa smettere di funzionare quando raggiungono i 18 mila fogli stampati.

Inoltre, esiste il gravoso problema dello smaltimento dei rifiuti: secondo le informazioni fornite dal documentario, innumerevoli aziende occidentali spediscono i loro rifiuti elettrici ed elettronici in Africa, utilizzando i paesi poveri come discarica in cui l'80 % di computer, televisori e stampanti viene buttato e smembrato dagli abitanti del posto, alla disperata ricerca di metallo — rame, alluminio, ferro — da cui ricavare qualche dollaro.

Intende la Commissione promuovere un'azione legale presso la Corte di giustizia contro le aziende che praticano tale frode a danno dei cittadini dell'Unione europea?

Intende la Commissione proporre una direttiva specifica che interdica la produzione e la vendita nel territorio dell'Unione europea di prodotti ad obsolescenza programmata?

Intende la Commissione costringere i fabbricanti a menzionare in modo esplicito, chiaro e visibile la durata d'uso degli apparecchi in vendita?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2013)

La Commissione rimanda l'onorevole deputato alle risposte date alle interrogazioni scritte E-1284/11, E-2875/11, E-4273/11, E-4887/2012 ed E-3441/2013. In particolare, il fatto che un rivenditore non informi il consumatore che un prodotto è stato progettato per avere una durata limitata può essere considerato una pratica commerciale sleale ai sensi della direttiva 2005/29/CE ([1]).

La direttiva sulla progettazione ecocompatibile ([2]) contiene un quadro giuridico adeguato per vietare che i prodotti oggetto delle misure di esecuzione siano immessi sul mercato europeo qualora si ritenga che abbiano un impatto ambientale significativo. Tali misure di esecuzione possono altresì includere requisiti di informazione sulle caratteristiche e le prestazioni del prodotto, nonché sulla sua durata di funzionamento.

La nuova direttiva sui rifiuti di apparecchiature elettriche ed elettroniche (RAEE) ([3]) fissa ambiziosi obiettivi di raccolta e dispone che il trattamento dei RAEE sia portato a termine in maniera inoffensiva per l'ambiente. Nel caso di spedizioni di AEE usate sospette di essere RAEE, si applicano il regolamento n. 1013/2006 ([4]) e il regolamento n. 1418/2007 ([5]), in modo coerente rispetto alle prescrizioni della direttiva RAEE. Realizzare controlli a livello dell'Unione europea è fondamentale per combattere la spedizione illegale di RAEE nei paesi in via di sviluppo.

L'obsolescenza programmata è in chiara contraddizione con gli obiettivi stabiliti dalla Commissione nella strategia Europa 2020 finalizzata alla crescita con un uso efficiente delle risorse. Un elemento chiave di tale uso efficiente delle risorse è la gestione sostenibile dei materiali. La Commissione sta valutando misure di attuazione per la tabella di marcia verso un'Europa efficiente sotto il profilo delle risorse ([6]) e, in tale contesto, esaminerà la questione della durata di funzionamento dei prodotti, la quale deve essere affrontata tenendo conto del ciclo di vita.

([1]) GU L 149 del 11.6.2005, pag. 22.
([2]) Direttiva 2009/125/CE; GU L 285 del 31.10.2009.
([3]) Direttiva 2012/19/UE; GU L 197/38 del 24.07.2012.
([4]) GU L 342 del 22.12.2009.
([5]) GU L 316 del 4.12.2007.
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0571:FIN:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005352/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Need for action by the Commission against the built-in obsolescence of industrial products

An investigation instigated by the Economic and Social Committee is under way into the built-in obsolescence of electric and electronic products. In practice, manufacturers create defects in products sold so as to reduce their lifespan and force consumers to buy new ones.

A few years ago a Spanish documentary entitled *'Comprar, tirar, comprar — La historia segreta de la obsolescencia programada'* (Buy, throw away, buy — the secret history of built-in obsolescence) revealed that many printers on the market have a chip inside them that makes them stop working once they have printed 18 000 pages.

In addition, there is the serious problem of waste disposal: according to information supplied by the documentary, countless Western firms send their electric and electronic waste to Africa, using poor countries as landfills into which 80% of computers, televisions and printers are thrown and then taken apart by the local residents, in desperate search of metal — copper, aluminium, iron — from which to make a few dollars.

Does the Commission intend to bring legal proceedings at the Court of Justice against firms carrying out this fraudulent practice, which is damaging to European Union citizens?

Does the Commission intend to put forward a specific directive banning the production and sale in European Union territory of products with built-in obsolescence?

Does the Commission intend to force manufacturers to state in an explicit, clear and visible manner the lifespan of devices that they put on sale?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-1284/11, E-2875/11, E-4273/11, E-4887/2012 and E-3441/2013. In particular, the fact that a trader does not inform the consumer when a product has been designed to have a limited lifetime could be considered as an unfair commercial practice under the provisions of Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]).

The Ecodesign Directive ([2]) contains an adequate legal framework to prohibit products covered by implementing measures to be placed on the EU market whenever the associated environmental impacts are found to be significant. Implementing measures may also include information requirements on the characteristics and performance of a product or with regard to its life expectancy.

The new Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) ([3]) is setting ambitious collection target and is mentioning that the WEEE collected should be treated in an environmentally sound way. In the case of shipments of used EEE suspected to be WEEE, the Regulation No 1013/2006 ([4]) and Regulation No 1418/2007 ([5]) are aplicable coherently with the requirements of WEEE Directive. Enforcing inspections at EU level is very important for combating illigal shipment of WEEE to developing countries.

Planned obsolescence clearly runs counter to the objectives set out by the Commission in its Europe 2020 strategy to achieve resource-efficient growth. An important element of resource efficiency is sustainable materials management. The Commission is currently considering implementation measures for the Roadmap to a resource efficient Europe ([6]) and, in this context, will examine the issue of longevity of products, which needs to be addressed from a life cycle perspective.

([1]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([2]) Directive 2009/125/EC, OJ L 285, 31.10.2009.
([3]) Directive 2012/19/EU; OJ L 197/38, 24.7.2012.
([4]) OJ L 342, 22.12.2009.
([5]) OJ L 316, 4.12.2007.
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0571:FIN:EN:PDF

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005354/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: 473 millones para autopistas en crisis, riesgo de ayuda estatal y distorsión de la competencia

El Ministerio de Fomento está ultimando la creación de una empresa pública a la que se traspasarían las concesionarias de peaje privadas en pérdidas, como las radiales de Madrid. El traspaso tendrá un descuento del 50 % sobre lo que han invertido los promotores de estas infraestructuras, según han señalado fuentes financieras conocedoras del proyecto que estudia el Gobierno, y que supone la creación del equivalente al «banco malo», pero para las autopistas ([1]). Dicha sociedad pública se constituirá para rescatar a una decena de autopistas de peaje en riesgo de quiebra y las ayudas se han concedido en forma de préstamos participativos, que suman un total de 473 millones de euros. El Ministerio de Fomento convertirá así estos préstamos en acciones de la nueva Empresa Nacional de Autopistas, con lo que pasará a controlar el 80 % de su capital social, según fuentes del sector. El 20 % restante de la empresa es el porcentaje de su capital que dicho Ministerio repartirá entre las constructoras y concesionarias que actualmente gestionan las autopistas a cambio de que traspasen sus activos a la nueva sociedad.

Este porcentaje reservado a las empresas tiene un valor de 121,71 millones de euros, dado que la sociedad de autopistas se valorará en 608 millones, según las estimaciones que un experto independiente (Ernst & Young) ha realizado para el departamento que dirige Ana Pastor. El Ministerio de Fomento ha planteado al sector constituir esta sociedad pública de autopistas como alternativa a la quiebra ([2]) ([3]). El fiasco de las radiales de Madrid, que es un peligro para todo el modelo concesional español, no es el único caso. Aunque, en general, se habla de las radiales de Madrid —como la R-3, la R-4 y la R-5, que son el grueso del problema—, la nueva empresa pública incluirá otras vías de pago, como la circunvalación de Alicante, o los tramos de Alicante a Cartagena o de Cartagena a Vera. En total, casi una decena de concesionarias que acumulan una deuda total de 3 900 millones de euros, sobre la que la banca acreedora aceptaría una quita.

¿Considera la Comisión que estas ayudas estatales distorsionan la competencia favoreciendo a determinadas empresas?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión toma nota de la información y los comunicados de prensa puestos en conocimiento suyo por Su Señoría. En esta fase, la Comisión no dispone de información suficiente sobre la «Empresa Nacional de Autopistas» contemplada por las autoridades españolas. La Comisión procederá a solicitar inmediatamente información y aclaraciones a las autoridades españolas.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/economia/2013/04/08/fomento-propone-quitas-del-50-para-traspasar-las-radiales-al-banco-malo-de-las-autopistas--118401/
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20121015/54353079886/autopistas-radiales-madrid-solicitan-finalmente-concurso-acreedores.html
([3]) http://www.labolsa.com/noticias/20130512131309001/fomento-capitalizara-en-la-sociedad-de-rescate-de-autopistas-las-ayudas-de-473-millones-dadas-al-sector/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005354/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: EUR 473 million for motorways in crisis, risk of state aid and distortion of competition

The Spanish Ministry of Development is finalising the creation of a public company to which loss-making private toll facility concessionaires, such as the radial motorways around Madrid, would be transferred. According to financial sources familiar with the plan which the government is studying, the transfer will be subject to a discount of 50% of the amount the developers of these facilities invested, which means creating the equivalent of a 'bad bank', but for motorways ([1]). This public company will be set up to rescue a dozen toll motorways at risk of bankruptcy and aid has been granted in the form of shareholder loans totalling EUR 473 million. The Ministry of Development will convert these loans into shares in the new National Motorway Company, thereby gaining control of 80% of its share capital, according to industry sources. The remaining 20% of the company is the percentage of its capital that the Ministry will distribute among the developers and operators who currently manage the motorways in exchange for transferring their assets to the new company.

This percentage reserved for the companies is worth EUR 121.71 million, given that the motorway company will be worth EUR 608 million, according to estimates made by an independent expert (Ernst & Young) for the department led by Ana Pastor. The Ministry of Development has proposed that the sector set up this public motorway company as an alternative to bankruptcy ([2]) ([3]). The Madrid motorways fiasco, which is a danger for Spain's whole franchising model, is not the only case. Although, in general, it concerns the radial motorways around Madrid — such as the R-3, R-4 and R-5, which are the bulk of the problem — the new public company will include other toll roads, such as the Alicante bypass and the sections of road from Alicante to Cartagena and from Cartagena to Vera. Altogether, it covers almost a dozen toll facilities with a total debt of EUR 3.9 billion, for which the creditor bank would accept a debt reduction.

Does the Commission consider that this state aid distorts competition by favouring certain companies?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission takes note of the information and press releases brought to its attention by the Honourable Member. At this stage, the Commission does not possess enough information about the 'National Motorway Company' contemplated by the Spanish authorities. The Commission will immediately request information and clarification from the Spanish authorities.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/economia/2013/04/08/fomento-propone-quitas-del-50-para-traspasar-las-radiales-al-banco-malo-de-las-autopistas--118401/
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20121015/54353079886/autopistas-radiales-madrid-solicitan-finalmente-concurso-acreedores.html
([3]) http://www.labolsa.com/noticias/20130512131309001/fomento-capitalizara-en-la-sociedad-de-rescate-de-autopistas-las-ayudas-de-473-millones-dadas-al-sector/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005355/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Dois anos de aplicação do programa UE-FMI em Portugal

Dois anos de aplicação do programa UE-FMI resultaram, em Portugal, numa recessão acumulada de 5,5 % do PIB, num aumento em mais de 430 mil do número de desempregados, que já ultrapassa 1 milhão e 400 mil, numa redução média dos salários reais de 9,2 % e numa quebra no consumo das famílias de 10 %. Este programa revelou-se, assim, um autêntico pacto de agressão ao país e ao seu povo.

Ou seja, o país não apenas empobreceu, criando menos riqueza (quando criar mais riqueza era imprescindível para resolver os desequilíbrios e défices externos), como a riqueza criada passou a ser distribuída de uma forma ainda mais injusta do que até há dois anos (quando Portugal já era um dos países mais desiguais da UE). Assim o demonstra a redução dos salários e do consumo das famílias, bastante superior, em termos percentuais, à redução do PIB. Tal confirma, além do mais, que tudo quanto está inscrito nos tratados da UE sobre a tão propalada «coesão económica e social» de nada vale, já que o caminho percorrido é de sentido contrário.

Em face do exposto, e tendo em conta as responsabilidades da Comissão Europeia no programa UE-FMI atualmente em curso, solicitamos que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem a Comissão alguma intenção de, com base numa avaliação séria dos números acima mencionados e tendo em conta as disposições que ainda constam dos tratados sobre «coesão económica e social», alterar as políticas que tem vindo a prosseguir e a impor a países como Portugal?

2. Que medidas propõe para contribuir para criar mais riqueza e distribuir de uma forma socialmente justa a riqueza criada?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(6 de agosto de 2013)

Um dos principais objetivos do programa de ajustamento económico para Portugal é garantir que Portugal recupere a capacidade de satisfazer as suas necessidades financeiras a longo prazo a partir dos seus recursos próprios. Dois anos de boa execução do programa fizeram muito para atingir este objetivo, tendo as taxas de juro das obrigações do Tesouro diminuído para apenas 5 %, um nível inferior ao registado no início de 2011.

Infelizmente, o ressurgir da crise política em Portugal inverteu temporariamente este processo e as taxas de juro das obrigações do Tesouro ultrapassaram de novo o limiar de sustentabilidade, embora nos últimos dias tenha sido visível uma estabilização. Isto demonstra a importância de executar o programa de forma determinada, por forma a restaurar a confiança na economia portuguesa.

A Comissão está consciente do impacto social do programa na população portuguesa. Por esta razão, a Comissão tem promovido sistematicamente a conceção de medidas para limitar os seus efeitos sobre os grupos mais vulneráveis da população.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005355/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Two years of the EU-IMF programme in Portugal

Two years of the EU-IMF programme in Portugal have resulted in a cumulative decline in GDP of 5.5%, a rise of over 430 000 in the number of unemployed, which now exceeds 1.4 million, a 9.2% drop in average salaries in real terms and a 10% drop in household consumption. This programme has therefore turned out to be a genuine pact of aggression against the country and its people.

The country has not only become a poorer one that is creating less wealth (when creating more wealth was essential to resolving external imbalances and deficits) but also one in which the wealth created is distributed even more unfairly than it was two years ago (when Portugal was already one of the most unequal countries in the EU). This is shown by the fact that the drop in salaries and household consumption is substantially greater in percentage terms than the drop in GDP. Above all, this confirms that everything set down in the EU Treaties about 'economic and social cohesion' is worthless since the programme is taking us in the opposite direction.

1. In view of the above figures, the Commission's responsibilities set down in the EU-IMF programme currently underway, and the treaty dispositions on 'economic and social cohesion', does the Commission have any intention of changing the policies that it has been pursuing and imposing on countries such as Portugal?

2. What steps will it take to create more wealth and to distribute it in a way that is socially just?

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

One of the main goals of the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal is to ensure that Portugal regains the capacity to meet its long-term financing needs out of its own resources. Two years of good programme implementation went a long way towards achieving this goal, with bond yields falling back to as low as 5%, which is below the level recorded at the beginning of 2011.

Unfortunately, the outbreak of the political crisis in Portugal has temporarily reversed this process and bond yields went back again beyond the sustainability threshold, though a stabilisation has been visible over the last days. This demonstrates the importance of a determined programme implementation as the way to restore the confidence in the Portuguese economy.

The Comission is aware of the social impact the programme has on the Portuguese population. For this reason, it has consistently advocated the design of measures to limit the effect on the most vulnerable groups of the population.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005356/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Previsões da primavera da Comissão Europeia

Nas suas previsões da primavera, a Comissão avançou com a revisão das previsões de fevereiro relativas a Portugal, agravando todos os indicadores económicos.

A previsão aponta para uma contração da economia de 2,3 % (contra 1,9 % em fevereiro), para a subida do desemprego acima de 18,2 % (face aos 17,3 % em fevereiro) e para um défice de 5,5 % (4,9 % segundo a previsão de fevereiro).

Mas mesmo estas previsões poderão ser consideradas irrealistas, tendo em conta o impacto negativo profundo que os novos cortes orçamentais, entretanto anunciados pelo Governo e acordados com a UE, a serem consumados, terão na economia.

O ambiente internacional também não é favorável, uma vez que a zona euro conhecerá uma contração de 0,4 %, enquanto o desemprego ultrapassará os 12 %.

Em face do exposto, e tendo em conta as responsabilidades da Comissão no programa UE-FMI atualmente em curso, solicitamos que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

Que medidas pensa tomar para evitar a consumação das negras previsões agora avançadas ou mesmo a sua revisão para pior a breve trecho?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(17 de julho de 2013)

A data de fecho da informação incluída nas previsões de inverno da Comissão de 2013 deu-se um dia após a publicação das estimativas provisórias do PIB para o quarto trimestre de 2012 e apenas dois dias depois da publicação das estatísticas sobre o emprego para o referido trimestre. Ambas as estatísticas revelaram uma contração inesperadamente elevada que levou a uma revisão em baixa das perspetivas económicas que já constavam das previsões de inverno publicadas. Contudo, aquando da publicação das previsões, ainda não estavam disponíveis informações sobre a composição do PIB para o quarto trimestre de 2012 e, por conseguinte, foi difícil avaliar os fatores e, consequentemente, a persistência destes desenvolvimentos no momento da publicação das previsões de inverno.

Após a publicação das previsões de inverno, passou-se a dispor de nova informação relativamente à composição do crescimento; isto, juntamente com os indicadores indiretos entretanto publicados, bem como a deterioração da procura externa, justificaram a nova revisão em baixa das perspetivas de crescimento para as previsões da primavera de 2013.

É de assinalar que a Comissão avalia regularmente a sua capacidade de apresentar previsões. A mais recente avaliação, realizada no ano passado ([1]), concluiu que as previsões da Comissão são razoavelmente precisas. O historial da Comissão é considerado bom, tanto medido por indicadores estatísticos como em comparação com outras instituições internacionais e as previsões consensuais. Os resultados são semelhantes para as previsões específicas feitas em relação a Portugal.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/economic_paper/2012/pdf/ecp476_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005356/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: The Commission's spring forecast

In the Commission's spring forecast, all of the economic indicators in its February forecast for Portugal have been revised downwards.

The forecast predicts a contraction in the economy of 2.3% (compared with 1.9% in February), a rise in unemployment to over 18.2% (compared with 17.3% in February) and a deficit of 5.5% (compared with 4.9% in February).

However, even these predictions may be considered unrealistic in the light of the profoundly negative impact that the new budget cuts, announced by the Government and agreed with the EU, will have on the economy.

The international outlook is also unfavourable since the euro area will contract by 0.4% while unemployment is set to rise above 12%.

In view of the above and of the Commission's responsibilities set down in the EU-IMF programme currently underway, could the Commission state what steps it will take to prevent these forecasts from either taking place or being further downgraded in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

The cut-off date for information to be included in the Commission's Winter 2013 forecast fell on the day after the publication of the GDP flash estimates for 2012Q4 and just a couple of days after the publication of employment statistics for the same quarter. Both these statistics showed an unexpectedly large contraction, which led to a downward revision of the economic outlook already in the Winter forecast publication. However, at the time of the forecast, no information was yet available on the composition of the 2012Q4 GDP and therefore it was difficult to assess the drivers and hence the persistence of these developments at the time of the Winter forecast.

After the publication of the Winter forecast, new information became available regarding the growth composition; this, together with newly published soft indicators as well as the worsening of the external demand motivated a further downward revision of the outlook in the Spring 2013 forecast.

It should be pointed out that the Commission is regularly assessing their forecasting performance. The most recent assessment carried out last year ([1]) reports that the Commission's forecasts are reasonably accurate. The Commission's track record is found to be good both measured by statistical indicators as well as in comparison with other international institutions and the consensus forecast. Similar results hold true for the specific forecasts made for Portugal.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/economic_paper/2012/pdf/ecp476_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005357/13
ao Conselho
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Processo de paz na Colômbia e posição da UE

A União Europeia tem afirmado, nomeadamente através de comunicações feitas pela Alta-Representante para os Negócios Estrangeiros e a Política de Segurança, dar todo o seu apoio às negociações de paz em curso entre o Governo colombiano e as Forças Armadas Revolucionárias da Colômbia — Exército do Povo (FARC-EP), as quais têm como objetivo acabar com um conflito que dura há mais de cinco décadas, causando um imenso sofrimento aos colombianos.

No final de um novo ciclo das conversações de paz, ambas as partes declaram-se otimistas quanto a um acordo sobre a questão agrária. As FARC-EP e representantes do governo manifestaram satisfação com o curso do processo e confiança quanto à possibilidade de se alcançar um entendimento em matérias como a reforma e a democratização da terra, o desenvolvimento social e o estímulo à produção agropecuária e à economia solidária e cooperativa, segundo o comunicado conjunto emitido a semana passada.

Uma sondagem recentemente efetuada indica que cerca de dois terços dos colombianos defendem que o diálogo entre as FARC-EP e o governo deve prolongar-se até que seja alcançado o fim do conflito armado.

Notícias vindas a público dão também conta do possível início, ainda este mês, de conversações entre o Governo colombiano e o Exército de Libertação Nacional (ELN).

Assim, perguntamos ao Conselho:

1. Considera a possibilidade de anular a posição assimétrica da UE relativamente ao conflito na Colômbia, retirando os grupos insurgentes (FARC-EP e ELN) da lista de «grupos terroristas» da UE?

2. Não considera que a retirada das FARC-EP e do ELN da lista de «grupos terroristas» da UE se revestiria de uma grande importância para apoiar um sério, franco e amplo processo de paz e para que o mesmo seja estável e duradouro — condição imprescindível para a justiça social na Colômbia?

Resposta
(11 de setembro de 2013)

O Conselho tem manifestado continuamente o seu apoio ao Governo Colombiano na busca por uma solução negociada para o conflito armado interno, e como tal congratula-se com o início de conversações de paz com as FARC. No entanto, apesar das conversações, as FARC continuam a realizar atos terroristas tal como definidos no artigo 1.°, n.° 3, da Posição Comum 2001/931/PESC de 27 de dezembro de 2001 ([1]). O mesmo sucede no caso do ELN. Por conseguinte, e por enquanto, ainda não se encontram reunidas as condições para suprimir as FARC e do ELN da lista de organizações terroristas estabelecida pela UE.

([1]) JO L 344 de 28.12.2001, p. 93.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005357/13
to the Council
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: The peace process in Colombia and the EU's position on it

The EU has stated through the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy that it fully supports the peace negotiations underway between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army (FARC-EP). The aim of these negotiations is to end a conflict that has lasted for over fifty years, causing immense suffering to the Colombian people.

At the end of a new round of peace talks, both parties said that they were optimistic about reaching an agreement over the agrarian issue. According to a joint statement issued last week, FARC-EP and Government representatives said that they were satisfied with the progress made and confident that an understanding could be reached over issues such as land reform and democratisation, social development, and stimulating agriculture and a cooperative, solidarity-based economy.

A recent survey indicated that around two thirds of Colombians believe that the dialogue between FARC-EP and the Government should continue until the armed conflict is brought to an end.

News reports have also indicated that talks between the Colombian Government and the National Liberation Army (ELN) might begin this month.

1. Will the Council reverse the EU's asymmetrical position on the conflict in Colombia by removing the insurgent groups (FARC-EP and ELN) from the list of 'terrorist groups'?

2. Given that social justice in Colombia depends on the success of the peace process, does the Council not consider that removing FARC-EP and the ELN from the EU's list of 'terrorist groups' would be an important step in supporting a serious, frank and wide-ranging peace process that will be stable and long-lasting?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

The Council has consistently expressed its support for the Colombian Government in its search for a negotiated solution to the internal armed conflict, and thus welcomes the start of peace talks with the FARC. However, despite the talks, the FARC continue to carry out terrorist acts as defined in Article 1(3) of Council Common Position 2001/931/CFSP of 27 December 2001 ([1]). The same is true in the case of the ELN. Therefore, for the time being, the conditions for removing the FARC and the ELN from the EU list of terrorist organisations are not in place.

([1]) OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p. 93.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005358/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios ao teatro — Bairros da Bela Vista (Setúbal)

Numa reunião recente com o Teatro do Elefante, tomei conhecimento dos projetos que este grupo de teatro tem para intervenção junto dos moradores dos bairros da Bela Vista, em Setúbal.

Os objetivos passam pela promoção da criação e fruição culturais junto dos moradores dos bairros, mas também pela aposta no teatro como via profissionalizante para muitos dos jovens que ali vivem.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que programas da UE na área da cultura podem apoiar o desenvolvimento de projetos de teatro na área da lusofonia, que estimulem a participação de agentes culturais de diversos países lusófonos?

2. Que programas e medidas podem apoiar a construção de um teatro na zona da Bela Vista, que sirva a população dos seus bairros?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(26 de junho de 2013)

O Programa Cultura (2007-2013) apoia projetos de cooperação e atividades no setor da cultura, incluindo projetos no domínio do teatro, que promovem a mobilidade transnacional de pessoas, incentivam a circulação transnacional de obras artísticas e culturais e aumentam o diálogo intercultural. Para que os projetos possam ser elegíveis, devem incluir no programa organizações de, pelo menos, três países participantes. Os projetos também podem envolver países terceiros selecionados.

O atual Programa «Cultura» chega ao seu termo em 2013. A Comissão propõe a sua substituição a partir de 2014, por um novo programa denominado «Europa Criativa». Para mais informações, consultar:
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm.

Como tal, através do seu Programa «Cultura» e do futuro programa «Europa Criativa», a Comissão não pode apoiar a construção de um teatro.

No que diz respeito ao FEDER, a construção de um teatro no bairro da Bela Vista poderia potencialmente ser financiada ao abrigo do eixo prioritário n.° 3, «coesão social», do Programa Operacional Regional de Lisboa, desde que a autoridade de gestão abra um novo convite à apresentação de propostas para apoio a este tipo de projetos.

Os fundos estruturais são geridos de acordo com o princípio da gestão partilhada pelas autoridades nacionais e regionais designadas pelos Estados-Membros. Por conseguinte, para mais informações, a Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte as autoridades de gestão do PO regional de Lisboa para o FEDER:

PO Regional de Lisboa
Rua de Artilharia Um, n.° 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Telefone: + 351 213 837 100
Fax: + 351 213 847 985
Endereço eletrónico: presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
Sítio Internet: http://www.ccdr-lvt.pt/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005358/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Supporting the theatre — Bela Vista neighbourhoods (Setúbal)

At a recent meeting with the Teatro do Elefante theatre company, I learned about their plans to work with residents of the neighbourhoods of Bela Vista in Setúbal.

The company's aims include promoting cultural creativity and appreciation among the neighbourhoods' residents, and establishing theatre as a vocation for many of the young people that live there.

1. What EU cultural programmes could support theatre projects in the Portuguese-speaking world that would attract the participation of cultural operators from the various Portuguese-speaking countries?

2. What programmes and measures could support the construction of a theatre in Bela Vista for the local population?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

The Culture Programme 2007-2013 supports cooperation projects and activities in the field of culture, including projects in the field of theatre, which promote the transnational mobility of people, encourage the transnational circulation of artistic and cultural works, and enhance intercultural dialogue. In order for projects to be eligible, they must include organisations from at least three countries participating in the programme. Projects can also involve selected third countries.

The current Culture programme comes to an end in 2013. The Commission proposes to replace it as of 2014 with a new programme called Creative Europe. For more information please refer to:
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm.

Through its current Culture programme and the future Creative Europe programme, the Commission cannot support the construction of a theatre as such.

As regards ERDF, the construction of a theatre in Bela Vista neighbourhood could potentially be financed under priority axis 3 'Social Cohesion' of the Lisbon Regional Operational Programme, provided that the Managing Authority opens any new call for proposals for these type of projects to be supported.

The Structural Funds are managed under the principle of shared management by national and regional authorities designated by the Member States. The Commission therefore suggests the Honourable Member contacts the managing authorities of the ERDF regional OP Lisbon for further information:

PO Regional Lisboa
Rua Artilharia Um, 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Tel. +351 213 837 100
Fax +351 213 847 985
E-mail: presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
Website: http://www.ccdr-lvt.pt/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005359/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios comunitários para intervenção nos bairros da Bela Vista (Setúbal)

Numa reunião recente com diversas entidades com intervenção nos bairros da Bela Vista, em Setúbal, fui alertado para vários dos problemas que enfrentam as comunidades locais e cuja resolução carece de um conjunto de intervenções dos poderes públicos.

A profunda crise económica e social vivida em Portugal, com níveis inauditos de desemprego, situação agravada pela aplicação do programa UE-FMI, afeta sobremaneira a situação dos moradores dos bairros e torna mais importante a ação de um conjunto de associações que, ao longo do tempo, têm desenvolvido uma destacada intervenção social e cultural junto da população dos bairros.

Entre as diversas questões abordadas durante esta reunião contam-se, entre outras: as dificuldades de acesso a fundos comunitários, devido à elevada burocracia e aos custos inerentes aos processos de candidatura (que excluem do acesso a fundos comunitários mais de 90 % dos atores ativos nos bairros); a necessidade de criação de centros de ocupação de tempos livres, destinados aos jovens dos bairros; a necessidade de criação de oportunidades de emprego para os moradores dos bairros, em especial os mais jovens, que passem por programas de formação profissional.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que medidas estão previstas para facilitar e desburocratizar a candidatura a fundos da UE, nomeadamente por parte de pequenas associações, com parcos meios logísticos e financeiros, como as que têm vindo a intervir nos bairros da Bela Vista?

2. Que programas e medidas poderão apoiar a criação e funcionamento de centros de ocupação de tempos livres, destinados aos jovens destes bairros?

3. Que programas e medidas poderão apoiar a criação de oportunidades de emprego para os moradores do bairro, em especial os mais jovens, nomeadamente através da criação e do funcionamento de programas de formação profissional (possivelmente em articulação com empresas locais)?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(8 de julho de 2013)

1. Os bairros da Bela Vista, em Setúbal, beneficiam de apoio do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) ao abrigo do Programa Operacional Regional de Lisboa. Tendo em conta o elevado nível de financiamento já atribuído pelo programa, não é provável que se venham a realizar mais convites à apresentação de propostas no período em curso. As medidas de simplificação aplicadas em 2013 centraram-se na execução e conclusão de projetos, a fim de acelerar o tratamento dos pedidos de pagamento.

2. No âmbito da prioridade «Coesão Social» do programa, foram aprovados e apoiados projetos diretamente relacionados com a criação e o funcionamento de espaços para jovens destes bairros.

3. As atividades que visam a promoção da inclusão social, nomeadamente, medidas de prevenção do abandono escolar, apoio psicopedagógico e educação não formal, podem ser apoiadas através do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE), ao abrigo do programa «Potencial Humano».

No período em curso, foram financiadas pela política de coesão medidas destinadas a aumentar o emprego dos jovens, as oportunidades de empreendedorismo e o acesso das PME ao financiamento. No contexto da iniciativa «Oportunidades para a Juventude», Portugal desenvolveu um programa estratégico denominado «*Impulso Jovem*» para promover a empregabilidade dos jovens, programa este que é igualmente cofinanciado pela política de coesão.

No âmbito do FEDER, não são financiadas medidas de apoio à criação e ao funcionamento de programas de formação profissional.

Tendo em conta o princípio da gestão partilhada aplicado à execução da política de coesão, a Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão do programa:

PO Regional de Lisboa
Rua de Artilharia Um, n.° 33
PT-1269-145 Lisboa
Telefone: + 351 213 837 100
Fax: + 351 213 847 985
presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
www.ccdr-lvt.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005359/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: EU funding for projects in the Bela Vista district of Setúbal

I met recently with several bodies working in the Bela Vista district of Setúbal and my attention was drawn to several problems faced by the communities there, which will only be solved with the involvement of the public authorities.

People living in this district are particularly affected by the profound economic and social crisis Portugal is experiencing, exacerbated by the imposition of the EU/IMF programme, with unprecedented levels of unemployment, which makes the noteworthy social and cultural projects a group of associations have been implementing for some time even more important.

Various problems were raised in this meeting, including: the difficulty of accessing EU funds due to the bureaucracy involved and the costs inherent to the application process (which prevent more than 90% of the bodies working in the district from accessing EU funds); the need to create spaces for the district's young people to use in their free time; and the need to create employment opportunities for those living in the district, especially young people, who participate in vocational training programmes.

1. Given the above, what measures are planned to reduce the bureaucracy involved in applying for EU funds so as to make the process easier, particularly for small associations with limited logistical and financial resources, such as those working in the Bela Vista district?

2. What programmes and measures could support the creation and running of spaces for young people in the district to use in their free time?

3. What programmes and measures could support the creation of employment opportunities for those living in the district, especially young people, in particular through the creation and running of vocational training programmes (possibly in cooperation with local businesses)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

1. The Bela Vista district of Setúbal benefits from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) support under the Lisbon ERDF programme. Due to the high level funds already allocated by the programme, there will most likely be no more calls for proposals in the current period. The simplification measures implemented in 2013 focused on the implementation and closure of projects in order to speed up the handling of payment requests.

2. Under the 'Social Cohesion' priority of the programme, projects directly related to the creation and running of spaces for young people in these districts have been approved and supported.

3. Activities aiming to promote social inclusion, such as those preventing school leaving, psycho-pedagogical support and non-formal education can be supported thought the European Social Fund (ESF) under the Human Potential programme.

Measures to increase youth employment entrepreneurship opportunities and SME access to funds have been financed by cohesion policy in the current period. In the context of the Youth Opportunities Initiative, Portugal has developed a strategic programme to foster the employability of young people, called *Impulso Jovem*, which is also co-financed by cohesion policy.

ERDF does not finance measures for supporting the creation and running of vocational training programmes.

In the framework of the shared management principle used for the implementation of cohesion policy, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact the managing authority directly:

PO Regional Lisboa
Rua Artilharia Um, 33
1269-145 Lisboa
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Fax: + 351 213 847 985
presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
www.ccdr-lvt.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005360/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios da UE ao realojamento e à integração social (2014-2020)

Em Portugal, o Programa Especial de Realojamento (PER) foi criado em 1993 com o objetivo de realojar agregados familiares residentes em barracas ou habitações similares nas áreas metropolitanas de Lisboa e Porto.

No balanço destes 20 anos, é forçoso reconhecer, como o fez recentemente o presidente da Junta Metropolitana de Lisboa, que o PER ficou «muito aquém das metas» traçadas, sobretudo no domínio da «integração social».

Nestes 20 anos, foram realojados quase 35 mil agregados, no âmbito do programa que custou cerca três mil milhões de euros. Mas ainda há mais de três mil famílias por realojar, segundo o Instituto da Habitação e Reabilitação Urbana.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que meios financeiros do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020 se prevê que venham a estar disponíveis para apoiar a prossecução de projetos de realojamento, que confiram uma outra atenção à componente, fundamental, da «integração social», colmatando também as falhas do PER neste domínio?

2. Que meios financeiros do atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (2007-2013) estão ainda disponíveis para projetos neste domínio, incluindo na atualização dos censos da população afetada?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(11 de julho de 2013)

1. O novo quadro legislativo para o período de 2014-2020 permitirá a promoção de investimentos em eficiência energética e energias renováveis no setor da habitação, com apoio do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) e do Fundo de Coesão.

No contexto da promoção da inclusão social e da luta contra a pobreza, o FEDER pode apoiar a reabilitação física e económica das comunidades desfavorecidas nas zonas urbanas e rurais, incluindo a habitação social, se fizerem parte de planos integrados acompanhados, nomeadamente, de intervenções no domínio da educação, da saúde e do emprego.

A Comissão recorda que, em conformidade com a orientação do futuro quadro legislativo para a obtenção de resultados, uma operação é elegível para apoio se se inscrever no âmbito das atividades dos fundos e contribuir para um objetivo específico, conforme descrito nas prioridades de investimento.

2. No âmbito da prioridade 3 «Coesão Social» do programa de Lisboa de 2007-2013, poderiam ter sido apoiados projetos de realojamento e integração social. No entanto, tendo em conta o elevado nível de financiamento já atribuído a projetos, muito provavelmente já não haverá possibilidades para o período em curso.

No contexto do princípio da gestão partilhada utilizado para a aplicação da política de coesão, a Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão para obter mais informações:

PO Regional Lisboa
Rua Artilharia Um, 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Tel.: + 351 213 837 100
Fax: + 351 213 847 985
presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
www.ccdr-lvt.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005360/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: EU support for rehousing and social integration (2014-2020)

The Special Rehousing Project (SRP) was created in Portugal in 1993 with the goal of rehousing family groups living in shacks or similar accommodation in the Lisbon and Porto metropolitan areas.

As the chair of the Lisbon metropolitan council recently recognised in assessing 20 years of operation of the SRP, it has 'fallen far below its targets', particularly in the area of 'social integration'.

More than 35 000 family groups have been rehoused during the 20 years of the project at a cost of around EUR 3 billion. However, there are still more than 3 000 families to be rehoused, according to the Urban Rehabilitation and Housing Institute.

1. What funding will be available in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 to support rehousing projects, so as to help address this fundamental component of 'social integration' and bridge the gaps in the SRP in this area?

2. What funding is still available in the current Multiannual Financial Framework 2007-2013 for projects in this area, including for updating surveys of the affected population?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

1. The new legislative framework for the 2014-2020 period will allow the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy investments in the housing sector with European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund support.

In the context of promoting social inclusion and combating poverty, the ERDF may support the physical and economic regeneration of deprived communities in urban and rural areas, including social housing if part of integrated plans accompanied notably by interventions in education, health and employment.

The Commission recalls that, in line with the results orientation of the future legislative framework, an operation is eligible for support if it falls within the scope of the Funds' activities and contributes to a specific objective as detailed in the investment priorities.

2. Projects for rehousing and social integration could potentially have been supported under priority 3 'Social Cohesion' of the 2007-2013 Lisbon programme. However, due to the high level of funding already allocated to projects, there will most likely be no more possibilities in the current period.

In the framework of the shared management principle used for the implementation of cohesion policy, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact the managing authority directly for additional information:

PO Regional Lisboa
Rua Artilharia Um, 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Tel.: + 351 213 837 100
Fax: + 351 213 847 985
presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
www.ccdr-lvt.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005361/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Prevenção da prematuridade e melhorias na saúde e qualidade de vida dos bebés prematuros

A Associação Portuguesa de Apoio ao Bebé Prematuro (XXS) foi constituída, em 2008, por pais que viveram a experiência da prematuridade na primeira pessoa. Esta associação tem como missão ajudar os bebés prematuros e as suas famílias a ultrapassarem muitas das dificuldades com que se deparam. Calcula-se que, a nível europeu, um em cada dez bebés nasça prematuramente.

A XXS coopera com a Secção de Neonatologia da Sociedade Portuguesa de Pediatria e é membro da EFCNI — «European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants» —, que visa criar, a nível europeu, uma rede de sinergias entre a comunidade científica, os pais e os seus representantes, de modo a assegurar melhorias nos cuidados prestados aos bebés, apoio médico e psicológico junto dos pais e apoio à investigação relativa à prematuridade e às melhorias na saúde e qualidade de vida dos bebés prematuros.

A XXS empenhou-se, recentemente, numa campanha visando a conciliação da vida profissional e familiar.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que programas e ações existem ao nível da UE para apoiar a atividade de associações como a XXS, tendo em conta a importante função social que desempenham?

2. Que medidas podem apoiar a criação da rede de sinergias supramencionada?

3. Que apoios existem para a investigação biomédica na área da saúde neonatal e, mais especificamente, que financiamento tem sido dirigido à investigação relativa à prematuridade e às melhorias na saúde e qualidade de vida dos bebés prematuros? Que prioridades estão previstas neste domínio?

4. Tendo em conta as dificuldades crescentes na conciliação entre a vida profissional e familiar, tendo em conta o aumento da jornada e dos ritmos de trabalho, para o que tem contribuído, em países como Portugal, o programa UE-FMI, que medidas tem previstas para inverter esta situação?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(2 de julho de 2013)

O Programa de Saúde da UE cofinanciou projetos no domínio da saúde perinatal, tais como o projeto Euro-peristat ([1]), com o objetivo de monitorizar e avaliar a saúde materna e infantil, incluindo a dos bebés prematuros. O projeto desenvolveu uma lista de indicadores para a vigilância no âmbito da saúde perinatal.

De um modo mais geral, o Programa de Saúde pode prestar apoio a associações e redes através do financiamento de projetos com uma dimensão europeia e através de subvenções de funcionamento.

O 7.° Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico (7.° PQ) da UE financiou a investigação sobre a saúde perinatal. Por exemplo, o projeto «THE HIP TRIAL» ([2]) é um ensaio aleatório controlado para gerir a hipotensão nos recém-nascidos prematuros de idade gestacional extremamente baixa. O projeto «Preventrop» ([3]) visa ainda desenvolver uma intervenção preventiva inovadora para a retinopatia da prematuridade, uma doença que causa cegueira, e outras complicações do nascimento prematuro.

([1]) http://www.europeristat.com
([2]) THE HIP TRIAL — 260777 — «Management of Hypotension In the Preterm Extremely Low Gestational Age Newborn» (Gestão da hipotensão nos recém-nascidos prematuros de idade gestacional extremamente baixa), http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/96983_en.html
([3]) Preventrop — 305485 — «New approach to treatment of the blinding disease Retinopathy of Prematurity» (Nova abordagem ao tratamento da retinopatia da prematuridade, uma doença que causa cegueira), http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/105874_en.html

Foi igualmente concedido financiamento a ações como CHICOS ([4]), RICHE ([5]) e EPICE ([6]) para a definição de prioridades na investigação sobre a saúde das crianças. Os resultados de investigação destes projetos serão provavelmente tomados em consideração aquando da execução do programa Horizonte 2020, o próximo Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação da UE.

No que se refere à conciliação da vida profissional e familiar, o Senhor Deputado poderá consultar a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-001434/2013 ([7]). A Comissão adotou recentemente um relatório sobre os objetivos de Barcelona: o desenvolvimento de estruturas de acolhimento para crianças de tenra idade na Europa, com vista a um crescimento sustentável e inclusivo ([8]).

([4]) CHICOS — 241604 — «Developing a Child Cohort Research Strategy for Europe» (Desenvolvimento de uma Estratégia de Investigação de Coortes de Crianças para a Europa)
www.chicosproject.eu

([5]) RICHE — 242181 — Plataforma e inventário para a investigação sobre a saúde das crianças na Europa
www.childhealthresearch.eu

([6]) EPICE — 259882 — «Effective Perinatal Intensive Care in Europe» (Cuidados intensivos perinatais eficazes na Europa): Tradução do conhecimento em prática baseada em evidências
http://www.epiceproject.eu/

([7]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pt/parliamentary-questions.html

([8]) COM(2013) 322
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130531_barcelona_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005361/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Preventing premature births and improving the health and quality of life of preterm babies

The Portuguese Preterm Baby Association (XXS — Associação Portuguesa de Apoio ao Bebé Prematuro) was formed in 2008 by parents who have had direct experience of premature birth. This association aims to help preterm babies and their families to overcome the many difficulties they face. It is calculated that one in every ten babies born in the EU is premature.

XXS works with the Neonatology Department of the Portuguese Paediatric Society and is a member of the European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants (EFCNI), which aims to create a European network to build synergies between the scientific community and parents and their representatives, so as to improve the care of babies, the medical and psychological support for parents, and the support for research on premature birth and improving the health and quality of life of preterm babies.

XXS recently ran a campaign aimed at reconciling professional and family life.

1. What EU programmes and actions are there to support the activities of associations such as XXS, recognising the important social function they perform?

2. What measures are available to support the creation of the network to build synergies, as mentioned above?

3. What support is there for biomedical research into neonatal health and, more specifically, what funding has been directed towards research into premature birth and improving the health and quality of life of preterm babies? What are the priorities in this area?

4. Given that it is increasingly difficult to reconcile professional and family life, as the working day has grown and work has become more intense, in part because of the EU/IMF programme in countries such Portugal, what measures will the Commission take to reverse this situation?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

The EU Health Programme has co-financed projects in perinatal health, such as the Europeristat ([1]), which aimed to monitor and evaluate maternal and child health, including pre-term babies. The project has developed a list of indicators for perinatal health surveillance.

More generally, the Health Programme can provide support to associations and networks through the funding of as project with a European dimension and through operating grants.

The EU's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7), has funded research on perinatal health. For example the HIP TRIAL ([2]) project is a randomized controlled trial seeking to manage hypotension in the Preterm Extremely Low Gestational Age Newborn. The PREVENTROP ([3]) project further aims to develop a novel preventive intervention for the blinding disease retinopathy of prematurity and other complications of pre-term birth.

Funding has also been provided to actions such as CHICOS ([4]), RICHE ([5]), and EPICE ([6]) for defining child health research priorities. Research outcomes of these projects will likely be taken into consideration when implementing Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

([1]) http://www.europeristat.com
([2]) THE HIP TRIAL — 260777 — Management of Hypotension In the Preterm Extremely Low Gestational Age Newborn, http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/96983_en.html
([3]) PREVENTROP — 305485 — New approach to treatment of the blinding disease Retinopathy of Prematurity http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/105874_en.html
([4]) CHICOS — 241604 — Developing a Child Cohort Research Strategy for Europe, www.chicosproject.eu
([5]) RICHE — 242181 — A platform and inventory for child health research in Europe, www.childhealthresearch.eu
([6]) EPICE — 259882 — Effective Perinatal Intensive Care in Europe: Translating knowledge into evidence-based practice, http://www.epiceproject.eu/

As regards reconciling work with family life, the Honourable Member is invited to refer to the reply given to the Written Question E-001434/2013 ([7]). The Commission has recently adopted report on the Barcelona objectives: the development of childcare facilities for young children in Europe with a view to sustainable and inclusive growth ([8]).

([7]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([8]) COM(2013) 322, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130531_barcelona_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005362/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório da Agência Europeia do Ambiente — receitas com novas medidas no ambiente

Em declarações recentes à agência de notícias LUSA, um responsável da Agência Europeia do Ambiente (AEA), referindo-se a um relatório desta instituição, afirmou que Portugal pode conseguir receitas de cerca de três mil milhões de euros com novas medidas no ambiente, como a criação de novas taxas e o aumento das já existentes.

O mesmo responsável referiu-se ainda ao elevado número de «carros de empresa» em Portugal, afirmando que «Portugal tem altos subsídios para carros das empresas e aí há potencial para ir mais ao encontro do que se passa no resto da Europa».

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Quais as medidas propostas no relatório da AEA e que receita esperada se associa a cada uma delas?

2. Para que outros países da UE foram efetuados estudos semelhantes?

3. Que dados concretos estão na base das conclusões da AEA relativamente aos «subsídios para carros de empresa»?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(12 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão solicitou à Agência Europeia do Ambiente (AEA) que fornecesse elementos de resposta à questão colocada pelo Senhor Deputado. Assim que possível, a resposta da Agência será transmita pela Comissão ao Senhor Deputado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005362/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: European Environment Agency report: revenue from new environmental measures

A European Environment Agency (EEA) official recently referred to a report from the institution in stating to the Portuguese news agency, LUSA, that Portugal could generate revenue of around EUR 3 billion with new environmental measures, such as the creation of new taxes and increases to those already in existence.

The same official also commented on the high number of company cars in Portugal and said, 'Company cars in Portugal are heavily subsidised and there is potential to move towards the practices used elsewhere in the EU.'

1. What measures are proposed in the EEA report and how much revenue is each of them expected to generate?

2. Which other EU countries have been studied in this way?

3. On what data are the EEA's conclusions regarding 'subsidies for company cars' based?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(12 juillet 2013)

La Commission a demandé à l'Agence européenne pour l'environnement (AEE) de fournir les éléments de réponse à la question posée par l'Honorable Parlementaire. La réponse de l'Agence sera transmise par la Commission à l'Honorable Parlementaire dès que possible.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005363/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Flavescência dourada em Portugal

Em Portugal, o parasita da flavescência dourada tem vindo a afetar videiras em vários concelhos do Minho, havendo também já ocorrências registas em concelhos das regiões do Douro e da Bairrada. A evolução da doença denota um alastramento progressivo para Sul e para o interior do país.

O parasita é um fitoplasma de estrutura semelhante à de um vírus, que vive e se alimenta do floema da videira, levando à morte mais ou menos rápida da planta. É disseminado por um inseto, de origem americana mas já bastante comum na Europa, que se alimenta da seiva da videira, assim propagando o parasita.

Diversas cooperativas e organizações de agricultores da região têm vindo a manifestar a sua preocupação com a ausência de medidas práticas, no terreno, de controlo da doença, assim como com a ausência de ajudas para o combate sanitário.

A existência de um Plano de Ação Nacional para o Controlo da Flavescência Dourada da Videira não tem tradução em intervenções práticas, no terreno, alegadamente por falta de verbas.

Entretanto, vários são os fatores de risco, como o elevado número de vinhas abandonadas, o que faz temer graves prejuízos para a viticultura portuguesa.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que programas e medidas podem ser mobilizados ao nível da UE, com caráter de urgência, para apoiar o combate contra a flavescência dourada em Portugal?

2. Que medidas de apoio, de caráter excecional, podem ser mobilizadas para acorrer aos prejuízos até agora causados pela flavescência dourada e restabelecer o potencial produtivo das vinhas afetadas?

3. Tem conhecimento sobre a dispersão do parasita causador da doença? Que outros países foram, até à data, infetados?

4. Que medidas de controlo e de investigação estão a ser tomadas ao nível da UE?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(1 de julho de 2013)

1. Ao abrigo do regime fitossanitário da UE ([1]), os Estados-Membros podem beneficiar, a seu pedido e em condições rigorosas, de contribuições financeiras em matéria de «luta fitossanitária» para cobrir as despesas diretamente relacionadas com medidas de erradicação ou de contenção necessárias para lutar contra esse organismo prejudicial.

2. Não existem, mo âmbito da Política Agrícola Comum, medidas rapidamente mobilizáveis para reconstituir o potencial produtivo afetado por essa doença. Contudo, através do primeiro pilar da PAC, os programas de ajuda no setor vitivinícola podem incluir uma medida de seguro de colheita que salvaguarde os rendimentos produtivos afetados por acontecimentos adversos, tais como doenças ou infestações por parasitas. Além disso, esses programas de ajuda podem ter por objetivo a reestruturação e a reconversão das vinhas, a fim de aumentar a sua competitividade.

3. O fitoplasma Grapevine flavescence dorée MLO, responsável pela doença vulgarmente designada por flavescência dourada da videira, é um organismo prejudicial objeto de regulamentação na UE. É conhecida a sua ocorrência na Áustria, França, Itália, Eslovénia e Espanha, sendo aplicáveis requisitos especiais para a circulação de plantas, a fim de impedir a continuação da sua propagação. Por outro lado, a República Checa e partes de França e de Itália são reconhecidas como zonas protegidas.

([1]) Instituído pela Diretiva 2000/29/CE do Conselho, JO L n.° 169 de 10.7.200, p. 1.

4. Os focos devem ser imediatamente notificados à Comissão, sendo necessário tomar medidas com vista à sua erradicação ou a impedir a sua propagação. A Comissão não recebeu quaisquer notificações de ocorrência de focos em Portugal, nem informações quanto à presença do referido organismo nesse país.

A investigação em matéria de deteção rápida deste organismo e de procura de soluções práticas para a sua contenção é financiada ao abrigo do 7.° Programa-Quadro. Em especial, um dos resultados do projeto Vitisens será um dispositivo portátil de deteção rápida do organismo. Por outro lado, está a ser desenvolvida, no âmbito do projeto PURE, uma tecnologia inovadora destinada a interromper o acasalamento do seu vetor principal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005363/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2013)

Subject: Golden flavescence in Portugal

The parasite golden flavescence has affected vineyards in several parishes in Minho, Portugal, with cases also being recorded in parishes in the Douro and Bairrada regions. The evidence shows that the disease is spreading to the south and the interior of the country.

The parasite is a phytoplasma, with a structure similar to a virus, which lives and feeds on the phloem of the vine, leading sooner or later to the death of the plant. It is passed by an insect of American origin, already very common in Europe, which feeds on the sap of the vine, thereby spreading the parasite.

Various agricultural cooperatives and organisations in the region have voiced their concerns about the lack of practical measures for controlling the disease and the absence of support for sanitary countermeasures.

While a national action plan for controlling vine golden flavescence does exist, this has not translated into practical interventions in the region, allegedly due to lack of funding.

However, various risk factors, such as the high number of abandoned vineyards, raise fears that Portuguese viticulture will suffer serious losses.

1. What EU programmes and measures can be mobilised quickly to support the fight against golden flavescence in Portugal?

2. What exceptional support measures can be mobilised to tackle the damage caused by golden flavescence so far, and to recover the productive potential of the affected vineyards?

3. Does the Commission have any information about the spread of the parasite that causes the disease? What other countries have been affected to date?

4. What control and research measures are being implemented at EU level?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

1. Under the EU plant-health regime ([1]), Member States may receive, at their request and under strict conditions, a 'plant health control' financial contribution to cover expenditure relating directly to the eradication or containment measures of that harmful organism.

2. The Common Agricultural Policy does not provide for measures which can be taken at short notice to regenerate the production potential lost due to this disease. However, the first pillar of the CAP allows for winegrowing support programmes to include a harvest insurance measure which safeguards the production revenue affected by adverse events such as diseases or pest infestations. Furthermore, these support programmes aim to restructure and redevelop vineyards in order to improve their competitiveness.

3. Grapevine golden flavescence, a mycoplasma-like organism, is a regulated harmful organism in the EU. It is known to occur in Austria, France, Italy, Slovenia and Spain, and there are special requirements for the movement of plants, to prevent its further spread. In addition, the Czech Republic and parts of France and Italy are recognised as protected zones.

4. Outbreaks need to be immediately notified to the Commission and measures to eradicate it or inhibit its spread need to be taken. The Commission has no notification of outbreaks in Portugal, nor any information on the presence of this organism there.

([1]) Established by Council Directive 2000/29/EC, OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p. 1.

Research is funded under the 7th Framework Programme on fast detection of this organism and practical solutions for its containment. In particular, a hand-held device for its rapid detection will be an output of the VITISENS project. Under the PURE project, a novel technology for mating disruption of its main vector is under development.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-005365/13
do Komisji
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(15 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Program dystrybucji żywności wśród osób najbardziej potrzebujących w Unii (PEAD) w 2014 r.

Jednym z pięciu celów strategii Europa 2020 jest ograniczanie ubóstwa i wykluczenia społecznego w Unii Europejskiej. Środki w dziedzinie pomocy żywnościowej są jednym z elementów polityki zwalczania ubóstwa, którym zagrożone jest już 116 mln Europejczyków! Dotychczas głównym unijnym narzędziem pomocy najuboższym był ustanowiony w 1987 r. w ramach Wspólnej Polityki Rolnej program dystrybucji żywności wśród osób najbardziej potrzebujących we Wspólnocie (PEAD). W ostatnich latach za pomocą ponad 240 banków żywności i organizacji charytatywnych z tego programu korzystało ok. 18 milionów Europejczyków w 20 państwach członkowskich.

W dniu 15 lutego 2012 r. Parlament Europejski, na podstawie mojego sprawozdania, zdecydował o kontynuacji zagrożonego wyrokiem Trybunału Sprawiedliwości UE programu PEAD w latach 2012-2013, czyli do końca obecnej perspektywy finansowej, z budżetem 500 mln EUR rocznie.

Następnie w dniu 24 października 2012 r. Komisja Europejska przedstawiła założenia nowego Europejskiego Funduszu Pomocy Najbardziej Potrzebującym dysponującego 2,5 mld EUR w okresie 7 lat kolejnej perspektywy finansowej (2014-2020). Nowy fundusz ma być finansowany z funduszy strukturalnych alokowanych do Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego.

Propozycję Komisji zaaprobowała Rada Europejska na szczycie budżetowym w dniach 7-8 lutego 2013 r. Jednakże w związku z ciągłym brakiem zgody ze strony Parlamentu Europejskiego na budżet wieloletni przyjęty przez Radę Europejską na szczycie lutowym, istnieje poważne ryzyko, że Europejski Fundusz Pomocy Najbardziej Potrzebującym nie będzie mógł zostać uruchomiony z dniem 1 stycznia 2014 r. Równocześnie Komisja przedstawiając projekty regulacji przejściowych dla Wspólnej Polityki Rolnej na rok 2014 nie przewidziała możliwości kontynuacji programu PEAD według dotychczasowych zasad.

Brak ciągłości realizacji programu PEAD może skutkować dużymi problemami społecznymi w krajach członkowskich, co w okresie kryzysu, rosnącego bezrobocia i ubóstwa może mieć poważne konsekwencje dla milionów osób najbardziej potrzebujących. Konieczne jest więc zapewnienie stosownego rozwiązania w okresie przejściowym.

W związku z tym zwracam się z następującym zapytaniem: jakie działania, w świetle przedstawionych przeze mnie powyżej okoliczności, podejmuje/zamierza podjąć Komisja na rzecz zapewnienia ciągłości unijnego wsparcia dla osób najbardziej potrzebujących?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Lászlo Andora w imieniu Komisji
(17 czerwca 2013 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma, jak wielkie znaczenie dla obywateli ma istnienie programu pomocy dla osób najbardziej potrzebujących. Dlatego też, poszukując trwałego rozwiązania pod względem prawnym i aby zachować PEAD do 2013 r., zaproponowała nowy program (FEAD) na okres 2014-2020. FEAD opiera się na nowej podstawie prawnej i zakres jego działania jest szerszy. Komisja zaproponowała jego budżet, który zatwierdzono na szczycie europejskim w lutym 2013 r. Współustawodawcy uzgadniają aktualnie szczegóły programu.

Jednak dyskusje, zarówno w Parlamencie, jak i w Radzie, okazują się trudne z uwagi na niechętny stosunek niektórych państw członkowskich do tego programu. W Parlamencie Europejskim trwają także dyskusje co do szczegółów programu. Dla Komisji cały czas najważniejszą sprawą jest jak najszybsze przyjęcie rozporządzenia oraz związanych z nim programów operacyjnych. Należy jednak zwrócić uwagę na fakt, że w art. 20 ust. 1 wniosku Komisji datą, począwszy od której wydatki będą uznawane za kwalifikujące się, jest dzień 1 stycznia 2014 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005365/13
to the Commission
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: European Food Aid Programme (PEAD) in 2014

One of the Europe 2020 strategy's five targets is fighting poverty and social exclusion in the EU. Funding for food aid is one element in the EU's anti-poverty policy, and 116 million Europeans are now at risk of falling into poverty. Currently, the EU's main instrument for providing assistance to the poorest is a programme (PEAD) established in 1987 under the common agricultural policy to distribute food among the EU's neediest people. In recent years, some 18 million Europeans in 20 Member States have benefited from this programme, which has been backed by over 240 food banks and charities.

On 15 February 2012, Parliament decided, on the basis of my report, to continue with PEAD, which is threatened by a Court of Justice ruling, in the years 2012-2013 — that is, to the end of the current financial perspective — with an annual budget of EUR 500 million.

Then on 24 October 2012, the Commission presented an outline for a new Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived with a budget of EUR 2.5 billion for the seven years of the next financial perspective (2014-2020). The new fund is to be financed from structural funds allocated to the European Social Fund.

The Commission's proposal was approved by the Council at the budget summit of 7 and 8 February 2013. However, given Parliament's ongoing failure to approve the multiannual financial framework adopted by the Council at the February summit, there is a serious risk that the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived will not be up and running by 1 January 2014. Furthermore, when the Commission was submitting proposals for transitional rules on the common agricultural policy in 2014, it saw no possibility of maintaining PEAD on the basis of current rules.

If implementation of PEAD were to be interrupted, it could create major social problems in Member States. During a period of crisis, growing unemployment and poverty, this could have serious consequences for millions of Europe's poorest. It is therefore vital that an appropriate interim solution be found.

In this connection, what steps is the Commission taking or planning to take in order to ensure that EU support for Europe's poorest is not interrupted?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M Andor au nom de la Commission
(17 juin 2013)

La Commission est bien consciente de l'importance pour nos concitoyens d'avoir un programme d'aide aux plus démunis et c'est pourquoi elle a cherché une solution juridiquement solide pour préserver le PEAD jusqu'en 2013 et proposé un nouveau programme (FEAD) pour la période 2014-2020. Le FEAD s'appuie sur une nouvelle base juridique et propose un champ d'action plus large. Le programme, dont le montant proposé par la Commission a été confirmé par le sommet européen de février 2013, est désormais sur la table des co-législateurs afin d'en agréer les modalités.

Les discussions au Parlement comme au Conseil se révèlent néanmoins difficiles, certains États membres restant de fait hostiles à ce programme. Des discussions sur les modalités continuent également au Parlement européen. La priorité de la Commission reste une adoption rapide du règlement ainsi que des programmes opérationnels correspondants. Toutefois, il convient de rappeler que l'article 20.1 de la proposition de la Commission fixe l'éligibilité des dépenses à partir du 1er janvier 2014.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-005366/13
a la Comisión
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(15 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Comunicación mantenida entre la Comisión Europea y el Gobierno de España sobre la legislación autonómica para asegurar la función social de la vivienda

En los últimos días, los medios de comunicación españoles han reproducido una información, divulgada por el Ministerio de Economía de España, en la que se aludía a una supuesta carta que la Comisión habría enviado al Gobierno español para recabar información sobre las iniciativas legislativas planteadas o anunciadas por algunas comunidades autónomas para paliar las consecuencias sociales de los desahucios y su posible impacto en el sector bancario. En concreto, la Comisión se estaría refiriendo al Decreto-ley 6/2013, de 9 de abril, de medidas para asegurar el cumplimiento de la función social de la vivienda, impulsado por la Junta de Andalucía.

Un portavoz de la Comisión ha desmentido que exista esa carta. Parece claro que el Gobierno español ha querido parapetarse tras la Comisión para poner en tela de juicio las medidas impulsadas por el Gobierno de Andalucía.

1. ¿Qué clase de comunicación ha remitido la Comisión al Gobierno de España sobre este asunto?

2. ¿Sabe la Comisión que el Gobierno de España está utilizando esta comunicación para hostigar a los Gobiernos autonómicos que han promovido iniciativas legislativas para proteger los intereses de personas especialmente vulnerables ante la crisis económica y el drama de los desahucios, asegurando así el cumplimiento de la función social de la vivienda? ¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión que el Gobierno español ponga sus comunicaciones institucionales al servicio de sus propios intereses políticos y en contra de las comunidades autónomas donde no gobierna?

3. ¿Actuará la Comisión con el mismo celo que demuestra a la hora de velar por el sector financiero cuando se trate de poner en práctica, sin demora, las medidas de ayuda y apoyo necesarias en la lucha contra la penosa situación que atraviesa el desempleo juvenil en España?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

El Memorándum de Acuerdo de 23 de julio de 2012 entre la Comisión Europea, que firmó en nombre del Mecanismo Europeo de Estabilización Financiera, y las autoridades españolas dispone que España se compromete a consultar de antemano con la Comisión Europea, el Banco Central Europeo y el Fondo Monetario Internacional acerca de la adopción de medidas no contempladas en dicho Memorándum, pero que podrían tener repercusiones importantes en la consecución de los objetivos del programa. Además, España también proporcionará todos los datos necesarios para supervisar el curso de la ejecución del programa y seguir la coyuntura económica y financiera. La Comisión considera que estas medidas también abarcan las actuaciones de las autoridades regionales españolas.

A este respecto, los servicios de la Comisión Europea participantes en el programa del sector financiero español recabaron información del Gobierno español sobre determinadas medidas legislativas adoptadas por los gobiernos autonómicos españoles que pueden tener una incidencia importante en el cumplimiento del objetivo del programa, consistente en estabilizar el sector bancario español.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005366/13
to the Commission
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Letter from the Commission to the Spanish Government regarding autonomous community legislation designed to ensure housing fulfils its social function

The Spanish media in recent days have relayed information disclosed by the Spanish Ministry of Finance referring to a letter supposedly sent by the Commission to the Spanish Government. The letter is reported to have requested information about the legislative initiatives planned or announced by certain autonomous communities with the aim of mitigating the social fallout of evictions and the possible impact on the banking sector. Specifically, the Commission would be referring to Decree-Law No 6/2013 of 9 April, initiated by the Regional Government of Andalusia, on measures to ensure housing fulfils its social function.

A spokesperson for the Commission has denied that such a letter exists. It seems clear that the Spanish Government sought to use the Commission as a means to challenge the measures initiated by the Government of Andalusia.

1. What was the nature of the letter sent by the Commission to the Spanish Government regarding this issue?

2. Is the Commission aware that the Spanish Government is using this letter to harass the autonomous communities behind legislative efforts to protect the interests of those particularly vulnerable to the economic crisis and the turmoil surrounding evictions, thus ensuring housing fulfils its social function? What is the Commission's view of the Spanish Government using institutional correspondence to serve its own political interests and to undermine autonomous communities where it has no power?

3. Will the Commission act with the same diligence it applies to safeguarding the financial sector when it comes to implementing, without delay, the aid and support measures needed to address the plight facing youth unemployed in Spain?

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

According to the Memorandum Understanding of 23 July 2012 between the European Commission, signed on behalf of the European Stability Mechanism and the Spanish authorities foresees that Spain commits to consult *ex-ante* with the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the adoption of measures that are not included in this MoU but that could have a material impact on the achievement of programme objectives and that Spain will also provide all information required to monitor progress in programme implementation and to track the economic and financial situation. It is the view of the Commission that these measures also include actions taken by regional authorities in Spain.

In this context, the European Commission services involved in the Spanish financial-sector programme requested information from Spanish Government, on certain legislative measures taken by regional governments in Spain, which could have a material impact on the achievement of the programme objective of stabilising the Spanish banking sector.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-005367/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(15 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Proyecto de explotación de oro en la mina Corcoesto

El Diario Oficial de Galicia n° 88, de 8 de mayo de 2013, ha sometido a información pública la admisión definitiva de un nuevo permiso de investigación a favor de la empresa Mineira de Corcoesto, S.L., filial de la canadiense Edgewater Exploration Ltd. Este nuevo permiso abarcaría más de 630 ha situadas al este y contiguas a la zona para la que el mismo DOG recoge la aprobación de la declaración de impacto ambiental de la Consejería de Medio Ambiente de la Xunta de Galicia para la explotación aurífera del Grupo Minero de Corcoesto (provincia de A Coruña) en favor de la empresa Mineira de Corcoesto, S.L. Las cuadrículas mineras ahora solicitadas engloban parte del LIC ES1110015 Río Anllóns.

Considerando la coincidencia en el tiempo, en el espacio, en el recurso mineral y en la empresa, cabe deducir que se trata, en realidad, de un único proyecto que se ha dividido en dos para no evaluar conjuntamente sus efectos sinérgicos y acumulativos sobre el medio natural y socioeconómico, incumpliendo por tanto la Directiva 97/11/CE por la que se modifica la Directiva 85/337/CEE relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente.

Cabe resaltar que, pese a haber sido expresamente advertida por la Sociedad Gallega de Historia Natural, la Consejería de Medio Ambiente: a) no ha evaluado los efectos sanitarios, económicos y ecológicos del peor accidente posible por la rotura de las balsas mineras, con vertido total al cauce del río Anllóns (Natura 2000) de la cantidad máxima de la solución de cianuro de sodio que sea previsible emplear, ni ha exigido a la empresa la contratación de un seguro de responsabilidad civil; b) no ha tenido en cuenta la información científico-técnica más reciente y detallada disponible, publicada por prestigiosos grupos de investigación ([1]) que alertan de los riesgos sanitarios y ambientales de las actividades mineras en esa zona con niveles naturales muy elevados de arsénico ([2]). Asimismo, existe una mayoritaria oposición social a la iniciativa minera ([3]).

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión del proyecto completo de extracción minera, incluida la ampliación ahora sometida a información pública? ¿Lo considera compatible con la Directiva de Hábitats, 92/43/CE, la Directiva Marco de Aguas 2000/60/CE y la Directiva 2004/35/CE sobre responsabilidad? ¿Ha recibido la Comisión respuesta del Gobierno de España?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión ha solicitado a las autoridades españolas información en relación con un proyecto de explotación de oro en la mina Corcoesto, sobre el que se emitió una declaración de impacto ambiental en noviembre de 2012 ([4]).

La Comisión analizará la respuesta de España para verificar la conformidad del proyecto con la legislación ambiental de la UE aplicable. A este respecto, la Comisión tendrá en cuenta la nueva investigación anunciada en el Diario Oficial de Galicia n° 88, de 8 de mayo de 2013 ([5]), y, si resulta necesario, solicitará más aclaraciones sobre esa investigación y sobre su conformidad con la legislación de la UE en materia de medio ambiente.

([1]) Instituto de Investigaciones Marinas (CSIC), la Universidad de Vigo y la Universidad de Santiago de Compostela.
([2]) Hasta 4 g/kg en suelos y hasta 100 g/kg en rocas.
([3]) La plataforma «Salvemos Cabana» ha reunido más de 22 500 firmas en contra por los impactos sociales y ambientales del proyecto, que puede poner en riesgo la supervivencia de miles de empleos asociados al sector primario y turístico.
([4]) http://www.xunta.es/dog/Publicados/2013/20130108/AnuncioCA04-271212-0002_es.html
([5]) http://www.xunta.es/dog/Publicados/2013/20130508/AnuncioCA04-030413-0002_es.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005367/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Corcoesto gold mining project

The Official Journal of Galicia (OJG) No 88 of 8 May 2013 announced the award of a new exploration licence to Mineira de Corcoesto, S.L., a subsidiary of the Canadian firm Edgewater Exploration Ltd The licence covers an area of more than 630 hectares situated immediately to the east of another area dealt with in the same edition of the OJG. Regarding the latter site, the journal contains a notice of approval, likewise issued to Mineira de Corcoesto, S.L. by the Galician Government's Environmental Department, pertaining to the environmental impact statement for the mining operations of Corcoesto Gold Mining Group (province of A Coruña). The mining units requested include part of the Anllóns River SCI (ES1110015).

Given the concurrence in terms of time, location, mineral resource and company, it would seem that we are really looking at a single project that has been split into two in order to avoid a joint assessment of their synergistic and cumulative effects on the natural and socioeconomic environment, thus breaching Directive 85/337 EEC as amended by 97/11/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

It should be noted that, despite being expressly warned by the Galician Natural History Society, the Galician Government's Environmental Department: a) has not assessed the economic, health and ecological impacts of the worst case scenario, should the mining dams break and the maximum volume of sodium cyanide solution likely to be used be released into the Anllóns river (a Natura 2000 site), nor has it demanded that the company take out civil liability insurance; b) neither has it taken into account the most recent and detailed scientific and technical information available, published by prestigious research groups ([1]), which warn of the health and environmental risks of mining activities in this area with unusually high natural levels of arsenic ([2]). There is also strong public opposition to this mining project ([3]).

Is the Commission aware of the full extent of this mining project, including the recently announced extension? Does it consider it in line with the Habitats Directive (92/43/EC), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability? Has the Commission received a reply from the Spanish Government?

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

The Commission has requested information from the Spanish authorities concerning a gold mining project in Corcoesto for which an Environmental Impact Statement was issued in November 2012 ([4]).

The Commission will assess the reply to be provided by Spain, in order to verify compliance with the relevant EU environmental legislation. In this context, the Commission will take into account the new exploration announced in the Official Journal of Galicia No 88 of 8 May 2013 ([5]), and additional clarifications concerning this exploration and its compliance with the EU environmental legislation will be requested if necessary.

([1]) Institute of Marine Research (CSIC), the University of Vigo and the University of Santiago de Compostela.
([2]) Up to 4 g/kg in soil and up to 100 g/kg in rock.
([3]) The platform 'Salvemos Cabana' has collected more than 22 500 signatures against the social and environmental impacts of the project, which could jeopardise thousands of jobs in the primary and tourism sector.
([4]) http://www.xunta.es/dog/Publicados/2013/20130108/AnuncioCA04-271212-0002_es.html
([5]) http://www.xunta.es/dog/Publicados/2013/20130508/AnuncioCA04-030413-0002_es.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005368/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Consequências da recapitalização dos bancos com recurso a depósitos de pessoas coletivas

Tem sido argumentado o facto de ser reduzido o número de casos de depósitos acima dos 100 000 euros, que nessa medida seriam afetados pela eventual necessidade de recapitalização de bancos em dificuldades. Tal não corresponde à verdade.

Acresce que esta possibilidade não distingue depósitos de pessoas singulares ou coletivas.

Na UE, existem milhões de empresas privadas, cooperativas, fundações e entidades diversas, que, por razão da sua atividade, possuem depósitos de valores superiores a 100 000 euros. Não se trata de poupanças. Trata-se, isso sim, de liquidez corrente, que mensalmente assegura a vida dessas empresas e entidades no pagamento de salários a trabalhadores, na compra de matérias-primas e mercadorias a fornecedores e na satisfação de encargos fiscais ou outros com os próprios Estados. Trata-se até do dinheiro com que muitas pessoas coletivas ajudam os mais carenciados, em razão da idade ou em situação de pobreza.

Quando os depósitos acima dos 100 000 euros das referidas empresas ou entidades se revelar apropriado para a recapitalização de bancos, a maior parte viverá enormes dificuldades e será forçada ao próprio encerramento.

Mas muitos mais serão os afetados, que não apenas os titulares desses depósitos.

Serão afetados os trabalhadores que eventualmente ficarão sem emprego, se a empresa que perdeu o seu dinheiro não puder pagar salários; serão afetados os fornecedores, que não receberão o que é devido pelas mercadorias ou matérias-primas vendidas; serão afetados os beneficiários do apoio social (idosos, crianças e necessitados), que deixarão de o ter; serão afetados os Estados, que não receberão contribuições fiscais e administrativas das empresas em dificuldades; e serão afetados contribuintes, chamados a suportar os custos sociais das novas pessoas no desemprego.

Por isso, pergunto: de que forma é que o sistema de recapitalização proposto será capaz de evitar o impacto colateral descrito nas considerações acabadas de expor relativamente aos trabalhadores e aos fornecedores das empresas afetadas, aos Estados que ficarão privados de receitas fiscais ou administrativas e aos contribuintes que serão chamados a suportar custos sociais com o novo desemprego gerado?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(10 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão partilha as preocupações do Senhor Deputado.

O tratamento dos depósitos superiores a 100 000 EUR no âmbito do futuro enquadramento para a resolução bancária está ainda a ser negociado, mas o Parlamento, o Conselho e a Comissão estão de acordo em que pode ser necessário prever um tratamento específico para certos depositantes, nomeadamente as pessoas singulares e as PME.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005368/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Consequences of recapitalising banks by using the deposits of legal persons

It has been argued that because there are now fewer deposit accounts above EUR 100 000, fewer people would be affected by the possible need to recapitalise struggling banks. This is not the case.

Moreover, this possibility makes no distinction between the deposits of natural and legal persons.

In the EU, there are millions of private companies, cooperatives, foundations and bodies of various kinds which, because of their activities, hold deposits over EUR 100 000. These deposits are not savings accounts. Rather, they represent current liquidity which, every month, ensures that these companies and bodies are able to survive by paying salaries, buying raw materials and merchandise from suppliers, and paying taxes or other monies owed to the Member States. This is money that many legal persons use to help those most in need whether due to age or poverty.

When deposits over EUR 100 000 are declared to be a suitable means of recapitalising banks, most of the companies and bodies who hold these deposits will experience enormous difficulties and be forced to close.

Furthermore, many people other than those holding the deposits will be affected.

Those affected will include workers who may lose their jobs if companies that have lost money cannot pay their salaries; suppliers who will not be paid for merchandise or raw materials; old people, children and poor people dependant on social support that they will no longer receive; Member States who will no longer receive tax and administrative contributions from the struggling companies; and taxpayers who must bear the social cost of supporting the newly unemployed.

I therefore ask the Commission how the proposed system of recapitalization can avoid having this kind of collateral impact on the workers and suppliers of affected companies, Member States deprived of tax revenue, and taxpayers who will have to bear the costs of supporting the newly unemployed?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission understands the concerns of the Honourable Member.

The treatment of deposits above EUR 100 000 within the future resolution framework is still subject to negotiations, but the Parliament, the Council, and the Commission agree that special consideration may need to be given to certain depositors, in particular physical persons and SMEs.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005369/13
an die Kommission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Tierische Nebenprodukte — Chondroitin

Aus Knorpelgewebe gewonnenes Chondroitin wird arzneilich und diätetisch zur Behandlung von Gelenkerkrankungen eingesetzt. In der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1069/2009 wird ein Endpunkt in der Fertigungskette für Produkte festgelegt, die keine direkte Relevanz für die Sicherheit der Futtermittelkette mehr haben. Produkte, die den Endpunkt überschritten haben, sollten ohne Einschränkungen in Verkehr gebracht werden können.

Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass es sich bei Chondroitinsulfat um ein Folgeprodukt entsprechend der oben genannten Verordnung handelt, welches den Endpunkt der Herstellungskette überschritten hat, oder muss Chondroitinsulfat als tierisches Nebenprodukt betrachtet werden? Aus welchen Gründen?

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

Chondroitinsulfat ist ein wichtiger Bestandteil von Knorpelgewebe und liegt gewöhnlich an Proteine gebunden vor. Aus diesem Grund unterliegt es einer Reihe von Auflagen zur Vermeidung des Risikos der bovinen spongiformen Enzephalopathie (BSE), deren Träger Proteinvarianten sind.

Chondroitinsulfat ist als tierisches Nebenprodukt zu betrachten, sofern es nicht in Übereinstimmung mit dem EU-Recht behandelt wird, das für seinen Endpunkt in Abhängigkeit von seiner Endnutzung verschiedene Optionen bietet. Der Endpunkt ist erreicht, wenn das BSE-Risiko als vernachlässigbar betrachtet werden kann. Dies ist in einer bestimmten Phase oder am Ende des Verarbeitungszyklus von Chondroitinsulfat der Fall, je nach der Verarbeitungsnorm für das Endprodukt.

Mögliche Endprodukte, die verarbeitetes Chondroitinsulfat enthalten dürfen, werden in Artikel 33 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1069/2009 ([1]) genannt, darunter: i) kosmetische Mittel, ii) aktive implantierbare medizinische Geräte, iii) In-vitro-Diagnostika, iv) Tierarzneimittel sowie v) Humanarzneimittel.

([1]) ABl. L 300 vom 14.11.2009, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005369/13
to the Commission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Animal by-products — chondroitin

Chondroitin, extracted from cartilage, is used for the medicinal and dietetic treatment of joint diseases. Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 establishes an end point in the manufacturing chain for products which no longer have direct relevance for the safety of the feed chain. Products which have gone beyond the end point should be allowed to be placed on the market without restriction.

Does the Commission believe that chondroitin sulphate is a derived product, in accordance with the aforementioned Regulation, which has gone beyond the end point of the manufacturing chain, or must it be regarded as an animal by-product? For what reasons?

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

Chondroitin sulphate is an important component of cartilage and it is usually found attached to proteins. For this reason, it is subject to a number of requirements to prevent risks of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) the agent of which is of protein nature.

Chondroitin sulphate is to be considered an animal by-product, unless it is treated in accordance with EU legislation that establishes several options as regards its end-point, depending on its final use. The end-point is reached when the BSE risk can be considered as negligible. This would be at a certain stage or at the end of the chondroitin sulphate processing cycle, depending on the processing standard of the final product.

Possible final products which may include processed chondroitin sulphate are referred to in Article 33 of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 ([1]) and include: i) cosmetics, ii) active implementable medical devices, iii) in-vitro diagnostic medical devices, iv) veterinary medicinal products, or v) medicinal products for humans.

([1]) OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p.1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005370/13
an die Kommission
Karin Kadenbach (S&D)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Tiertransporte — Entladevorrichtungen und Kontrollstellen

1. Kann die Kommission garantieren, dass die Mitgliedstaaten ausreichende finanzielle Mittel und genug Personal für die Einrichtung von Kontrollstellen und Notfall-Entladevorrichtungen in angemessenen Abständen voneinander bereitstellen, um die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 durchzusetzen?

2. Falls die Kommission dies nicht garantieren kann, glaubt sie, dass die ständig wiederkehrenden Probleme an den Kontrollstellen bzw. Notfall-Entladevorrichtungen gelöst werden können, ohne dass die Verordnung überarbeitet werden muss, zumal damit Tiertransporte über weite Entfernungen beendet werden sollen? An deren Stelle sollte der Transport von Fleisch und Schlachtkörpern treten.

3. Teilt die Kommission die Ansicht, dass die Festsetzung einer Obergrenze von acht Stunden für die Beförderung von Schlachttieren — wie bereits vom Parlament und von mehr als einer Million EU-Bürgern gefordert — die extremsten Fälle verhindern könnte? Dies würde nämlich bedeuten, dass Tiere im Notfall nicht mehr als vier Stunden lang befördert werden müssen, um entweder ihren Bestimmungsort zu erreichen oder zu ihrem Abfahrtsort zurückzukehren.

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

Die Einrichtung von Notfall-Entladevorrichtungen ist eine Möglichkeit, wie die Mitgliedstaaten das Wohlergehen der Tiere gewährleisten können. Artikel 23 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport ([1]) sieht allerdings eine Reihe weiterer Dringlichkeitsmaßnahmen bei Verstößen gegen die Verordnung vor, wie etwa einen Wechsel des Fahrers oder die Reparatur des Lkw.

Es obliegt den zuständigen Behörden, von Fall zu Fall zu entscheiden, welche Maßnahme für die Tiere die beste ist. Daher ist die Kommission ganz allgemein nicht der Auffassung, dass die Einrichtung von Notfall-Entladevorrichtungen immer die beste Option ist, mit der ein Mitgliedstaat die ordnungsgemäße Durchsetzung der Verordnung 1/2005 gewährleisten kann.

Unter bestimmten Umständen könnte es im Interesse der Tiere liegen, weitere vier Stunden transportiert zu werden, in anderen Fällen würde dies ihrem Wohlergehen schaden. In solchen Fällen sind möglicherweise andere, in Artikel 23 vorgesehene Maßnahmen, darunter auch die tierschutzgerechte Tötung, vorzuziehen.

Nach Auffassung der Kommission würde eine Änderung der maximalen Beförderungsdauer nicht unbedingt Probleme lösen, die aufgrund von Verstößen gegen die Verordnung 1/2005 entstehen.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005370/13
to the Commission
Karin Kadenbach (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Animal transport — unloading facilities and control posts

1. Can the Commission guarantee that the Member States will invest substantial financial and human resources into setting up control posts/emergency unloading facilities available at a reasonable distance in order to be able to enforce Regulation (EC) No 1/2005?

2. If the Commission cannot guarantee this, does it consider that the chronic problems regarding control posts/emergency unloading facilities can be solved without a review of the regulation aimed at ending long-distance animal transport and replacing it with the transport of meat and carcasses?

3. Does the Commission not think that the establishment of a maximum eight-hour journey limit for animals for slaughter, as already requested by Parliament and by over one million European citizens, could prevent the most extreme cases, as this would mean that, in the event of an emergency, animals would not have to travel for more than four hours to either arrive at their destination or return to their place of departure?

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

Ensuring the availability of facilities for emergency unloading of animals during transport is indeed one way for Member States to be prepared for ensuring the welfare of the animals. Article 23 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]), does however foresee a number of other emergency measures, such as a change of driver or a repair of the truck, to be taken in the event of non-compliance with the regulation.

It is for the competent authorities to, on a case-by-case basis, decide which action is in the best interest of the animals. The Commission does therefore not see, in general, that the setting up of facilities for emergency unloading of animals is always the best option for a Member State to ensure the proper enforcement of Regulation 1/2005.

While under some circumstances it could be in the interest of the animals to be transported for another four hours, there are situations when this would be detrimental to their welfare. In such cases, other actions foreseen in Article 23, including the humane killing of the animals may be preferred.

In the view of the Commission, a change of the maximum transport time would therefore not necessarily solve problems that may arise due to non-compliance with Regulation 1/2005.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005371/13
an die Kommission
Karin Kadenbach (S&D)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Tierschutzstandards im Zusammenhang mit Investitionskapital für die Viehhaltung

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob die EU-Mitgliedstaaten nach wie vor bilateral und/oder durch internationale Finanzinstitute wie die Internationale Finanz-Corporation (IFC) und/oder durch regionale Finanzinstitute wie die Europäische Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung (EBWE) Investitionskapital sowie Ausfuhrkredite für Agrar- und Viehhaltungsbetriebe außerhalb der EU bereitstellen? Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob solche Projekte die EU-Mindeststandards für den Tierschutz erfüllen? Liegen der Kommission Informationen über die Höhe des Investitionskapitals und/oder der Versicherung vor, insbesondere in Fällen, bei denen diese Mittel für Projekte, die die EU-Mindeststandards für den Tierschutz nicht erfüllen, bereitgestellt werden?

2. Strebt die Kommission ein Verfahren an, mit dem auf der Grundlage der Tierhaltungsstandards der EU ein Gemeinsamer Standpunkt aller EU-Mitgliedstaaten zur Festsetzung verbindlicher Standards innerhalb internationaler und regionaler Finanzinstitute erreicht wird, die als Mindestkriterien zur Beurteilung von Finanzierungsanträgen herangezogen werden?

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

1. Der Kommission ist nicht bekannt, ob die EU-Mitgliedstaaten bilateral und/oder durch internationale Finanzinstitute Investitionskapital oder Ausfuhrkredite für Agrar- und Viehhaltungsbetriebe außerhalb der EU bereitstellen.

2. Nahrungsmittel, die auf den EU-Markt gelangen, müssen den EU-Vorschriften hinsichtlich der Lebensmittelsicherheit und der Tier- und Pflanzengesundheit entsprechen. Die EU kann jedoch ihre Tierschutznormen bei Einfuhren aus Drittländern gemäß den gesundheitspolizeilichen und pflanzenschutzrechtlichen Anforderungen (SPS) nicht durchsetzen, da der Tierschutz nicht Gegenstand des SPS-Übereinkommens der WTO ist.

Die Kommission bemüht sich seit vielen Jahren um die Sensibilisierung und die Förderung eines gemeinsamen Verständnisses der vereinbarten Standards bei den wichtigsten Handelspartnern der EU. Fortschritte bei der Entwicklung gemeinsamer Tierschutzstandards wurden auch durch die Unterstützung und die Zusammenarbeit mit der Weltorganisation für Tiergesundheit (OIE) erzielt. Die Kommission engagiert sich zudem im Rahmen der Ernährungs- und Landwirtschaftsorganisation (FAO), die sich mit dem Tierschutz befasst.

Die EU wird ihre Zusammenarbeit im Bereich Tierschutz mit ihren Handelspartnern in den geeigneten bilateralen und internationalen Foren fortsetzen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005371/13
to the Commission
Karin Kadenbach (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Animal welfare standards for investment capital granted to livestock operations

1. Is the Commission aware whether EU Member States continue to provide investment capital as well as export credits, bilaterally and/or via international finance institutions such as the International Finance Corporation, and/or via regional finance institutions such as the EBRD, to agro-business and livestock operations outside the EU? Does the Commission know whether such projects meet minimum EU animal welfare standards? Does the Commission have information about the scope of such investment capital and/or insurance, especially where this is provided for projects that do not meet minimum EU animal welfare standards?

2. Does the Commission intend to support a process with a view to reaching a common position of the EU Member States aimed at enacting binding standards — based on EU animal husbandry standards — within international and regional finance institutions as minimum criteria for judging funding applications?

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

1. The Commission is not aware whether EU Member States provide investment capital or export credits, bilaterally and/or via international finance institutions to agro-business and livestock operations outside the EU.

2. Agro-food products which enter the EU market have to comply with requirements set by EU legislation which concern the safety of food products and animal and plant health. However, the EU cannot impose its animal welfare standards on imports from third countries under the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements, since animal welfare is not part of the WTO SPS Agreement.

The Commission has been working for years now to raise awareness and promote shared understanding on mutually agreed standards with the main EU trading partners. Important achievements have also been reached through the support and collaboration with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to develop animal welfare standards. The Commission is also active in the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) where work is undertaken on animal welfare.

The EU will continue the cooperation on animal welfare with EU's trading partners in the appropriate bilateral and international fora.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005372/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Exclusionary practice of TEN-T funding for maritime ports

In Scotland, port authorities play a crucial role in connecting important commercial and oil-related industries to the rest of Europe, and therefore offer important infrastructure as centres for international trade and distribution. In addition to this, ports provide major economic support to local communities, where it is acknowledged that port-related industries are major and sustainable employers in regions where ports exist.

It is my understanding that, to maintain the high standards and competitiveness of ports in Scotland, port authorities may access funding through TEN-T. In Scotland, a maritime nation, many ports are relatively small in size and attempts to secure funding through TEN-T have failed, as it has been suggested in the application process that a threshold of 1.5 million tonnes of cargo is set for ports to be in a position to be considered for TEN-T funding, which surely disqualifies smaller ports from participation whilst larger ports qualify.

Does the Commission consider that a more flexible system may be appropriate to allow smaller ports to seek TEN-T funding?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

In November 2012 the Commission launched TEN-T Annual and Multi-Annual Programme calls for proposals, and the project selection is ongoing.

Under these calls, as mentioned by the Honourable Member, only international Category A seaports (i.e. ports with a total annual traffic volume of not less than 1.5 million tonnes of freight) were eligible. The reasons for this approach were the limited funds available, the limited timeframe for implementation of projects under the 2007-2013 Multi-Annual Financial Framework (until end 2015), and the need to maximise the project funding impact from a trans-European point of view.

The new regulation for TEN-T guidelines now under discussion in Council and Parliament ([1]) advocates the development of the TEN-T network through a dual-layer approach, consisting of a comprehensive network and a core network, and sets the framework for identifying projects of common interest.

The Commission fully recognises the socioeconomic importance of local and regional ports. However, in view of the need to maximise the EU added-value with targeted funding, only ports with a trans-European relevance are included in the comprehensive and core networks of the new TEN-T guidelines.

EU support under the forthcoming Connecting Europe Facility ([2]) will focus on ports in the TEN-T networks, and not on ports with a local or regional relevance only. In so far as Scotland is concerned, the guidelines include 10 seaports, 8 in the comprehensive network and 2 in the core network (Glasgow and Edinburgh).

([1]) COM(2011) 650 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 665.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005374/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(15 mai 2013)

Objet: Impacts sanitaires du bruit

Dans sa proposition de 7e Programme d'action pour l'environnement, la Commission définit des objectifs et des mesures visant à protéger les citoyens de l'Union contre les pressions liées à l'environnement et les risques pour la santé et le bien-être.

Elle propose notamment de mettre en œuvre une politique de l'Union actualisée de lutte contre le bruit, tenant compte des connaissances scientifiques les plus récentes, ainsi que des mesures visant à réduire les émissions sonores à la source.

En France, l'Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail (Anses) vient de rendre un avis sur la prise en compte des impacts sanitaires des bruits liés aux transports ou à des sites d'activités industrielles, dans lequel elle propose une nouvelle méthode d'évaluation de ces impacts ([1]).

— La Commission a-t-elle pris connaissance de cette étude et quelle analyse en tire-t-elle?

— Comment compte-t-elle améliorer la prise en compte des effets extra-auditifs du bruit environnemental au niveau européen?

— Que soutient-elle dans les programmes de recherche européens pour développer la connaissance scientifique sur le lien entre bruit et santé?

— Comment la Commission compte-t-elle prendre en compte les impacts sanitaires du bruit sans paralyser l'activité économique?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(10 juillet 2013)

La Commission a pris connaissance du rapport mentionné dans la question et a entrepris d'examiner la corrélation entre les impacts sanitaires du bruit et les paramètres cités dans le rapport qui diffèrent de ceux figurant dans la directive 2002/49/CE relative à l'évaluation et à la gestion du bruit dans l'environnement ([2]).

L'actuelle directive relative au bruit dans l'environnement traite des effets extra-auditifs du bruit ambiant. La Commission a financé des travaux supplémentaires sur les effets extra-auditifs du bruit, comme le projet ENNAH ([3]), financé au titre du septième programme-cadre; elle peut être amenée à soutenir de nouvelles initiatives dans le cadre du prochain programme pour la recherche et l'innovation («Horizon 2020»), en vue de renforcer la base de connaissances dans le domaine de la pollution sonore.

La directive ne fixe pas d'objectifs particuliers à atteindre par les États membres, puisque la législation en vigueur laisse cette question à l'appréciation des États membres.

La Commission se concertera avec l'OMS sur les preuves scientifiques de nature à étayer la définition des courbes dose/effet utilisées pour fixer des limites de sécurité en matière de bruit en tenant compte du rapport coût-efficacité de toute mesure envisagée.

Le septième programme d'action pour l'environnement adopté par la Commission européenne et qui devrait recevoir sous peu l'assentiment du Conseil et du Parlement européen comportera l'engagement de réduire significativement la pollution sonore d'ici à 2020, c'est-à-dire de la rapprocher sensiblement des niveaux acceptables.

([1]) http://www.anses.fr/sites/default/files/documents/AP2009sa0333Ra.pdf
([2]) JO L 189 du 18.7.2002, pp. 12 à 25.
([3]) http://www.ennah.eu/home?lang=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005374/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Health effects of noise

In its proposal for a Seventh Environment Action Programme, the Commission defines objectives and measures to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing.

In particular, it proposes to implement updated EU noise policy aligned with the latest scientific knowledge, and measures to reduce noise at source.

The French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety (ANSES) recently issued an opinion on the recognition of the health effects of noise linked to transport or industrial sites, in which it proposes a new method of assessing those effects ([1]).

— Is the Commission aware of this study and what is its assessment of it?

— How will it improve recognition of the non-auditory effects of environmental noise at European level?

— What measures does it support in EU research programmes with a view to improving scientific knowledge on the link between noise and health?

— How will it take account of the health effects of noise without crippling economic activity?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

The Commission is aware of the report cited in the question and is examining how the health implications of noise related to the parameters therein which are different from those set out in the European Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC ([2]).

The current Environmental Noise Directive addresses the non-auditory effects of environmental noise. The Commission has financed further work on the non-auditory impacts of noise, such as the ENNAH project ([3]) funded by the Seventh Framework programme, and may support further research in the context of the upcoming EU Research and Innovation Programme, 'Horizon 2020', with a view to strengthen knowledge base in the field of noise pollution.

The directive does not set specific levels of ambition which Member States should aim for: the legislation in force leaves this to the discretion of the Member States.

The Commission will liaise with the WHO on the scientific evidence supporting the definition of dose/effect curves which are used to establish safe noise limits taking into account the cost-effectiveness of any measures.

The 7th EU Environment Action Programme adopted by the European Commission and expected to be agreed by the Council and European Parliament shortly, will include a commitment that by 2020, noise pollution should have significantly improved, i.e. will have moved significantly closer to acceptable levels.

([1]) http://www.anses.fr/sites/default/files/documents/AP2009sa0333Ra.pdf
([2]) OJ L 189, 18.7.2002, p. 12-25.
([3]) http://www.ennah.eu/home?lang=en.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005375/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(15 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανάγκη λήψης μέτρων για την ενίσχυση του ευρωπαϊκού τουρισμού

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή Ταξιδιών (European Travel Commission) στην πρόσφατη έκθεση της με τίτλο «Ευρωπαϊκός Τουρισμός 2013: Τάσεις και Προοπτικές», υπογραμμίζει την ανοδική πορεία κατά το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2013 της ευρωπαϊκής τουριστικής βιομηχανίας, καθώς και τις εν γένει ευνοϊκές προοπτικές της. Παρ' όλα αυτά, τονίζει ότι είναι απαραίτητο να υλοποιηθούν συμπληρωματικές δράσεις με σκοπό την ενίσχυση της τουριστικής ζήτησης μεσοπρόθεσμα. Τονίζει, μάλιστα, ότι είναι απαραίτητη η απλοποίηση της διαδικασίας θεώρησης εισόδου (visa) πολιτών τρίτων χωρών στην Ευρώπη.

Σε συνέχεια των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Συμφωνεί με την επισήμανση της ETC για την ανάγκη πρόσθετων μέτρων τόνωσης της ζήτησης του ευρωπαϊκού τουρισμού; Εάν ναι, τι ενέργειες σκοπεύει να κάνει για την περαιτέρω προώθηση των ευρωπαϊκών προορισμών σε τρίτες χώρες;

2. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να αναλάβει δράση για την απλούστευση της διαδικασίας έκδοσης θεωρήσεων ώστε να καταστήσει την Ευρώπη πιο ελκυστικό τουριστικό προορισμό;

3. Τέλος, προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να αναλάβει μέτρα, και εάν ναι, ποια, ώστε να ενισχύσει τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις που δραστηριοποιούνται στον τουριστικό τομέα και οι οποίες έχουν πληγεί λόγω της δυσχερούς οικονομικής συγκυρίας στην Ευρώπη;

Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Αυγούστου 2013)

1. Η ανακοίνωση περί τουρισμού 2010 υπογραμμίζει ότι ένας από τους κύριους στόχους της Επιτροπής είναι να διασφαλιστεί ότι η Ευρώπη θα διατηρήσει τη θέση της ως «ο αριθ. 1 παγκόσμιος τουριστικός προορισμός» με την τόνωση της τουριστικής ζήτησης, όχι μόνο εντός της ΕΕ, αλλά και από τρίτες χώρες. Σύμφωνα με τα προαναφερθέντα, η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη δρομολογήσει σειρά ειδικών μέτρων. Μεταξύ αυτών, η πρωτοβουλία «50 000 τουρίστες» αποτελεί σημαντική πιλοτική δράση που έχει στόχο να συμβάλει στην τόνωση της τουριστικής ροής στην Ευρώπη, με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στη χαμηλή τουριστική περίοδο ([1]). Παράλληλα, η διεθνής επικοινωνιακή εκστρατεία τουρισμού ([2]) επιδιώκει να ενθαρρύνει τουρίστες από τρίτες χώρες να ταξιδεύουν στην Ευρώπη καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια του έτους.

2. Η τόνωση των ταξιδιών στην ΕΕ απαιτεί όχι μόνον πιο διαρθρωμένες δραστηριότητες προώθησης, αλλά και μια κατάλληλη αξιοποίηση των πολιτικών που έχουν επίδραση στον τουρισμό, μεταξύ των οποίων μια έξυπνη πολιτική θεωρήσεων διαβατηρίων αποτελεί καθοριστικό παράγοντα. ([3]) Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Επιτροπή προετοιμάζει την παρούσα στιγμή μια αξιολόγηση της εφαρμογής του Κώδικα Θεωρήσεων και υπολογίζει να υποβάλει νομοθετική πρόταση αναθεώρησης πριν από το τέλος του 2013, για να εισαγάγει αλλαγές που θα οδηγήσουν σε περαιτέρω απλούστευση των διαδικασιών στον τομέα των θεωρήσεων διαβατηρίων, και βελτίωση της εναρμόνισης των πρακτικών έχοντας υπόψη την ανάγκη να εξασφαλισθεί η ασφάλεια των ευρωπαίων πολιτών.

([1]) Η πρωτοβουλία «50 000 τουρίστες» είναι μια πολύπλοκη πιλοτική πρωτοβουλία με βάση τη συνεργασία μεταξύ της Επιτροπής και 10 κρατών μελών (Ιταλίας, Ισπανίας, Γαλλίας, Πολωνίας, Λιθουανίας, Ελλάδας, Ρουμανίας, Δημοκρατίας της Σλοβακίας, Μάλτας και Πορτογαλίας), 3 κύριων ευρωπαϊκών ενώσεων της τουριστικής βιομηχανίας (Ένωση Ευρωπαίων Διοργανωτών Ταξιδίων — ETOA, — Ευρωπαϊκές Ενώσεις Ταξιδιωτικών Γραφείων και Διοργανωτών Ταξιδίων — ECTAA), 7 μεγάλων αεροπορικών εταιρειών (Alitalia, Air France, British Airways, Iberia, Lufthansa, TAP Air Portugal και LOT Polish Airlines), 3 εταίρων από τον ιδιωτικό τομέα (El Corte Inglés S.A., Amadeus IT Group S.A. και TUI Travel plc), καθώς και με πολλές τρίτες χώρες (Αργεντινή, Βραζιλία και Χιλή, σε πρώτη φάση). Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/50k/index_en.htm

([2]) Η διεθνής επικοινωνιακή εκστρατεία τουρισμού «Ευρώπη — Όποτε είστε έτοιμοι» απευθύνεται ιδίως στη Βραζιλία, στην Αργεντινή, στη Χιλή, στη Ρωσία, στην Κίνα και στην Ινδία. Ειδικότερα αποσκοπεί στην ευαισθητοποίηση και την προβολή της Ευρώπης ως κορυφαίου τουριστικού προορισμού μέσω της προβολής της πολυμορφίας και του πλούτου της, υποστηρίζοντας τον ευρωπαϊκό τουριστικό κλάδο μέσω της ενθάρρυνσης, των τουριστών από τις χώρες αυτές, καθώς και των δυνάμενων να ασκήσουν τους επηρεάσουν, να εξερευνούν την Ευρώπη καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια του έτους, καθώς και μέσω ενθάρρυνσης των εν λόγω τουριστών να ανακαλύψουν λιγότερο γνωστούς ευρωπαϊκούς προορισμούς, ιδίως κατά την χαμηλή περίοδο. Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες: http://europa.eu/readyforeurope

([3]) Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής με τίτλο «Εφαρμογή και ανάπτυξη της κοινής πολιτικής θεωρήσεων με στόχο την τόνωση της ανάπτυξης στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση» (COM(2012)0649 της 7ης Νοεμβρίου 2012) σαφώς αναφέρει την ανάγκη «να εξεταστεί ο οικονομικός αντίκτυπος της πολιτικής θεωρήσεων στην ευρύτερη οικονομία της Ένωσης, και ειδικότερα στον τουρισμό» και αναφέρεται στο «μεγάλο ανεκμετάλλευτο δυναμικό ανάπτυξης από τουρίστες προερχόμενους από αναδυόμενες αγορές» και τη συμβολή του στη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας».

3. Η Επιτροπή έχει παράσχει στις ΜΜΕ διάφορα μέτρα στήριξης, μεταξύ των οποίων ένα ολοκληρωμένο σύστημα οικονομικών πολιτικών και μηχανισμών για τη στήριξή τους με τις πλέον κατάλληλες πηγές και τύπους χρηματοδότησης σε κάθε στάδιο της ζωής τους ([4]). Ακόμη, οι τουριστικές επιχειρήσεις της ΕΕ, μπορούν να επωφεληθούν από τις ειδικές άμεσες χρηματοδοτικές επιχορηγήσεις ([5]) καθώς και από τη δωρεάν προσαρμοσμένη στις υπηρεσίες στήριξη που παρέχεται από το δίκτυο ευρωπαϊκού επιχειρηματικού δικτύου (Enterprise Europe Network) ([6]), το οποίο περιλαμβάνει μια ειδική τομεακή ομάδα για τον τουρισμό και την πολιτιστική κληρονομιά ([7]).

([4]) Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/financing-environment/index_en.htm

([5]) Μια επισκόπηση των χρηματοδοτικών μέσων της ΕΕ για ενδεχόμενη χρήση από τους ενδιαφερόμενους του δημόσιου και του ιδιωτικού τομέα στον τουρισμό διατίθεται στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7652

([6]) http://portal.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/about/about

([7]) http://portal.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/about/sector-groups/tourism-cultural-heritage

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005375/13
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Need for measures to strengthen European tourism

In its recent report entitled 'European Tourism 2013: Trends and Prospects', the European Travel Commission highlights the European tourism industry's upward trend and its promising prospects in general. Despite this, it stresses that complementary actions must be implemented with the aim of strengthening tourism demand in the medium term. It even stresses that visa regimes for third-country nationals in Europe should be simplified.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission agree with the ETC's conclusion regarding the need for additional measures to boost demand for European tourism? If so, what measures does it intend to take to further promote European destinations to third countries?

2. In this context, does the Commission intend to take action to simplify visa regimes in order to make Europe more attractive as a tourist destination?

3. Finally, does it intend to take measures, and if so, what measures, to support small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the tourism sector which have been affected by the unfortunate economic situation in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2013)

1. The 2010 Tourism Communication emphasises that one of the Commission's main objectives is to ensure that it maintains Europe in its position as 'the world's No 1 tourist destination' by boosting demand for tourism not only within the EU, but also from third countries. In line with this, the Commission has already launched several dedicated measures. Amongst them, the '50.000 tourists' initiative is an important pilot action meant to contribute to boosting tourism flows into Europe, with a particular focus on low season ([1]). In parallel, the international tourism communication campaign ([2]) aims at encouraging tourists from third countries to travel to Europe throughout the year.

2. Boosting travel to the EU requires not only more structured promotion activities, but also a proper exploitation of policies having an impact on tourism, among which a smart visa policy is key ([3]). In this context, the Commission is currently preparing an evaluation of the implementation of the Visa Code and envisages tabling a legislative proposal for a revision before the end of 2013 to introduce changes leading to further simplification of the visa procedures and enhancing harmonisation of practices, while bearing in mind the need to ensure the security of European citizens.

([1]) '50.000 tourists' is a complex pilot initiative based on the collaboration between the Commission and 10 Member States (Italy, Spain, France, Poland, Lithuania, Greece, Romania, Slovak Republic, Malta and Portugal), 3 main European tourism industry associations (the European Tour Operators Association — ETOA, the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Association — ECTAA), 7 major airlines (Alitalia, Air France, British Airways, Iberia, Lufthansa German Airlines, TAP Air Portugal and LOT Polish Airlines), as well as 3 private sector partners (El Corte Inglés S.A., Amadeus IT Group S.A. and TUI Travel plc), together with several third countries (Argentina, Brazil and Chile, in a first phase). For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/50k/index_en.htm

([2]) The international tourism communication campaign 'Europe — Whenever you're ready' is addressed in particular to Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Russia, China and India. It specifically aims at raising the visibility of Europe as a top tourism destination by showcasing its diversity and richness, supporting the European tourism sector by encouraging tourists from these countries, and influencers to explore Europe all year round, as well as encouraging these tourists to discover lesser-known European destinations, in particular during the low-season. For more information: http://europa.eu/readyforeurope

([3]) In this context, the Commission Communication 'Implementation and development of the common visa policy to spur growth in the EU' (COM(2012)0649 of 7 November 2012) clearly mentions the need 'to consider the economic impact of visa policy on the wider EU economy, and in particular on tourism' and refers to the 'large untapped potential for growth from tourists from emerging markets' and its impact on job creation.

3. The Commission has provided SMEs with various support measures, amongst which, a comprehensive system of financial policies and instruments to support them with the most appropriate sources and types of financing at each stage of their life ([4]). Further to this, EU tourism enterprises can benefit from dedicated direct funding grants ([5]) as well as from free service-tailored support provided by the Enterprise Europe Network ([6]) which includes a dedicated tourism and cultural heritage sector group ([7]).

([4]) For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/financing-environment/index_en.htm

([5]) An overview of EU financial instruments for possible use by the tourism sector's public and private stakeholders can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7652 .

([6]) http://portal.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/about/about .

([7]) http://portal.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/about/sector-groups/tourism-cultural-heritage

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005376/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(15 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Autorización de prospecciones petrolíferas en Canarias

Esta diputada ha tenido conocimiento de que el Ministerio de Industria del Gobierno de España podría haber dado la autorización para iniciar prospecciones petrolíferas e intervenciones físicas en los fondos marinos de aguas cercanas a las costas de Lanzarote y Fuerteventura en las islas Canarias.

¿Puede confirmar la Comisión Europea si es consciente de que se haya otorgado dicha autorización?

En su respuesta escrita de 11 de marzo de 2013 indican que la Comisión Europea está examinando la evaluación inicial presentada por el Reino de España prevista en la Directiva marco sobre la Estrategia Marina 2008/56/CE (artículo 8).

¿Estima la Comisión que los elementos notificados cumplen los requisitos de dicha Directiva?

¿Constituyen un marco adecuado para conseguir un buen estado medioambiental de aquí a 2020?

Por último, y en lo que respecta al expediente EU PILOT 3880, ¿ha tomado ya una decisión la Comisión Europea sobre su investigación de supuestas infracciones de la Directiva 94/22/CE sobre las condiciones para la concesión y el ejercicio de las autorizaciones de prospección, exploración y producción de hidrocarburos en la zona?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de julio de 2013)

Los servicios de la Comisión tienen conocimiento de nueve permisos de investigación de hidrocarburos en la zona de las Islas Canarias, denominados Canarias 1 a 9. Esos permisos fueron concedidos por la autoridad competente española en 2001. Están en curso varios procedimientos judiciales ante los tribunales nacionales españoles. Se han presentado asimismo denuncias a nivel de la Comisión y están siendo objeto de estudio.

En particular, los servicios de la Comisión clarifican actualmente con las autoridades españolas algunas decisiones relacionadas con las obligaciones previstas en la Directiva 94/22/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, sobre las condiciones para la concesión y el ejercicio de las autorizaciones de prospección, exploración y producción de hidrocarburos ([1]), tanto en relación con la aplicación general de dicha legislación en España como, más en concreto, con su aplicación respecto a esos nueve permisos. En estos momentos, los servicios de la Comisión todavía no han adoptado una posición definitiva sobre este asunto.

La Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina (DMEM) ([2]) no regula esas actividades. De acuerdo con el artículo 12, la Comisión evaluará si los elementos notificados por España conforme al artículo 9, apartado 2, al artículo 10, apartado 2, y al artículo 11, apartado 3, de la DMEM constituyen un marco adecuado en virtud de la citada Directiva.

([1]) DO L 164 de 30.6.1994, p. 3.
([2]) 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 (DO L 164 de 25.6.2008, p. 19).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005376/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Authorisation of oil prospecting in the Canary Islands

I have learnt that the Spanish Government's Ministry of Industry may have authorised the commencement of oil prospecting and physical interventions on the seabed off the coast of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura, in the Canary Islands.

Can the Commission confirm whether it is aware that such authorisation has been granted?

According to the written answer dated 11 March 2013, the Commission was assessing the initial assessment submitted by Spain as laid down by Article 8 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, 2008/56/EC.

Does the Commission think that the elements notified meet the requirements of that directive?

Do they constitute an appropriate framework for achieving good environmental status by 2020?

Finally, with regard to the EU PILOT 3880 file, has the Commission come to a decision yet regarding its investigation of alleged breaches of Directive 94/22/EC on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons in the area?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

The Commission's services are aware of 9 licences to prospect for hydrocarbons in the area of the Canary Islands — named Canarias 1 to 9. These licences have been awarded by the competent Spanish authority in 2001. A series of judicial proceedings are underway before Spanish national courts. Complaints have also been raised at the level of the Commission and are still under examination.

In particular, the Commission's services are currently clarifying with Spanish authorities some of their decisions in relation to obligations under Directive 94/22/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons ([1]), both as regards the general implementation of that legislation in Spain as well as specifically to its application for these 9 licences. At this moment in time, the Commission's services have not adopted a definitive position on this matter.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD ([2])) does not regulate such activities. In line with Article 12, the Commission will assess whether the elements notified by Spain under Articles (9)(2), (10)(2) and (11)(3) of MSFD constitute an appropriate framework under the said directive.

([1]) OJ L164, 30.06.1994, p. 3.
([2]) 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 (OJ L164, 25.6.2008, p.19).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005377/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(15 mai 2013)

Objet: Concentration et accaparement des terres agricoles en Europe

L'accaparement des terres est en expansion en Europe. La concentration et l'accaparement des terres agricoles par des groupes d'intérêts financiers qui spéculent sur les matières premières et le prix des terres n'est pas un phénomène nouveau et s'est accéléré en Europe au cours des dernières décennies.

Les petits agriculteurs locaux sont exclus du commerce des terres agricoles sous l'effet d'une augmentation des acquisitions par des sociétés, des fonds souverains et des fonds de pension ainsi que les géants de l'agroalimentaire, dont une grande partie sont des investisseurs étrangers, attirés par les subventions élevées offertes par l'Union européenne.

La moitié des terres agricoles de l'Union est concentrée dans les 3 % de grandes exploitations de plus de 100 hectares. Dans certains pays membres, la propriété agricole est aussi inégalement répartie qu'au Brésil, en Colombie ou aux Philippines. La terre est saisie à travers l'Europe essentiellement pour la production de matières premières destinées à l'industrie alimentaire dominée par les sociétés transnationales, les industries extractives, les bioénergies, ou encore l'installation de fermes solaires et l'étalement urbain.

En Allemagne, on est passé de 1,2 million d'exploitations en 1966-67 à 299 100 en 2010. En Andalousie, ce chiffre a chuté des deux tiers à moins de 1 million en 2007. Ainsi, en 2010, 2 % des propriétaires possédaient la moitié des terres. En France, chaque année, plus de 60 000 hectares de terres agricoles sont perdues pour faire place à des routes ou des supermarchés, à l'étalement urbain ou aux parcs de loisirs.

1. La Commission a-t-elle effectué une étude de l'impact que l'accaparement provoque sur les petites exploitations agricoles par des investisseurs étrangers en Europe, et notamment sur les conditions de vie et de travail des petits agriculteurs? Quelles sont les conclusions de cette étude?

2. Quelles sont les mesures que l'Union européenne a mises en place pour protéger le travail agricole et les petites exploitations face à la puissance des entreprises agroalimentaires?

3. Quelles sont les aides d'urgence proposées aux petites et moyennes exploitations pour faire face à la diminution des exploitations sous l'effet de la concentration des terres agricoles en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(17 juillet 2013)

1. La Commission n'a mené aucune étude sur le sujet.

2. La politique agricole commune (PAC) contribue considérablement au développement économique des petites exploitations grâce aux politiques d'aides au revenu (paiements directs) et de soutien au développement rural.

La proposition de la Commission relative à la réforme de la PAC vise à rééquilibrer les rapports de force tout au long de la chaîne d'approvisionnement alimentaire. La proposition relative à l'organisation commune de marché unique favorise la coopération entre producteurs, tout en respectant les règles de concurrence, et étend les règles en matière de reconnaissance des différentes organisations à tous les secteurs. Selon la Commission, en matière de développement rural ([1]), le développement de circuits d'approvisionnement courts et des marchés locaux fait partie des priorités. Elle propose également une aide au démarrage pour le développement des petites exploitations, des aides aux investissements et un soutien à la coopération ([2]).

([1]) Consultable à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/legal-proposals/index_fr.htm
([2]) Les propositions législatives de la Commission sur la PAC pour la période de programmation 2014-2020 sont en phase de négociation entre le Conseil et le Parlement européen; les dispositions légales en la matière sont donc sujettes à modification.

Concernant les paiements directs, la Commission a proposé la mise en place d'un régime simplifié pour les petits exploitants agricoles, donnant accès à une aide plus importante et pouvant contribuer à stabiliser et à consolider leur situation. Le Conseil et le Parlement européen ont également proposé que les États membres puissent attribuer une aide plus élevée pour les premiers hectares déclarés par les petits exploitants afin qu'ils bénéficient d'un soutien direct. Les agriculteurs qui bénéficient du régime des petits exploitants agricoles se voient exonérés des obligations liées à d'écologisation.

D'ici janvier 2014, la Commission présentera également un rapport concernant la mise en œuvre d'un nouveau système d'étiquetage applicable à la vente directe, visant à aider les producteurs à commercialiser leurs produits au niveau local ([3]).

3. Les structures agricoles de l'UE sont relativement petites par rapport à celles des États-Unis ou du Canada, et la Commission s'efforce de valoriser la diversité ([4]). Aucune aide d'urgence allant au delà des mesures visées ci-dessus n'est proposée aux petites et moyennes exploitations.

([3]) Article 5 du règlement (UE) n° 1151/2012 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 21 novembre 2012 relatif aux systèmes de qualité applicables aux produits agricoles et aux denrées alimentaires (JO L 343 du 14.12.2012, p. 1).

([4]) En 2010, sur plus de 12 millions d'exploitations agricoles dans l'Union européenne, seules 290 000 exploitations (2,5 %) environ étaient détenues par des personnes morales, contre près de 257 000 (1,8 %) en 2005. Selon les statistiques européennes disponibles, entre 2005 et 2010, le nombre d'exploitations a augmenté d'environ 2,2 % par an dans la classe de taille la plus élevée (au-delà de 100 ha). Toutefois, plus de 60 % de ces exploitations sont entre les mains d'un seul et unique exploitant et seulement 29 % appartiennent à des personnes morales. Entre 2005 et 2010, ce dernier chiffre a augmenté de moins d'un point de pourcentage, ce qui permet difficilement de se prononcer sur les acquisitions foncières à grande échelle par les entreprises.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005377/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Concentration and monopolisation of agricultural land in Europe

Land in Europe is becoming increasingly monopolised. The concentration and monopolisation of agricultural land by financial interest groups speculating on raw materials and the price of land is not a new phenomenon, but it has accelerated in Europe in recent decades.

Small local farmers are excluded from trade in agricultural land due to an increase in acquisitions by companies, sovereign funds and pension funds, as well as agri-food giants, many of which are foreign investors, attracted by the higher subsidies offered by the European Union.

Half of the EU's agricultural land is concentrated in 3% of large holdings of more than 100 hectares. In some Member States, agricultural property is as unevenly distributed as it is in Brazil, Colombia or the Philippines. The land is used across Europe essentially for the production of raw materials intended for the food industry, which is dominated by transnational companies, mining and quarrying, bioenergy or even the installation of solar farms and urban sprawl.

In Germany, the number of holdings has fallen from 1.2 million in 1966-67 to 299 100 in 2010. In Andalusia, this figure has fallen by two thirds to less than 1 million in 2007. Thus, in 2010, half of the land was owned by 2% of owners. In France, every year, more than 60 000 hectares of agricultural land are lost to make way for roads or supermarkets, for urban sprawl or theme parks.

1. Has the Commission carried out a study on the impact of monopolisation by foreign investors in Europe on small agricultural holdings, and in particular on the living and working conditions of small farmers? What were the conclusions of this study?

2. What measures has the European Union put in place to protect farm work and small holdings faced with of the power of agri-food companies?

3. What urgent aid has been offered to small and medium-sized holdings given the decrease in holdings due to the concentration of agricultural land in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

1. The Commission has not carried out such study.

2. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) contributes substantially to the economic development of small holdings by providing them with income support (direct payments) and rural development support.

The Commission's proposal on the CAP reform aims to rebalance power relationships along the food supply chain. The proposal on the single Common Market Organisation facilitates producer cooperation, while respecting competition rules, in addition to extending the scope of recognition to all sectors. As regards rural development ([1]), the Commission has identified the development of short supply chains and local markets among the priorities. It provides also a start-up aid for the development of small farms, investment support and support for cooperational activities ([2]).

With regard to direct payments, the Commission has proposed a simplified scheme for small farmers with the possibility of a higher support. This additional support can help in stabilising and consolidating the situation of such farms. The Council and the European Parliament have also proposed an option for Member States to increase the payment to the first hectares they declare for the purpose of receiving direct support. Farmers participating in the small farmers schemes are also exempted from greening.

([1]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/legal-proposals/index_en.htm
([2]) The Commission's legal proposals on the CAP for programming period 2014-2020 are in a negotiation phase with the Council and the European parliament and the relevant legal provisions could be subject to change.

The Commission shall also present a report on the case for a new local farming and direct sales labelling scheme to assist producers in marketing their produce locally by January 2014 ([3]).

3. EU farm structures are relatively small compared to those in the US or Canada and the Commission is trying to enhance the diversity ([4]). No urgent aid is offered to small and medium-sized holdings going beyond the measures referred to above.

([3]) Article 55 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, OJ L 343, 14.12.2012.

([4]) Out of more than 12 million agricultural holdings in the EU, only around 290 000 holdings (2.5%) were held by legal entities in 2010, up from 257 000 (1.8%) in 2005. Based on the available European statistics, an increase in the number of holdings in the highest size class (above 100 ha), by roughly 2.2%/year between 2005 and 2010 could be seen. However, more than 60% of these holdings are held by a single holder, while only 29% are held by legal entities. Between 2005 and 2010 this latter share has increased by less than 1 percentage point, giving limited evidence of large-scale land acquisition by companies.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005378/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(15 mai 2013)

Objet: Licenciements économiques à l'usine Cobral à Lorient (France)

Le 17 mai prochain, l'usine Cobral-Lorient (groupe Cecab), spécialisée dans la fabrication de plats surgelés, fermera ses portes. La production est transférée à Pontivy. Sur les soixante-trois personnes que compte le site lorientais, dont la plupart sont des femmes, cinquante-trois sont sous la menace d'un licenciement économique.

L'activité de l'usine Cobral-Lorient va en conséquence être transférée sur le site de Pontivy, dans lequel près de 4 millions d'euros ont été investis. À défaut d'avoir trouvé un emploi ou une solution de reclassement d'ici le 17 mai, les cinquante-trois autres seront licenciés.

Le souhait de la direction était d'inciter la majorité des salariés à ce transfert géographique. Lors de l'annonce de la fermeture définitive à Lorient, les salariés, dont beaucoup de femmes, avaient exprimé leurs inquiétudes Des propositions de reclassement ont été faites dans d'autres filiales du groupe Cecab. Ces offres n'ont, à ce jour, pas été acceptées par les salariés concernés car elles sont trop éloignées de leur lieu de vie.

1. La Commission est-elle au courant de cette situation qui obligerait des salariés de Cobral, notamment des femmes, à devoir accepter un transfert géographique sous risque de licenciement?

2. Quels sont les soutiens qui ont été concédés au groupe Cecab à l'échelle européenne et en France?

3. Quelles sont les garanties qui existent quant au respect des droits liés au travail, et notamment du droit à un emploi?

4. Quelles mesures doivent être prises par le groupe Cecab afin d'atténuer les conséquences d'un transfert géographique de travailleurs, notamment des femmes, vis-à-vis de la compatibilité entre la vie professionnelle, d'une part, et la vie familiale et privée, d'autre part, défendue par l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(8 juillet 2013)

1. La Commission n'a pas le pouvoir d'interférer dans les discussions entre la direction et les représentants des travailleurs ou dans les décisions propres à une société. Elle incite cependant les parties à respecter les bonnes pratiques d'anticipation et de gestion socialement responsable de la restructuration. Après la parution de son livre vert ([1]) en janvier 2012 et l'adoption par le Parlement européen le 15 janvier 2013 du rapport Cercas, la Commission va maintenant présenter une communication qui insèrera la législation et les initiatives actuelles de l'UE concernant la restructuration dans un cadre de qualité qui regroupera les meilleures pratiques que toutes les parties concernées devraient mettre en œuvre.

2. D'après les informations transmises par les autorités portugaises, le groupe Cecab n'a reçu aucun soutien financier du Fonds social européen (FSE).

3.-4. Plusieurs directives de l'UE sur l'information et la consultation des salariés pourraient être applicables dans les cas où une société envisage une fermeture ou une restructuration, notamment les directives 2002/14/CE ([2]) et 98/59/CE ([3]). Ces directives demandent que les salariés soient impliqués dans les décisions des employeurs les affectant afin d'en limiter les conséquences négatives et d'éviter ou de réduire les licenciements collectifs. Il incombe aux autorités nationales compétentes, notamment les instances juridiques, de veiller à ce que la législation nationale transposant les directives soit correctement et effectivement appliquée par l'employeur concerné, en tenant compte des spécificités individuelles.

([1]) Voir les réponses et une synthèse à l'adresse suivante http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en (en anglais).
([2]) Directive 2002/14/CE du Parlement et du Conseil du 11 mars 2002 établissant un cadre général relatif à l'information et la consultation des travailleurs dans la Communauté — JO L 80 du 23.3.2002.
([3]) Directive 98/59/CE du Conseil du 20 juillet 1998 concernant le rapprochement des législations des États membres relatives aux licenciements collectifs — JO L 225 du 12.8.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005378/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Economic redundancies in the Cobral factory in Lorient (France)

On 17 May, the Cobral-Lorient factory (Cecab group), which specialises in frozen food manufacturing, will shut its doors. Production has been transferred to Pontivy. Of the 63 workers on the Lorient site, most of whom are women, 53 are at risk of economic redundancy.

The Cobral-Lorient factory's activity will consequently be transferred to the Pontivy site, in which almost EUR 4 million have been invested. If they have not found a job or redeployment solution by 17 May, the other 53 will be made redundant.

The management wanted to encourage the majority of the workers to make the move to the Pontivy site. When the closure of the Lorient site was announced definitively, the workers, including many women, expressed their concerns. They were offered the chance to be redeployed to other subsidiaries in the Cecab group. So far, the workers involved have not accepted these offers as they are too far away from their homes.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation, which would force workers from Cobral, particularly women, to accept a geographical transfer at the risk of being made redundant?

2. What support has been granted to the Cecab group at European level and in France?

3. What guarantees have been made with regard to respect for rights relating to work, and in particular the right to a job?

4. What measures should the Cecab group take in order to mitigate the consequences of a geographical transfer for workers, particularly women, with regard to the work-life balance defended by the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

1. The Commission has no power to interfere in discussions between management and worker's representatives or in specific company's decisions. It urges them, however, to follow good practices of anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring. Following its January 2012 Green Paper ([1]) and the adoption by the European Parliament on 15 January 2013 of the Cercas report, the Commission will present a communication establishing a Quality Framework that will frame the current EU legislation and initiatives relevant to restructuring and it will include the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders.

2. According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, the Cecab group has not received any financial support from the European Social Fund (ESF).

3-4. Several EU Directives on informing and consulting employees could be applicable in cases where a company contemplates closure or restructuring, in particular Directives 2002/14/EC ([2]) and 98/59/EC ([3]). These Directives require to involve employees in employers' decisions affecting them in order to mitigate any negative consequences and to avoid or reduce collective redundancies. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the directives is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.
([2]) Directive 2002/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2002 establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community, OJ L 80, 23.3.2002.
([3]) Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005379/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(15. maj 2013)

Om: Elefanter dræbt af krybskytter i Den Centralafrikanske Republik

Dzanga-Ndoki Nationalparken i Den Centralafrikanske Republik, som er en enestående del af verdenskulturarven, er hjemsted for over 1 000 skovelefanter. Til trods for, at disse elefanter betragtes som nationale klenodier, blev en stor gruppe elefanter for nylig dræbt af krybskytter i parken, hvilket understreger den nuværende prekære sikkerhedssituation i landet. Den Europæiske Union spiller en vigtig rolle i regionen, og den støtte, den siden 2008 har ydet til Den Centralafrikanske Republik alene, beløber sig til ca. 157 mio. EUR (205 mio. USD). Denne støtte er blevet suspenderet på grund af den manglende retssikkerhed i landet.

1. Er Kommissionen bekendt med den nylige nedslagtning af elefanter i Den Centralafrikanske Republik, og tages der i forbindelse med overvejelserne om fremtidig støtte til landet hensyn til beskyttelsen af nationale klenodier som f.eks. elefanter?

2. Hvad kan EU og det internationale samfund gøre for at hjælpe Den Centralafrikanske Republik med at genoprette ro og orden i landet med henblik på at beskytte såvel befolkningen som naturarven?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Andris Piebalgs
(21. juni 2013)

1. Kommissionen er bekendt med den nylige nedslagtning af 27 elefanter i nationalparken Dzanga-Sangha og overvåger nøje situationen. EU-delegationen har drøftet situationen med statsoverhoved Michel Djodotia og overgangsregeringen og opfordrer dem til at sende militære forstærkninger som støtte til den lokale naturbeskyttelsesstyrke. Minister Dhaffane, som har ansvaret for beskyttede områder, bekræftede den 2. juni over for EU-delegationen, at en mission støttet af Verdensnaturfonden til bekæmpelse af krybskytteri, bestående af 60 skovfogeder og soldater, var ankommet i parken.

Kommissionen har støttet beskyttelsen vilde dyr og planter i Den Centralafrikanske Republik (CAR) siden 1989. Den nuværende støtte gives gennem det regionale ECOFAC-program ([1]) og det nationale EcoFaune-projekt. Det er planen, at der fortsat gives støtte til regionen inden for rammerne af den 11. Europæiske Udviklingsfond med særlige foranstaltninger i CAR.

2. Den Europæiske Union er yderst bekymret over situationen i CAR og de sikkerhedsrisici, som befolkningen er udsat for. EU arbejder tæt sammen med De Forenede Nationer, Den Afrikanske Union og Det Centralafrikanske Økonomiske Fællesskab (ECCAS) for at styrke sikkerheden i Bangui og resten af landet. Som den højtstående repræsentants/næstformandens talsmand understregede den 21. april, støtter Den Europæiske Union ECCAS's beslutning om at forstærke sin fredsbevarende indsats i CAR, der skal hjælpe med at genoprette sikkerheden i hele landet, og er klar til at overveje yderligere finansiering til MICOPAX (fredsbevarende mission), hvis ECCAS anmoder om det.

([1]) Program for beskyttelse og udvikling af skrøbelige økosystemer i Centralafrika.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005379/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Elephants killed by poachers in the Central African Republic

Dzanga-Ndoki National Park in the Central African Republic is a unique World Heritage site and home to more than 1 000 forest elephants. Despite the fact that they are considered national treasures, in a recent episode a large group of these elephants was killed by poachers in the park, underlining the currently precarious security situation in the country. The European Union plays a vital role in the region, and has since 2008 provided roughly EUR 157 million (USD 205 million) in aid alone to the Central African Republic. That aid has been suspended in response to the lack of the rule of law in the country.

1. Is the Commission aware of the recent slaughter of elephants in the Central African Republic, and is the protection of national treasures such as elephants being taken into consideration in the assessment of future aid to the country?

2. How can the EU and the international community act to assist the Central African Republic to restore peace and order in the country in order to safeguard its population and its natural heritage?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the recent slaughter of 27 elephants in the Dzanga-Sangha National Park and monitors the situation closely. The EU Delegation has discussed the situation with the transitional Head of State Michel Djodotia and with the interim government and encouraged them to send military reinforcements to support the local wildlife protection force. The Minister in charge of Protected Areas, Mr Dhaffane, called the EU Delegation on 2 June to confirm that a World Wildlife Fund-supported anti-poaching mission made up of 60 forest guards and soldiers had arrived in the park.

The Commission has supported the wildlife sector in the Central African Republic (CAR) since 1989. Current support is provided through the regional ECOFAC ([1]) programme and the national EcoFaune project. It is planned that regional funding will be continued in the framework of the 11th EDF, with specific interventions in CAR.

2. The European Union is extremely concerned about the situation in CAR and the security risks this presents for the population. The EU is working closely with the UN, AU and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to reinforce security in Bangui and the rest of the country. As underlined by the HR/VP's spokesperson on 21 April, the European Union welcomes and supports the decision of the ECCAS to reinforce their peace operation in CAR to assist the restoration of security throughout the country and is ready to consider further financing in support of MICOPAX (mission de consolidation de la paix), if requested by ECCAS.

([1]) Programme de conservation et de valorisation des Ecosystèmes Fragilisés d'Afrique centrale.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005380/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(15. maj 2013)

Om: Foie gras — Ramme for dyrevelfærd

Tvangsfodring med henblik på fremstilling af foie gras er forbudt i visse EU-lande på grund af den mishandling, det indebærer for ænder og gæs. I Rådets direktiv 98/58/EF om beskyttelse af dyr, der holdes til landbrugsformål, fastsættes det, at »intet dyr må gives foder eller drikke på en måde, der kan påføre det unødig lidelse eller skade«. Tvangsfodring er således ikke i overensstemmelse med EU's minimumsstandarder for beskyttelse af dyr.

1. Overvejer Kommissionen at indføre lovgivning, der forbyder tvangsfodring?

2. Er Kommissionen bekendt med forskning i alternative metoder, der ikke indebærer tvangsfodring?

3. Hvor mange steder, hvor der produceres foie gras, har Kommissionen inspiceret i Frankrig og Ungarn — de to kendte EU-medlemsstater, der producerer foie gras — siden februar 2010?

4. Hvor stor en andel af det samlede antal steder, hvor der produceres foie gras, udgør dette antal?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(26. juni 2013)

Kommissionen henviser det ærede medlem til sit svar på forespørgsel E-3959/2009 ([1]). Derudover kan et sådant forbud kræve en ændring af Kommissionens forordning (EF) nr. 543/2008 af 16. juni 2008 om gennemførelsesbestemmelser til Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1234/2007 for så vidt angår handelsnormer for fjerkrækød ([2]), som fastsætter handelsnormerne for foie gras, jf. forordningens artikel 1, nr. 3.

Kommissionen er ikke bekendt med særlig forskning i alternative fodringsmetoder, der uden tvangsfodring kan skabe den udvidelse af levercellerne, der er det særlige ved foie gras. Der er dog nogle landbrugere, der hævder, at det er muligt at lave et sådant produkt uden stopfodring ([3]).

Kommissionens Generaldirektorat for Sundhed og Forbrugeres Levnedsmiddel- og Veterinærkontors (FVO) rolle er fastlagt i Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets Forordning (EF) nr. 882/2004 af 29. april 2004 om offentlig kontrol med henblik på verifikation af, at foderstof- og fødevarelovgivningen samt dyresundheds- og dyrevelfærdsbestemmelserne overholdes (artikel 45) ([4]). Kommissionen kontrollerer følgelig de kompetente myndigheders officielle kontrolaktiviteter, herunder kontrol af anvendelsen af anbefalingerne i den europæiske konvention om beskyttelse af dyr, der holdes til landbrugsformål, vedrørende produktionen af foie gras. I den forbindelse kan Kommissionen besøge produktionssteder, men den vil ikke erstatte medlemsstaternes myndigheder.

FVO har dækket dette emne i sine kontroller i Frankrig og Ungarn i 2012 og 2011 ([5]). Begge rapporter indikerer, at de kompetente myndigheder har foretaget målrettede inspektioner på disse gårde, og at deres inspektionsprocedurer stort set var tilfredsstillende.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) EUT L 157 af 17.6.2008, s. 46.
([3]) Se http://www.lapateria.eu/home.html
([4]) EUT L 165 af 30.4.2004, s. 1.
([5]) De relevante rapporter om Ungarn (ref. DG(SANCO) 2011-6045) og om Frankrig (ref. DG(SANCO) 2012-6446 er offentliggjort her: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005380/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Foie gras — animal welfare framework

Force-feeding for foie gras production is prohibited in some EU countries because of the cruelty involved for ducks and geese. Council Directive 98/58/EC on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes states that 'no animal shall be provided with food or liquid in a manner […] which may cause unnecessary suffering or injury'. Thus, force-feeding does not comply with EU minimum standards for the protection of animals.

1. Is the Commission considering legislation that will prohibit force-feeding?

2. Is the Commission familiar with research on alternative feeding methods that do not include gavage (tube feeding)?

3. How many foie gras production sites has the Commission inspected in France and Hungary — the two Member States known to produce foie gras — since February 2010?

4. What share of the total number of foie gras production sites in the two countries has been inspected?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-3959/2009 ([1]). Moreover, such a ban may require an amendment of Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards the marketing standards for poultry meat ([2]) which provides marketing standards for foie gras as defined in it Article 1 point 3.

The Commission is not aware of specific research on alternative feeding methods that would produce the enlargement of liver cells specific to the product without force feeding. However some farmers claimed that such product can be obtained without gavage ([3]).

The role of the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) is specified in 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 (Art. 45) ([4]). Accordingly the Commission is to audit the competent authorities official control activities including control on the application of the recommendations of the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes on the production of foie gras. In this context it may also visit production sites, but will not replace Member States authorities.

The FVO has included this topic in audits in France and Hungary in 2012 and 2011 ([5]). Both reports indicate that the competent authorities have targeted inspections on these farms and their inspection procedures were largely satisfactory.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) OJ L 157, 17.6.2008, p. 46.
([3]) See at http://www.lapateria.eu/home.html
([4]) OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([5]) The relevant reports on Hungary (ref DG(SANCO) 2011-6045) and on France (ref DG(SANCO) 2012-6446 are published at http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005381/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(15 mei 2013)

Betreft: Stop het vrijgeven van de cabotage

Volgens berichtgeving van FNV Bondgenoten gaan op 14 mei 2013 de Europese vakbonden, verenigd in de Europese Transportarbeiders Federatie (ETF), samen actievoeren tegen de cabotageplannen van eurocommissaris Kallas ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Actie 14 mei: Stop het vrijgeven van de cabotage, stop Kallas!"?

2. Klopt het dat de Commissie plannen heeft om de cabotage binnen de EU vrij te geven?

3. Is de Commissie bekend met de zorgen (o.a. sociale dumping) van de Nederlandse transportsector inzake de geplande regelgeving omtrent cabotage? Wat is de mening van de Commissie over deze zorgen?

4. Is de Commissie bereid haar plannen over verdere liberalisering van het wegtransport waaronder het vrijgeven van de cabotage per direct te schrappen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

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

Zoals gevraagd door de wetgever (Verordening (EG) nr. 1072/2009 ([2])), werkt de Commissie aan een evaluatie van de wegvervoersmarkt met het oog op een betere handhaving van de regelgeving. Een aantal belanghebbenden wijst op de problematische arbeidsomstandigheden in het wegvervoer. Er is echter geen aantoonbaar verband tussen die situaties en het verrichten van cabotagevervoer. De arbeidsomstandigheden verbeteren vergt in de eerste plaats de handhaving van de toepasselijke sociale regelgeving en de regelgeving inzake het verrichten van diensten (Richtlijn 96/71/EG betreffende de terbeschikkingstelling van werknemers ([3]), de verordening inzake contractuele verbintenissen — Rome I ([4])). De Commissie onderzoekt of nieuwe maatregelen kunnen worden genomen om ervoor te zorgen dat de regelgeving inzake de tijdelijke en permanente dienstverrichtingen in het wegvervoer correct wordt nageleefd. Dit heeft met name betrekking op de verordeningen (EG) nrs. 1071/2009 ([5]) en 1072/2009.

Zoals in juni en december 2012 door de staatshoofden en regeringsleiders is benadrukt, is het in de huidige economische situatie belangrijk om de interne markt te voltooien. In combinatie met de invoering van passende handhavingsmaatregelen zou de EU-economie baat hebben bij een geleidelijke versoepeling van de regels inzake de toegang tot de markt voor het wegvervoer. De Commissie bekijkt op dit moment hoe dergelijke maatregelen kunnen worden ingevoerd.

De Commissie zou graag een afschrift ontvangen van het door het Geachte Parlementslid genoemde rapport.

([1]) http://www.fnvbondgenoten.nl/nieuws/nieuwsarchief/2013/mei/601674-actie_14_mei_stop_het_vrijgeven_van_de_cabotage_stop_kallas/.

([2]) Artikel 17, lid 3, van Verordening (EG) nr. 1072/2009 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 21 oktober 2009 tot vaststelling van gemeenschappelijke regels voor toegang tot de markt voor internationaal goederenvervoer over de weg, PB L 300 van 14.11.2009, blz. 72.

([3]) Richtlijn 96/71/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 16 december 1996 betreffende de terbeschikkingstelling van werknemers met het oog op het verrichten van diensten, PB L 18 van 21.1.1997, blz. 1.

([4]) Verordening (EG) nr. 593/2008 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 17 juni 2008 inzake het recht dat van toepassing is op verbintenissen uit overeenkomst (Rome I), PB L 177 van 4.7.2008, blz. 4.

([5]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1071/2009 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 21 oktober 2009 tot vaststelling van gemeenschappelijke regels betreffende de voorwaarden waaraan moet zijn voldaan om het beroep van wegvervoerondernemer uit te oefenen en tot intrekking van Richtlijn 96/26/EG van de Raad (Voor de EER relevante tekst), PB L 300 van 14.11.2009, blz. 51.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005381/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Stop opening up cabotage

According to reports from the Dutch trade union FNV Bondgenoten, European trade unions, united in the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), are going to campaign together on 14 May 2013 against Commissioner Kallas's cabotage plans ([1]).

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'Action 14 May: Stop opening up cabotage, stop Kallas!'?

2. Is it true that the Commission is planning to open up cabotage within the EU?

3. Is the Commission aware of the Dutch transport sector's concerns (including those of social dumping) concerning the planned legislation for cabotage? What is the Commission's opinion on these concerns?

4. Is the Commission prepared to immediately scrap its plans for the further liberalisation of road transport, including the opening up of cabotage? If not, why not?

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

The Commission is assessing the situation of the EU road haulage market , as requested by the legislator (Reg. (EC) No 1072/2009 ([2])) with the aim of improving enforcement of the rules. Concerns exist amongst some stakeholders regarding employment conditions in the road haulage sector. There is no clear evidence that such situations are linked to the operation of cabotage. Rather, it is the enforcement of the relevant provisions in social and services legislation (Directive 96/71/EC on the posting of workers ([3]), Rome I Regulation on contractual obligations ([4])) that is important to address the employment conditions. The Commission is considering further measures to ensure that the provisions on temporary and permanent provision of services in the road haulage sector are complied with. This refers in particular to Regulations (EC) No 1071/2009 ([5]) and 1072/2009.

As has been underlined by the Heads of State and Government in June and December 2012, in the present economic circumstances it is important to complete the internal market. In combination with the introduction of the appropriate enforcement measures, the EU economy would benefit from a gradual relaxation of the provisions on access to the road haulage market. The Commission is currently considering how such measures could be introduced.

The Commission would be interested in receiving the report referred to by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://www.fnvbondgenoten.nl/nieuws/nieuwsarchief/2013/mei/601674-actie_14_mei_stop_het_vrijgeven_van_de_cabotage_stop_kallas/.

([2]) Article 17(3), Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market, OJ L 300, 14.11.2009.

([3]) 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.

([4]) Regulation (EC) No 593/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 on the law applicable to contractual obligations (Rome I), OJ L 177, 4.7.2008.

([5]) Regulation (EC) No 1071/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing common rules concerning the conditions to be complied with to pursue the occupation of road transport operator and repealing Council Directive 96/26/EC (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 300, 14.11.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005383/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL) και Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(15 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Πτήσεις τσάρτερ στο παράνομο αεροδρόμιο Ercan

Η ιστοσελίδα του αεροδρομίου Wrocław στην Πολωνία διαφημίζει πτήσεις τσάρτερ για την καλοκαιρινή σεζόν στο παράνομο αεροδρόμιο Ercan, που ευρίσκεται στα κατεχόμενα εδάφη της Κύπρου.

— Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή την ύπαρξη αυτών των πτήσεων;

— Υπάρχουν άλλα αεροδρόμια σε κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ από τα οποία πραγματοποιούνται πτήσεις στα κατεχόμενα εδάφη της Κύπρου;

— Δεδομένου ότι παρόμοιες πτήσεις παραβιάζουν κατάφωρα τους νόμους της ΕΕ, και θέτουν ζητήματα ασφαλείας, τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή ώστε να διακοπούν αυτές οι πτήσεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Ιουλίου 2013)

Όλες οι πτήσεις προς το αεροδρόμιο Τύμπου/Ερτζάν για τις οποίες είναι ενήμερη η Επιτροπή περιλαμβάνουν ενδιάμεση στάση/προσγείωση στην Τουρκία.

Στο πλαίσιο της σύμβασης του Σικάγου για τη διεθνή πολιτική αεροπορία, οι χώρες γνωστοποιούν στη Διεθνή Οργάνωση Πολιτικής Αεροπορίας (ΔΟΠΑ) ποια αεροδρόμιά τους είναι ανοιχτά στις διεθνείς αεροπορικές μεταφορές. Η κυβέρνηση της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας δεν έχει πράξει αναλόγως για το αεροδρόμιο Τύμπου/Ερτζάν που βρίσκεται στις περιοχές στις οποίες δεν ασκεί ουσιαστικό έλεγχο.

Η Επιτροπή, ωστόσο, δεν διαθέτει τη νομική αρμοδιότητα να διαχειριστεί το θέμα αεροπορικής εταιρείας που εκτελεί πτήσεις μεταξύ της Τουρκίας και των περιοχών της Κύπρου στις οποίες έχει ανασταλεί η εφαρμογή του κοινοτικού κεκτημένου.

Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει στην απάντησή της στην ερώτηση E-005343/2013 σχετικά με την ασφάλεια στην αεροπορία στη νοτιοανατολική περιοχή της Μεσογείου.

Το θέμα που έθεσαν τα Αξιότιμα Μέλη καταδεικνύει για ακόμα μια φορά την επείγουσα ανάγκη για συνολική διευθέτηση του κυπριακού ζητήματος. Η Επιτροπή τονίζει τη σημασία της προόδου για την επίτευξη τελικής συμφωνίας μεταξύ των δύο Κοινοτήτων υπό την αιγίδα του ΟΗΕ, συμφωνίας πολυαναμενόμενης από τον κυπριακό λαό και, επιπλέον, σημαντικότατης και για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005383/13
do Komisji
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL) oraz Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(15 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Loty czarterowe na nielegalne lotnisko Ercan

Strona internetowa portu lotniczego we Wrocławiu reklamuje loty czarterowe w sezonie letnim na nielegalne lotnisko Ercan położone na okupowanym terytorium Cypru.

— Czy Komisja wie o tych lotach?

— Czy inne lotniska w państwach członkowskich UE obsługują loty do okupowanej części Cypru?

— Mając na uwadze, że loty te w rażący sposób naruszają przepisy UE i powodują problem związany z bezpieczeństwem, jakie kroki zamierza przedsięwziąć Komisja, by zaprzestano tych lotów?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(10 lipca 2013 r.)

Wszystkie loty do portu lotniczego Tymbou/Ercan, o których wie Komisja, obejmują przystanek/międzylądowanie w Turcji.

Na mocy konwencji chicagowskiej o międzynarodowym lotnictwie cywilnym państwa muszą powiadamiać Organizację Międzynarodowego Lotnictwa Cywilnego (ICAO) o lotniskach obsługujących międzynarodowe przewozy lotnicze na ich terytorium. Rząd Republiki Cypru w swoim powiadomieniu nie uwzględnił portu lotniczego w Tymbou/Ercan, który położony jest na terenach, nad którymi nie sprawuje on skutecznej kontroli.

Komisja nie posiada jednakże kompetencji prawnych umożliwiających jej rozwiązanie kwestii przewoźników lotniczych wykonujących loty między Turcją a tymi obszarami Cypru, gdzie stosowanie wspólnotowego dorobku prawnego zostało zawieszone.

Ponadto Komisja odsyła do odpowiedzi udzielonej na pytanie E-005343/2013 w sprawie bezpieczeństwa żeglugi powietrznej w południowo-wschodnim regionie Morza Śródziemnego.

Kwestia podniesiona przez szanownych Państwa Posłów po raz kolejny pokazuje, jak istotne jest szybkie i kompleksowe rozwiązanie problemu cypryjskiego. Komisja jeszcze raz podkreśla znaczenie działań – podejmowanych pod auspicjami ONZ – na rzecz osiągnięcia ostatecznego porozumienia między obiema społecznościami, na które tak bardzo czekają obywatele Cypru i które jest tak ważne również dla Unii Europejskiej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005383/13
to the Commission
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL) and Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Charter flights to illegal Ercan airport

The website of Wrocław airport in Poland advertises charter flights for the summer season to the illegal Ercan airport, located in the occupied territory of Cyprus.

— Is the Commission aware of these flights?

— Are there other airports in EU Member States that operate flights to the occupied territory of Cyprus?

— Given that such flights blatantly violate EC laws, and raise a security issue, what does the Commission intend to do to stop these flights?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

All flights to the Tymbou/Ercan airport of which the Commission is aware involve a stopover/touchdown in Turkey.

Under the Chicago Convention on international civil aviation, countries shall notify the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) about their airports open to international air services. The Government of the Republic of Cyprus has not done so for the airport of Tymbou/Ercan, which lies in the areas in which it does not exercise effective control.

The Commission does not, however, have the legal competence to deal with the issue of an airline operating flights between Turkey and those areas of Cyprus where the application of the *acquis communautaire* is suspended.

Furthermore, the Commission refers to its answer to Question E-005343/2013 on aviation safety in the South-East Mediterranean region.

The issue raised by the Honourable Members illustrates once again the urgent need for a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. The Commission reiterates the importance to move forward in order to reach a final agreement between both communities under UN auspices, so much awaited by the Cypriot people and so important also for the European Union.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005384/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(15. maj 2013)

Om: Korruption i Rumænien

I Kommissionens halvårsrapport om samarbejds- og verifikationsmekanismen for Rumænien fra 30. januar i år slås det fast, at der fortsat er problemer, når det kommer til korruption og respekt for domstolenes uafhængighed i Rumænien. Problemerne er blandt andet personlige trusler mod dommere og deres familier samt mediekampagner, der ligner decideret chikane. Derudover bliver der ofte sat spørgsmålstegn ved beslutningerne fra Det Nationale Integritetsagentur i Rumænien, hvis formål er at bekæmpe korruption i landet. På trods af 4 rapporter om korruption mod ministre er der ingen af ministrene, der er trådt tilbage, og personalet i Integritetsagenturet bliver ofte udsat for angreb i medierne og fra politikernes side ([1]).

Hvis domstolene og de officielle myndigheder ikke respekteres i deres arbejde mod korruption, vil problemerne med korruption i Rumænien ikke kunne løses. Derfor er den nuværende situation langt fra tilfredsstillende.

Kommissionen bedes derfor oplyse følgende:

— Hvad gør Kommissionen for at forbedre denne situation i Rumænien?

— Hvad foretager Kommissionen konkret for at bekæmpe korruption i Rumænien og støtte domstolenes og myndighedernes kamp mod korruption?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af José Manuel Barroso
(28. juni 2013)

1. Kommissionen overvåger meget nøje de Rumænske myndigheders fremskridt i forebyggelsen og bekæmpelsen af korruption og rådgiver dem om, hvordan de kan gøre yderligere fremskridt mod opfyldelsen af de benchmarks, der er fastlagt under mekanismen for samarbejde og kontrol (SKM) ([2]). Kommissionen udsteder således regelmæssigt konkrete anbefalinger. Derudover finansierer EU-midler en række projekter til korruptionsbekæmpelse, blandt andet inden for ministerierne for undervisning, sundhed, regionaludvikling og offentlig forvaltning.

2. De seneste års forøgelse i antallet af korruptionssager på højt niveau, hvor der er sket retsforfølgelse og fældet dom, er blevet anført i Kommissionens rapporter fra samarbejds- og kontrolmekanismen. De resultater, som det nationale direktorat for bekæmpelse af korruption og den rumænske højesteret fremviser på dette område, er en indikation på, hvorledes professionalisme og upartiskhed, undertiden over for et voldsomt pres, kan begynde at gøre en forskel. Det nationale integritetsagentur i Rumænien har ligeledes gjort et vigtigt arbejde med at indføre klare integritetsregler. Kommissionen har tillige bifaldet Rumæniens nationale strategi til bekæmpelse af korruption. På alle disse områder vil Kommissionen fortsat overvåge, hvilke fremskridt der gøres for at få etableret stærke og holdbare strukturer til bekæmpelse af korruption.

([1]) Rapport fra Kommissionen til Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet om fremskridt i Rumænien inden for rammerne af samarbejds- og kontrolmekanismen (KOM(2013)0047): http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/docs/com_2013_47_en.pdf

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/cvm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005384/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Corruption in Romania

The Commission states in its half-yearly report on the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Romania from 30 January this year that there are still problems when it comes to corruption and respect for the independence of the judiciary in Romania. The problems include personal threats against judges and their families and media campaigns that resemble outright harassment. In addition, the decisions of the Romanian National Integrity Agency, whose purpose is to combat corruption in the country, are often questioned. Despite four reports of ministerial corruption, none of the ministers have resigned and the staff of the Integrity Agency are often subjected to attacks in the media and from politicians ([1]).

If no respect is shown to the courts or the official authorities in their work against corruption, they will not be able to solve the problems of corruption in Romania. Therefore, the current situation is far from satisfactory.

— What is the Commission doing to improve the situation in Romania?

— What specific steps is it taking in order to combat corruption in Romania and to support the judiciary's and the authorities' fight against corruption?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2013)

1. The Commission monitors very closely the progresses made by the Romanian authorities in the prevention and fight against corruption and advises them on how to progress further towards the benchmarks established under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) ([2]) by issuing concrete recommendations on a regular basis. In addition to this, EU funds are financing a number of anti-corruption projects, including in the Ministries of Education, Health and Regional Development and Public Administration.

2. The Commission's reports under the CVM have noted the increased number of high level corruption cases prosecuted and judged by the courts in recent years. The track record of the National Anti-Corruption Directorate and the High Court in this area is a sign of how professionalism and impartiality, sometimes in the face of extreme pressure, can start to make a difference. Also important has been the work of the Romanian National Integrity Agency in putting in place a clear integrity framework. The Commission has also welcomed the Romanian National Anti-Corruption Strategy. In all the areas, the Commission will continue to monitor progress towards a strong and sustainable anti-corruption framework.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on Progress in Romania under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (COM(2013)47): http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/docs/com_2013_47_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005385/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(15 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Situación del Complejo Ciudad de la Luz de Alicante tras la decisión de la Comisión Europea de 23 de marzo de 2013

El 8 de mayo de 2012, la Comisión Europea adoptó una decisión relativa a la ayuda estatal SA.22668 concedida por España a la Ciudad de la Luz, publicada en el Diario Oficial de la Unión Europea ([1]).

En dicha decisión, la Comisión Europea concluyó que las ayudas estatales concedidas por la Comunidad Valenciana a Ciudad de la Luz SA, desde el año 2000 hasta diciembre de 2010, vulneraban lo dispuesto en el artículo 108, apartado 3, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea.

La Comisión consideró que la totalidad de la inversión pública realizada por el Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana en el complejo constituía una ayuda ilegal incompatible con el mercado interior y que por tanto Ciudad de la Luz SA debía reembolsar la suma de 265 089 599 euros concedida en concepto de ayuda ilegal.

Desde que se adoptara la decisión, la Ciudad de la Luz no ha vuelto a albergar rodajes de cine pese a las propuestas recibidas. La empresa gestora de los estudios de cine de la Ciudad de la Luz viene denunciando que esta inactividad se debe a un boicot por parte de la Generalitat Valenciana que, amparándose en la decisión adoptada por la Comisión, ha paralizado cualquier proyecto en el complejo cinematográfico.

El Gobierno de la Generalitat Valenciana mantiene que la decisión de la Comisión Europea declarando ilegales las ayudas supone la paralización de la actividad en la Ciudad de la Luz, al ser incompatible tal decisión con la continuación de los rodajes.

Ante esta situación de parálisis, conviene pedir a la Comisión que precise el alcance de la Decisión sobre las ayudas estatales recibidas por el complejo Ciudad de la Luz.

¿Implica la Decisión dictada por la Comisión el 8 de mayo de 2012 la parálisis de la actividad en el complejo Ciudad de la Luz?

¿Puede el complejo Ciudad de la Luz albergar rodajes de cine hasta que se resuelva el reembolso de las ayudas ilegalmente concedidas por la Generalitat Valenciana?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de julio de 2013)

El 13 de febrero de 2008, en respuesta a las denuncias de una presunta ayuda estatal a los estudios cinematográficos Ciudad de la Luz, la Comisión inició una investigación en profundidad sobre la financiación del complejo por parte de la Generalidad Valenciana. A raíz de la investigación, la Comisión concluyó que ningún inversor privado habría aceptado invertir en las mismas condiciones y que la financiación pública falsea de forma masiva la competencia entre los principales estudios de cine europeos.

La decisión de la Comisión de 8 de mayo de 2012 fijó los resultados de la investigación. También concluyó que 265 millones de euros concedidos por la Generalidad Valenciana a los estudios cinematográficos Ciudad de la Luz no se facilitaron en condiciones de mercado y el beneficiario tendría que devolverlos.

La comunicación de recuperación de la Comisión (DO C 272 de 15.11.2007, p. 4.) expone la manera en que se deben ejecutar las decisiones de la Comisión por las que se ordena a los Estados miembros que recuperen las ayudas estatales ilegales e incompatibles. Ténganse en cuenta, en particular, los puntos 47 y 61 ([2]).

([1]) DO L 85 de 23.3.2013, p. 1.
([2]) El punto 47 observa que el Estado miembro está obligado a iniciar los procedimientos de recuperación sin demora. El punto 61 brinda la posibilidad de que pueda considerarse que una decisión por la que se ordena al Estado miembro que recupere la ayuda ilegal e incompatible de un beneficiario insolvente se ejecuta correctamente cuando concluye la recuperación completa o, en caso de recuperación parcial, cuando se liquida la empresa y se venden sus activos en condiciones de mercado.

Habida cuenta de la difícil situación financiera de Ciudad de la Luz puesta de manifiesto por sus cuentas publicadas y señalada durante años por la Sindicatura de Cuentas de Valencia, Ciudad de la Luz no podrá reembolsar todo el importe de la ayuda. Por lo tanto, la recuperación puede tener que realizarse a través de su liquidación y la venta de sus activos. En tal situación, los procedimientos de insolvencia deben dar lugar a la liquidación de la empresa que recibió la ayuda ilegal, es decir, el cese definitivo de sus actividades ([3]).

Las autoridades españolas han confirmado a la Comisión que Ciudad de la Luz cesó su actividad comercial en febrero de 2013 y que tienen la intención de vender los activos en condiciones de mercado. Los servicios de la Comisión esperan recibir los datos sobre el proceso de liquidación y venta.

([3]) Véase, por ejemplo, el asunto C-610/10, 11 de diciembre de 2012, Comisión contra España, apartado 104.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005385/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Situation of the Ciudad de la Luz complex in Alicante following the decision of the European Commission of 23 March 2013

On 8 May 2012, the Commission adopted a decision on state aid SA.22668 granted by Spain to Ciudad de la Luz, published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* ([1]).

In this decision, the Commission found that the state aid granted by the Comunidad Valenciana to Ciudad de la Luz SA from 2000 to December 2010 was in breach of Article 108(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The Commission considered that the entire public investment made by the Valencian regional government in the complex constituted illegal aid incompatible with the internal market and that Ciudad de la Luz SA should therefore reimburse the sum of EUR 265 089 599 granted as illegal aid.

Since the decision was adopted, Ciudad de la Luz has not undertaken any filming despite receiving offers. The management company of the Ciudad de la Luz film studios has just reported that this inactivity is due to a boycott by the Valencian regional government which, sheltering behind the decision adopted by the Commission, has halted all projects in the film complex.

The Valencian regional government maintains that the Commission's decision declaring the aid illegal implies that activities at Ciudad de la Luz must be halted as the decision does not allow filming to continue.

Faced with this stalemate, I would ask the Commission to clarify the scope of the decision on the state aid received by the Ciudad de la Luz complex.

Does the decision taken by the Commission on 8 May 2012 mean that activity in the Ciudad de la Luz complex must be halted?

Can the Ciudad de la Luz complex continue to host filming activities until the reimbursement of aid granted illegally by the Valencian regional government has been resolved?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

On 13 February 2008, following complaints of alleged state aid to the Ciudad de la Luz film studios, the Commission opened an in-depth investigation into the financing of the complex by the Valencia Regional Government. Following the investigation, the Commission concluded that no private investor would have accepted to invest on the same terms, and that the public funding massively distorts competition between major European film studios.

The Commission's decision of 8 May 2012 set out the outcome of the investigation. It also concluded that EUR 265 million granted by the Valencia Regional Government to the Ciudad de la Luz film studio complex was not provided on market conditions and needed to be paid back by the beneficiary.

The Commission Recovery Notice (OJ C 272, 15.11.2007, p. 4-17) sets out how Commission decisions ordering Member States to recover unlawful and incompatible state aid should be implemented. Please note in particular Points 47 and 61 ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 85, 23.3.2013, p.1.
([2]) Point 47 notes that the Member State is obliged to initiate recovery proceedings without delay. Point 61 offers the possibility that a decision ordering the Member State to recover unlawful and incompatible aid from an insolvent beneficiary may be considered to be properly executed either when full recovery is completed or, in case of partial recovery, when the company is liquidated and its assets are sold under market conditions.

In view of the difficult financial position of Ciudad de la Luz as revealed by its published accounts and highlighted by Valencia's Sindicatura de Cuentas for some years, Ciudad de la Luz would not be able to repay the entire aid amount. Consequently, the recovery may need to be effected through its liquidation and the sale of its assets. In such a situation, the insolvency proceedings must result in the winding up of the undertaking which received the unlawful aid, that is to say, in the definitive cessation of its activities ([3]).

The Spanish authorities have confirmed to the Commission that Ciudad de la Luz ceased trading in February 2013 and that they intend to sell the assets under market conditions. The Commission is awaiting details of the liquidation and sale.

([3]) See for instance Case C-610/10, 11 December 2012, *Commission* v *Spain*, para 104.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005386/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten für den Tag der Offenen Tür in der Kommission

Am Samstag, 4. Mai 2013, fand anlässlich des Europatages am 9. Mai der jährliche Tag der Offenen Tür in den EU-Institutionen in Brüssel statt. Auch die Kommission öffnete an diesem Tag ihre Türen für Besucher.

Welche finanziellen Mittel wendete die Kommission jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013 für den Tag der Offenen Tür auf?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juli 2013)

Im Jahr 2013 zählte das Berlaymont am Tag der Offenen Tür 12 826 Besucher; dies ist eine Steigerung von 30 % gegenüber 2012. Die Gesamtkosten dieser Veranstaltung beliefen sich auf 429 000 EUR.

Die Gesamtkosten in den vergangenen Jahren beliefen sich auf 380 000 EUR im Jahr 2012, 418 000 EUR im Jahr 2011, 480 000 EUR im Jahr 2010 und 380 000 EUR im Jahr 2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005386/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: The cost of the Commission's Open Day

To celebrate Europe Day on 9 May, the EU institutions in Brussels held their annual Open Day on Saturday, 4 May 2013. The Commission also opened its doors to visitors on the same day.

What funds did the Commission spend on the Open Day in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

In 2013, the Open Doors event in the Berlaymont was attended by 12 826 visitors, an increase of 30% compared to 2012. The total cost of this event was EUR 429 000.

For the previous editions, the total cost was respectively: EUR 380 000 in 2012; EUR 418 000 in 2011, EUR 480 000 in 2010 and EUR 380 000 in 2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005387/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Mangelhafte Zielsetzungen bei EU-Beihilfen für die nahrungsmittelverarbeitende Industrie

In seinem Sonderbericht vom April 2013 über EU-Beihilfen für die nahrungsmittelverarbeitende Industrie hat der Europäische Rechnungshof festgestellt, dass die Europäische Kommission im Rahmen der Entwicklungsprogramme für den ländlichen Raum, konkret für die Maßnahme „Erhöhung der Wertschöpfung bei land- und forstwirtschaftlichen Erzeugnissen", Zuschüsse für Programme genehmigt hat, bei denen nur mangelhafte Zielsetzungen vorlagen. Bei diesen Programmen wurden lediglich allgemeine Ziele für die Projekte definiert, durch die gar nicht oder nur unzureichend aufgezeigt wurde, wie die Finanzierung zur Erhöhung der Wertschöpfung und zur Verbesserung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit beiträgt.

1. Wie erklärt die Kommission, dass die Programme trotz unzureichend formulierter Zielsetzungen mit EU-Beihilfen finanziert wurden?

2. Wurde bei der Genehmigung der kritisierten Zuschüsse der Kriterienkatalog der Kommission korrekt angewandt?

3. Wenn ja, welche Änderungen wird die Kommission an ihrem Kriterienkatalog vornehmen, um die Förderung von Maßnahmen mit mangelnder Zielsetzung zu verhindern?

4. Wenn nicht, warum wurden die Kriterien nicht korrekt angewandt, und welche Folgerungen zieht die Kommission daraus?

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

Bei der Genehmigung der derzeitigen Entwicklungsprogramme für den ländlichen Raum hat die Kommission geprüft, ob die Programme und Maßnahmen mit den strategischen Leitlinien der Gemeinschaft und den diesbezüglichen nationalen Strategieplänen vereinbar sind und den einschlägigen Rechtsbestimmungen entsprechen. Nach Auffassung der Kommission waren die Zielsetzungen generell ausreichend klar beschrieben, um eine angemessene Programmplanung für die Maßnahme zu ermöglichen.

Der Artikel 43 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1974/2006 ([1]) wurde für diesen Programmplanungszeitraum eingeführt, um sicherzustellen, dass die Investitionsbeihilfe auf klar definierte Ziele ausgerichtet ist, die den festgestellten strukturellen und räumlichen Erfordernissen und strukturellen Nachteilen Rechnung tragen.

Der derzeitige Rechtsrahmen der EU-Politik zur Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums bietet den Mitgliedstaaten genügend Handlungsspielraum, um Maßnahmen mit einem strategischen Ansatz entsprechend der besonderen Lage eines jeden ländlichen Gebiets durchzuführen. Die Ausrichtung der Beihilfe kann in vielfacher Weise erfolgen, so etwa durch Förder- und Auswahlkriterien, durch regionale und sektorale Differenzierung, durch von der Art der Investition abhängige Beihilfeintensitäten sowie durch Beihilfeobergrenzen, mit denen die Mitgliedstaaten eine Vorauswahl unter den möglichen Begünstigten treffen können.

Außerdem hat die Kommission für den nächsten Programmplanungszeitraum vorgeschlagen, den Rechtsrahmen dahin gehend zu stärken, dass bei jedem zu genehmigenden Programm für jedes Schwerpunktgebiet der EU-Prioritäten auf Basis gemeinsamer Ergebnisindikatoren vorab quantifizierte Zielvorgaben festgelegt werden und dass die in Bezug auf die EU-Prioritäten ausgewählten Maßnahmen auf einer stichhaltigen Interventionslogik beruhen, die sich auf eine Ex-ante-Bewertung stützt.

([1]) ABl. L 368 vom 23.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005387/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Lack of targeted EU aid to the food-processing industry

In its special report of April 2013 on EU aid to the food-processing industry, the European Court of Auditors found that, within the framework of rural development programmes, specifically the measure called 'Adding value to agricultural and forestry products', the European Commission approved funding for programmes in which targets had not been fully identified. These programmes only identified general targets for the projects, which only offered inadequate evidence, if any, of how the funding contributed to adding value and to an improvement in competitiveness.

1. How does the Commission explain the fact that the programmes were financed with EU aid despite their objectives being inadequately formulated?

2. Was the Commission's catalogue of criteria correctly applied when approving the criticised funding?

3. If so, does the Commission intend making changes to its catalogue of criteria so as to prevent the promotion of measures with poorly identified objectives?

4. If not, why were the criteria not applied correctly and what conclusions does the Commission draw from this?

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

When approving the current Rural Development Programmes, the Commission carried out an analysis to assess that programmes and measures are consistent with the Community strategic guidelines and relevant national strategy plans, and comply with the relevant legal provisions. The Commission takes the view that generally objectives were described with sufficient clarity to make programming of the measure appropriate and possible.

Article 43 of Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 ([1]) was introduced to this programming period to ensure that investment support is targeted on clearly defined objectives reflecting identified structural and territorial needs and structural disadvantages.

The current legal framework of the EU's rural development policy allows Member States enough flexibility to implement measures with a strategic approach depending on the specific situation of each rural area. Targeting of the aid can be achieved in many ways; through eligibility and selection criteria, regional and sectoral differentiation and differentiation of aid intensities depending on the type of the investment, as well as aid ceilings by which the Member State can make a pre-selection among the potential beneficiaries.

In addition, for the next programming period the Commission has proposed to strengthen the legal framework so that, for the programme to be approved, *ex ante* quantified targets are set for each of the focus areas of the Union priorities, on the basis of common result indicators, and that the selected measures in relation to the Union priorities should be based on sound intervention logic supported by an *ex ante* evaluation.

([1]) OJ L 368, 23.12.2006.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005388/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten für den Tag der Offenen Tür im Rat

Am Samstag, 4. Mai 2013, fand anlässlich des Europatages am 9. Mai der jährliche Tag der Offenen Tür in den EU-Institutionen in Brüssel statt. Auch der Rat der Europäischen Union öffnete an diesem Tag seine Türen für interessierte Besucher.

Welche finanziellen Mittel wendete der Rat jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013 für den Tag der Offenen Tür auf?

Antwort
(11. September 2013)

Das Generalsekretariat des Rates organisiert alljährlich im Namen des Rates der EU und des Europäischen Rates einen Tag der offenen Tür. Diese Veranstaltung richtet sich speziell an die allgemeine Öffentlichkeit. Für die gemeinsamen Themen und die Organisation erfolgt eine interinstitutionelle Abstimmung unter der Schirmherrschaft des Europäischen Parlaments.

Die Ausgaben des Rates für den Tag der offenen Tür sind der nachstehenden Tabelle zu entnehmen.

Tag der offenen Tür				
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
76 348 EUR	77 686 EUR	65 915 EUR	73 528 EUR	67 992 EUR

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005388/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: The cost of the Council's Open Day

To celebrate Europe Day on 9 May, the EU institutions in Brussels held their annual Open Day on Saturday, 4 May 2013. The Council of the European Union also opened its doors to interested visitors on the same day.

What funds did the Council spend on the Open Day in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

Each year, the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) organises an Open Day on behalf of the Council of the EU and the European Council. This event is specifically intended for the general public. Common themes and organisation for the event are subject to interinstitutional coordination under the auspices of the European Parliament.

Council expenditure for the Open Day is indicated in the following table:

Open Day				
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
EUR 76 348	EUR 77 686	EUR 65 915	EUR 73 528	EUR 67 992

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005389/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — EU-Ausbildungsmission in Mali

Am 29. April 2013 hat die Bundeswehr in Mali im Rahmen der EU-Ausbildungsmission EUTM mit der Ausbildung von malischen Soldaten begonnen. Andere EU-Mitgliedstaaten wie Frankreich und Spanien haben ebenfalls bereits Soldaten entsendet. Einige weitere Staaten planen dies noch zu tun.

1. Wird die Mission aus EU-Mitteln oder direkt durch die Mitgliedstaaten finanziert?

2. Sollten die Kosten von den Mitgliedstaaten selbst getragen werden; inwiefern ist die EU dennoch in den Einsatz involviert? Tragen auch EU-Gelder zur Finanzierung des Einsatzes bei?

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

1. Die Mission wird aus beiden Quellen finanziert:

— Die gemeinsamen Kosten werden über den Mechanismus Athena von allen Mitgliedstaaten mit Ausnahme Dänemarks nach dem BSP-Schlüssel getragen. Bei den gemeinsamen Kosten handelt es sich im Wesentlichen um Kosten, die nicht einem bestimmten an der Operation teilnehmenden Mitgliedstaat zugeschrieben werden können. Am 31. Mai 2013 genehmigte der Athena-Sonderausschuss für die EUTM Mali ein Budget von 23 451 356 EUR für dieses Jahr.

— Die an der Operation teilnehmenden Mitgliedstaaten kommen für die restlichen Kosten auf, einschließlich der sogenannten „von den Einzelstaaten getragenen Kosten", die für jede EU-Militäroperation aufgelistet und vom Athena-Sonderausschuss genehmigt werden.

2. Nach Artikel 41 Absatz 2 EUV gehen Ausgaben für EU-Maßnahmen mit militärischen oder verteidigungspolitischen Bezügen zulasten der Mitgliedstaaten und nicht zulasten des Haushalts der Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005389/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU training mission in Mali

On 29 April 2013, the German Army began training Malian soldiers within the framework of the EUTM EU Training Mission in Mali. Other EU Member States, such as France and Spain, have also already dispatched soldiers. A number of other countries are planning to follow suit.

1. Is this mission financed from EU funds or directly by the Member States?

2. If the costs are borne by the Member States themselves, to what extent is the EU involved in the exercise nonetheless? Are EU resources also used to finance the exercise?

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

1. The mission is funded both:

— by all the Member States, apart from Denmark, through the Athena mechanism in accordance with the GNP scale, as far as the common costs are concerned. Common costs mainly relate to costs that cannot be attributed to a specific Member State participating in the operation. On 31 May 2013, the Athena Special Committee approved a budget for EUTM Mali for the current year of EUR 23.451.356;

— by the Member States participating in the operation for the remaining costs, including nation borne costs from a list approved for each EU military operation by the Athena Special Committee.

2. By virtue of Article 41(2) of the TEU, EU operations having military or defence implications are charged to the Member States and not to the Union budget.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005390/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Kosten für den Tag der Offenen Tür im Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst

Am Samstag, 4. Mai 2013, fand anlässlich des Europatages am 9. Mai der jährliche Tag der Offenen Tür in den EU-Institutionen in Brüssel statt. Auch der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst öffnete an diesem Tag seine Türen für Besucher.

1. War 2013 das erste Jahr, in dem der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst am Tag der Offenen Tür teilnahm?

2. Welche finanziellen Mittel wendete der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst im Jahr 2013 für dieses Ereignis auf?

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

1. 2013 war das dritte Jahr in Folge, in dem der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst am Tag der offenen Tür teilnahm. Wie 2011 und 2012 waren die Stände des EAD im Justus-Lipsius-Gebäude des Rates untergebracht.

2. Die Ausgaben des EAD beliefen sich auf weniger als 1 000 EUR, einschließlich des Drucks von 600 „Europatag"-Postern und 300 „Pässen für kleine Diplomaten" für Kinder.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005390/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The cost of the European External Action Service's Open Day

To celebrate Europe Day on 9 May, the EU institutions in Brussels held their annual Open Day on Saturday, 4 May 2013. The European External Action Service also opened its doors to visitors on the same day.

1. Was 2013 the first year that the European External Action Service participated in the Open Day?

2. What funds did the European External Action Service spend on this event in 2013?

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

1. 2013 was the third consecutive year that the European External Action Service participated in the Open Day. Like in 2011 and the 2012, the EEAS stands were hosted by the Council in the Justus Lipsius building.

2. The EEAS spent less than EUR 1 000, including the printing 600 'Europe Day' posters and 300 'Little Diplomats' Passports' for children.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005391/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Muerte de un ciudadano senegalés en España al negársele la asistencia sanitaria

El pasado 21 de abril murió en las Islas Baleares el ciudadano senegalés de 28 años Alpha Pam, inmigrante sin papeles, que fue rechazado por los servicios hospitalarios de la Comunidad Autónoma. Dicho rechazo se debe a los últimos recortes aplicados por el Ministerio de Sanidad, que obliga a negar y a excluir de la asistencia sanitaria a las personas sin papeles, negando de facto la tradicional cobertura universal del sistema sanitario español.

A este ciudadano senegalés se le negó la asistencia médica cuando estaba infectado de tuberculosis, una enfermedad con tratamiento que, en el caso de habérsela aplicado adecuadamente, podría haber salvado su vida. Alpha Pam ha sido la primera víctima de los recortes aplicados en materia de sanidad por el Gobierno de España, pero se trata de una situación que se repetirá a medida que se vaya denegando el acceso a la sanidad a más personas por el mero hecho de no disponer de unos documentos en regla.

Es un ejemplo claro de cómo la política de austeridad que implementa el Gobierno, siguiendo los dictámenes de Bruselas, se traduce en violencia contra los migrantes e incluso en muertes, como ejemplifica este triste acontecimiento. Alpha Pam acudió al centro de salud hasta en tres ocasiones debido al deteriorado estado de salud que producía su enfermedad, siendo excluido en todas las ocasiones y muriendo en su domicilio solo y sin asistencia médica alguna tras ocho días de agonía.

¿Piensa la Comisión exigir a España que atienda a los inmigrantes sin papeles en su sistema sanitario para evitar más muertes? ¿No cree la Comisión que negar la asistencia al ser humano viola sus derechos más fundamentales?

¿Considera la Comisión que la exclusión de asistencia sanitaria a inmigrantes sin papeles puede suponer el incumplimiento de la Directiva 2005/85/CE sobre la reglamentación del estatuto del refugiados, considerando el claro riesgo que existía sobre su vida?

¿Considera la Comisión que España ha incumplido en este caso la Directiva 2008/115/CE relativa al retorno de personas sin documentos, al haber negado asistencia sanitaria a Alpha Pam, a quien esta denegación le costó la vida?

¿Considera la Comisión que España ha incumplido en este caso la Directiva 2011/24/UE relativa a la atención sanitaria transfronteriza, al haberlo dejado morir sin darle los más mínimos tratamientos de urgencia?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión lamenta el caso que describe Su Señoría y solicita a los Estados miembros que eviten cualquier incidente de este tipo. El Derecho de la UE tiene muy en cuenta la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de los Ciudadanos de la Unión Europea, que establece importantes salvaguardias para las personas (como la asistencia sanitaria), así como la promoción y la protección de las libertades fundamentales.

La Directiva 2008/115/CE sobre el retorno obliga a los Estados miembros a proporcionar atención sanitaria de urgencia y tratamiento básico de las enfermedades de los residentes ilegales nacionales de terceros países *que estén sujetos a procedimientos de retorno* [artículo 14, apartado 1, letra b), y artículo 16, apartado 3, de la Directiva]. El acceso de nacionales de terceros países en situación irregular que no estén sujetos a las disposiciones de la Directiva de retorno, esto es, los inmigrantes irregulares presentes en el territorio de un Estado miembro que no hayan sido interceptados y no estén sujetos a una decisión de retorno, todavía no está armonizada a nivel de la Unión, y la Comisión no está en condiciones de intervenir ante los Estados miembros en este ámbito. En la actualidad, la Comisión está comprobando la correcta incorporación a los ordenamientos jurídicos nacionales de las disposiciones de la Directiva 2008/115/CE sobre el retorno por parte de los Estados miembros y no ha podido detectar a este respecto ninguna deficiencia en lo referido a la incorporación de las disposiciones mencionadas al ordenamiento español.

De conformidad con el artículo 6, apartado 1, del Tratado de la Unión Europea, las disposiciones de la Carta no amplían en absoluto las competencias de la Unión tal como se definen en los Tratados. No obstante, todos los Estados miembros son Partes en el Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos y deben cumplir las obligaciones impuestas por este instrumento, en especial, el derecho a la vida.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005391/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Death of a Senegalese citizen in Spain after being refused healthcare

On 21 April 2013, a 28-year-old Senegalese citizen, Alpha Pam, died in the Balearic Islands. He was an illegal immigrant who had been refused care by the autonomous community's hospital services. He was refused treatment as a result of the most recent cuts by the Ministry of Health, which requires that illegal immigrants be refused healthcare and be excluded from the system. This is a de facto denial of the universal coverage traditionally provided by the Spanish health system.

This Senegalese citizen was refused medical care when he had tuberculosis, a disease for which there is treatment which, had it been properly administered, could have saved his life. Alpha Pam is the first victim of the health cuts imposed by the Spanish Government, but this is a situation that will be repeated for as long as people continue to be refused access to healthcare simply because they do not have valid documents.

This is a clear example of how the austerity policy implemented by the government, in line with the dictates of Brussels, is resulting in cruelty against migrants and even deaths, as this sad event illustrates. Alpha Pam attended the health centre on three occasions because of his deteriorating health as a result of his disease, but on each occasion was refused treatment. He died alone at home, without any medical care, after suffering for eight days.

Does the Commission think it should call on Spain to treat illegal immigrants within its health system in order to avoid more deaths? Does the Commission not believe that denying a human being care violates the most fundamental human rights?

Does the Commission believe that refusal to provide healthcare to illegal immigrants might amount to failure to comply with Directive 2005/85/EC on the regulations regarding refugee status, in view of the clear risk to Alpha Pam's life?

Does the Commission believe that in this case Spain has infringed Directive 2008/115/EC on returning persons without valid papers, by having denied healthcare to Alpha Pam, which cost him his life?

Does the Commission believe that in this case Spain has infringed Directive 2011/24/EU on cross-border healthcare, by having left him to die without giving him even minimal emergency care?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The Commission regrets the incident described by the Honourable Member and pleads on Member States to avoid any incident of this kind. EC law takes fully into account the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which provides important safeguards for individuals (such as healthcare) as well as the promotion and protection of fundamental freedoms.

The Return Directive 2008/115/EC obliges Member States to provide emergency healthcare and essential treatment of illness to illegally staying third-country nationals who *are subject of return procedures* (Articles 14(1)(b) and 16(3) of the directive). The access of illegally staying third-country nationals who are not covered by the provisions of the Return Directive — i.e. those irregular migrants staying on Member State territory who have not been apprehended and not made subject of a return decision yet — is not harmonised at Union level and the Commission is not in a position to intervene with Member States in this field. The Commission is currently in the process of checking the correct legal transposition of the provisions of the Return Directive 2008/115/EC by Member States and could not identify, in this context, any shortcoming as regards the transposition of the abovementioned provisions by Spain.

In accordance with Article 6(1) of the Treaty of the European Union, the provisions of the Charter do not extend in any way the competences of the Union as defined in the Treaties. However, all Member States are parties to the European Convention on Human Rights and have to fulfil the obligations imposed by this instrument, notably the right to life.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005392/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(15 mai 2013)

Objet: Promotion du tourisme de santé dans l'Union européenne

Pour des raisons multiples, le tourisme médical ou de santé est en pleine expansion et devient un véritable enjeu de société. Les touristes-patients se multiplient en raison du vieillissement de la population, de l'apparition de nouvelles pathologies (les allergies, les dépressions, les dépendances, par exemple) et de nouveaux traitements, de la large diffusion des technologies médicales, de la multiplication des offres et de la concurrence entre soins de santé en Europe ou dans le monde. Nous pouvons certes envisager le tourisme médical ou de santé comme un risque économique et sanitaire dans un contexte de mondialisation, mais aussi comme un nouveau champ d'action politique et réglementaire et comme une nouvelle opportunité de développement économique pour l'Union européenne.

Face à la concurrence internationale sur ce marché en ébullition, l'offre européenne doit se structurer et capitaliser sur ses atouts et ses savoir-faire pour devenir compétitive. Il nous appartient dès lors de choisir des produits et des formules dignes de concurrencer les offres existantes des pays tiers. D'où l'intérêt de développer la spécialisation, la notoriété des destinations fondée sur une image de sérieux, de qualité, de tradition et de patrimoine, et, pourquoi pas, de luxe également.

Pour l'heure, aucun pays européen n'a réellement de position dominante sur le marché du tourisme médical ou de santé, mais certains commencent à structurer leurs services ou se concentrent sur une offre de services de bien-être et de chirurgie esthétique. Différents produits mériteraient une attention particulière pour développer le tourisme de santé et de bien-être en Europe en fonction des atouts naturels et des spécificités locales: le thermalisme, la balnéothérapie et la thalassothérapie, les cures de soleil et la luxthérapie, le tourisme de montagne pour les maladies respiratoires, la vinothérapie dans les régions viticoles, les séjours antistress, les cures de sommeil et les cures contre les dépendances, par exemple. Compte tenu des différents types de clients cibles (le troisième âge, les femmes, les couples, les familles, les sportifs de haut niveau, les personnes en situation de handicap, les malades affectés par des problèmes de santé spécifiques), des mécanismes de soutien public devraient être envisagés pour développer les séjours hors-saison, sur le modèle de l'action préparatoire Calypso.

— La Commission a-t-elle engagé une réflexion sur une stratégie européenne en matière de tourisme de santé pour la clientèle européenne et internationale?

— Quelles mesures concrètes compte-t-elle proposer pour rendre ce secteur plus compétitif et créer de nouveaux emplois en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(15 juillet 2013)

Le tourisme de santé apparaît peu à peu comme un sous-secteur d'activité dynamique qui peut contribuer à l'économie de l'Union et aider certaines destinations touristiques à surmonter des obstacles tels que la dépendance excessive vis-à-vis d'une saison touristique intensive de courte durée. Il contribue aussi à la concrétisation d'un objectif de la Commission: permettre aux citoyens de vivre sainement et de vieillir en bonne santé ([1]).

La Commission a intégré le tourisme de santé dans le cadre consolidé pour la politique touristique européenne qu'elle a adopté dans sa communication de 2010 intitulée «L'Europe, première destination touristique au monde — Un nouveau cadre politique pour le tourisme européen» ([2]) et y a fait spécifiquement référence dans le contexte de la diversification de l'offre touristique. À ce jour, elle n'a pas élaboré de stratégie européenne autonome pour ce sous-secteur en particulier, mais elle en a certainement évoqué l'idée, notamment dans ses appels à propositions pour des produits touristiques thématiques transnationaux ([3]).

([1]) Il s'agit là d'une priorité importante pour la Commission. Le «partenariat européen d'innovation pour un vieillissement actif et en bonne santé» vise à améliorer le potentiel d'innovation de l'Europe pour résoudre les problèmes de l'évolution démographique liés au vieillissement. En réunissant tous les acteurs de la chaîne de l'innovation, des secteurs public et privé au niveau européen, national et régional, le partenariat a pour objectif d'allonger de deux ans la durée moyenne de vie en bonne santé des Européens d'ici à 2020. Il est clair que le tourisme de santé pourrait aider à atteindre cet objectif, singulièrement dans le domaine de la promotion de la santé et la prévention des maladies.

([2]) COM(2010)352 final du 30.6.2010.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=6615&tpa=136&tk=&lang=fr

Dans le droit fil de sa communication de 2010 sur le tourisme, elle a déjà déployé de grands efforts pour promouvoir la compétitivité du secteur touristique de l'Union et renforcer ses moyens de générer de la croissance et de créer de nouvelles perspectives d'emploi, surtout pour les jeunes. En outre, à court et moyen terme, elle s'attellera plus spécialement à l'intensification des flux touristiques en Europe et dans les pays tiers, notamment à la basse saison, grâce à diverses initiatives, dont Calypso ([4]), le tourisme pour les personnes âgées ([5]) et «50 000 touristes» ([6]). Elle soutiendra des mesures visant à renforcer et diversifier l'offre touristique et encouragera des actions ciblées pour stimuler l'innovation ([7]), améliorer l'accessibilité des services touristiques ([8]) et renforcer l'adéquation professionnelle et la mobilité des travailleurs du secteur ([9]).

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/calypso/index_fr.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/tourism-seniors/index_fr.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/50k/index_fr.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/ict/index_fr.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/accessibility/index_fr.htm
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/skills/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005392/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Promotion of health tourism in the European Union

For many reasons, medical and health tourism is expanding rapidly and becoming a real social issue. The number of tourist patients is increasing due to the ageing population, the development of new diseases (for example allergies, depression and addictions) and new treatments, the wide availability of medical technologies, and the increase in healthcare providers and competition in Europe and worldwide. Medical or health tourism can of course be seen as an economic and health risk within the context of globalisation, but it can also be seen as a new field of political and regulatory action and a new opportunity for economic development in the European Union.

Faced with international competition in this burgeoning market, European supply must be structured and capitalise on its assets and know-how in order to remain competitive. It is our responsibility then to choose products and schemes that are up to the challenge of competing with existing services in third countries. Hence the interest in developing the specialisation and reputation of destinations based on an image of seriousness, quality, tradition and heritage, and — why not — one of luxury as well.

For now, no European country really has a dominant position in the medical or health tourism market, but some are starting to structure their services or focus on providing wellness and cosmetic surgery services. Various products should be given particular attention in order to develop health and wellness tourism in Europe based on natural assets and local specialities: thermal baths, balneotherapy and thalassotherapy, sun treatments and light therapy, mountain tourism for respiratory illnesses, wine therapy in wine-growing regions, relaxation holidays, sleep therapy and treatments for addiction, for example. Bearing in mind the different types of target customers (the elderly, women, couples, families, top-level athletes, disabled people, people suffering from specific health problems), public support mechanisms should be considered to promote trips during the off-peak season, based on the Calypso preparatory action model.

— Has the Commission started to look at a European strategy for health tourism for European and international customers?

— What specific measures does it intend to propose to make this sector more competitive and to create new jobs in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

Health tourism represents a dynamic and still emerging tourism sub-sector which can contribute to the Union's economy and help tourist destinations overcome challenges such as overreliance on a short tourist-intensive season. It also contributes to the Commission's goal to enable citizens to lead healthy lives across the life cycle, and to healthy ageing ([1]).

The Commission integrated health tourism in its consolidated European tourism policy framework which it adopted with its 2010 Communication 'Europe, the world's number one tourism destination, a new political framework for tourism in Europe' ([2]) and made specific reference to it in the context of the diversification of the tourist offer. The Commission has not looked so far at a self-standing European strategy for this sub-sector in particular, but it has certainly addressed it, amongst others, in its calls for projects proposals on transnational thematic tourism products ([3]).

([1]) This is an important priority for the Commission. The 'European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing' aims to enhance Europe's innovation potential for tackling the challenges of demographic change associated with ageing. By bringing together all actors across the entire innovation chain, from public and private sectors, at EU, national and regional level, the Partnership's aim is to increase the average healthy lifespan of Europeans by two years by 2020. Health tourism could clearly contribute to the objective of more healthy live years, in particular in the area of health promotion and prevention.

([2]) COM(2010)352 final of 30.6.2010.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=6615&lang=en&tpa_id=136&title=Supporting%2Dthe%2Denhancement%2Dand%2Dpromotion%2Dof%2Dsustainable%2Dtransnational%2Dthematic%2Dtourism%2Dproducts%22%2D%2D70%2FG%2FENT%2FCIP%2F13%2FB%2FN03S04

In line with its 2010 Tourism Communication, the Commission has already deployed extensive efforts in order to foster the competitiveness of the EU tourism sector and to increase its potential in terms of generating growth and creating job opportunities, especially for the young population. Further to this, in the short and medium term, the Commission will intensively focus on enhancing tourist flows within Europe and from third countries, in particular in the low season, through its Calypso ([4]), senior tourism ([5]) and '50 000 tourists' ([6]) initiatives, amongst others. It will support measures to enhance and diversify tourism supply and will promote dedicated measures to develop innovation ([7]), improve the accessibility of tourism services ([8]) and to improve job matching and mobility of workers in the sector ([9]).

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/calypso/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/tourism-seniors/index_en.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/50k/index_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/ict/index_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/accessibility/index_en.htm
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/skills/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005393/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(15 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili attacchi di agroterrorismo in Europa

Un recentissimo rapporto dei Lloyds di Londra lancia l'allarme sull'agroterrorismo, cioè l'uso di agenti chimici, biologici o radiologici contro campi, allevamenti, fonti d'acqua e derrate alimentari.

Nel rapporto vengono evidenziati una serie di possibili rischi per il futuro del cibo: dal cambiamento climatico alla scarsità di acqua e terre arabili, dai nuovi parassiti e tossine fino all'azione terroristica. Si rileva anche che infettare un allevamento bovino o suino con il virus dell'afta epizootica è relativamente semplice, così come contaminare con salmonella o botulino il cibo o distruggere i raccolti di grano con qualche parassita.

Vi si evidenzia anche la preoccupazione per possibili sabotaggi degli impianti di desalinizzazione dell'acqua. Le matrici dell'agroterrorismo sono molteplici: oltre agli attacchi dei fondamentalisti islamici, ci potrebbe infatti essere l'azione di soggetti interessati a trarre profitto dalla manipolazione dei mercati o in cerca di vendetta contro aziende e governi oppure frange estremiste di movimenti a sfondo animalista e ambientalista desiderosi di compiere azioni dimostrative.

Il rapporto che sostiene la minaccia riguarda potenze agricole quali Usa, Paesi del Golfo e Unione europea.

1. Come intende la Commissione intervenire per fronteggiare questa minaccia nell'UE?

2. È essa a conoscenza di possibili attacchi di agroterrorismo in Europa?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza di possibili minacce di agroterrorismo, quali quelle citate nell'interrogazione, e ha attuato una serie di misure per contrastarle.

Nella comunicazione sul rafforzamento della sicurezza chimica, biologica, radiologica e nucleare nell'Unione europea ([1]), la Commissione ha stabilito un piano d'azione in materia di CBRN, composto da 124 misure da adottare a livello dell'UE e dei singoli Stati membri per mitigare qualsiasi minaccia di questo tipo.

Consapevole che le minacce terroristiche sono in costante evoluzione, la Commissione intende adeguare il suo approccio per tener conto di nuovi rischi per la sicurezza pubblica. Nel 2012, in collaborazione con gli Stati membri, ha proceduto ad un riesame delle 124 misure in materia di CBRN al fine di garantire un'adeguata definizione delle priorità nell'attuazione delle stesse, comprese le misure relative all'agroterrorismo.

È necessario un approccio più proattivo inteso ad individuare le minacce prima che si concretizzino in un attacco contro i cittadini. In tale contesto, la Commissione ha inaugurato lo scorso anno un programma di sperimentazioni pratiche di individuazione dei rischi, un dialogo con i professionisti per definire modelli ottimali di protezione civile e strategie per utilizzare meglio le tecnologie nell'individuazione di minacce CBRN, come quelle riguardanti le derrate alimentari e le risorse idriche.

È inoltre importante svolgere un'opera di sensibilizzazione riguardo alle potenziali minacce CBRN. Ciò avviene su diversi fronti (ad esempio per la questione degli individui radicalizzati o spinti da motivazioni economiche), nel contesto della rete dell'UE per la sensibilizzazione in materia di radicalizzazione.

Proseguiranno i lavori per l'istituzione di un programma di preparazione ed efficace individuazione di minacce CBRN, mediante le tecnologie o la sensibilizzazione dell'opinione pubblica, e saranno perseguite strategie adeguate per industria, Stati membri e altre parti interessate.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/pdf/com_2009_0273_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005393/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Possible agroterrorist attacks in Europe

A report just published by Lloyds of London sounds the alarm over agroterrorism, namely, the use of chemical, biological or radiological agents against fields, farms, water sources and foodstuffs.

The report highlights a range of potential risks for the future of food: from climate change to the scarcity of water and arable land, from new parasites and toxins to terrorist attacks. The report also demonstrates that infecting a cattle or pig farm with foot and mouth disease is relatively straightforward, as is contaminating food with salmonella or botulin or destroying wheat crops with parasites.

It also expresses concern over possible sabotage of desalination plants. There are many contexts underlying agroterrorism: in addition to attacks by Islamic fundamentalists, action could be taken by parties who wish to profit from manipulating the markets or who are seeking revenge against companies and governments, or by extreme animal or environmental rights fringe movements who wish to take representative measures.

The report identifying the threat concerns agricultural powers such as the USA, the Gulf States and the European Union.

1. How will the Commission combat this threat in the EU?

2. Is it aware of possible agroterrorist attacks in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

The Commission is aware of possible of agro-terrorist threats, such as those mentioned in the question, and has put in place a number of measures to address them.

In the communication on Strengthening Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Security in the European Union ([1]), the Commission established an EU CBRN Action Plan, including 124 steps to be carried out at EU and Member State level aimed at mitigating all kinds of CBRN threats.

Being aware that terrorist threats are constantly evolving, the Commission aims to adjust its approach to take account of new threats to public security. In 2012, the Commission, jointly with Member States, undertook an implementation review of the 124 CBRN actions in order to ensure appropriate prioritisation in their implementation, including actions related to agro-terrorism.

A more proactive approach is needed to detect threats before they materialise in an attack on the public. As part of this, the Commission launched last year a programme of practical detection trials, a dialogue with practitioners to identify optimal public protection models and on how to use technology better to detect CBRN threats, such as those posed to food and water supplies.

The issue of building awareness of potential CBRN threats is also important and is addressed in different domains, for example, on radicalised or financially driven individuals, in the context of EU Radicalisation Network.

The work on building preparedness and effective CBRN threat detection, by means of technology or public awareness, will continue appropriate outreach to industry, Member States and other stakeholders will be sought.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/pdf/com_2009_0273_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005394/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(15 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Επέκταση δανεισμού από ΕΤΕπ για αυτοκινητοδρόμους

Η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση εξετάζει ([1]) αύξηση της πρόσφατης δανειοδότησης ([2]) ([3]) από την Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Επενδύσεων (ΕΤΕπ) για κάλυψη του χρηματοδοτικού κενού αυτοκινητοδρόμων του οδικού δικτύου της ΠΑΘΕ (Πάτρα-Αθήνα-Θεσσαλονίκη), που πραγματοποιούνται με συμβάσεις παραχώρησης. Τα δάνεια από την ΕΤΕπ (το συγκεκριμένο, αλλά και προηγούμενο που αφορούσε σε άλλα έργα ([4])) χρηματοδοτούν επιλέξιμα προς συγχρηματοδότηση κόστη έργων κι αποτελούν μέρος του ετήσιου δανεισμού της χώρας. Εκταμιεύονται κατόπιν επίτευξης ορισμένων ποσοτικών ή/και ποιοτικών στόχων που περιλαμβάνονται στην υπογραφείσα κάθε φορά σύμβαση. Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει εκτιμήσεις για τα συνολικά κόστη ολοκλήρωσης των συγκεκριμένων έργων συγκρινόμενα με τα αρχικά εγκεκριμένα κόστη; Που οφείλονται κατά την άποψή της οι όποιες αποκλίσεις; Έχει προβεί σε εκτίμηση για την επιβάρυνση του εθνικού σκέλους του Προγράμματος Δημοσίων Επενδύσεων (ΠΔΕ) από τις όποιες αποκλίσεις;

2. Υπάρχει σοβαρός κίνδυνος μη ολοκλήρωσης μέχρι το 2015 ορισμένων από τα έργα που έχουν προγραμματιστεί για την περίοδο 2007-2013 με συνέπεια να μεταφερθούν κόστη στο εθνικό σκέλος του προϋπολογισμού που θα επιβαρύνουν το Δημόσιο για έργα μη λειτουργικά και μη ολοκληρωμένα;

3. Ποια η τελική υπέρβαση προϋπολογισμού των «μεγάλων» έργων κατά την Προγραμματική Περίοδο 2000-2006; Η όποια υπέρβαση επιβάρυνε το Εθνικό Υποπρόγραμμα του ΠΔΕ;

4. Ο προϋπολογισμός του ΠΔΕ (συγχρηματοδοτούμενες δράσεις) επαρκεί για ολοκλήρωση των προγραμματισμένων έργων αυτοκινητόδρομων χωρίς να απαιτηθεί μεταφορά επιπλέον πόρων σε βάρος κονδυλίων που προορίζονται για κοινωνική πολιτική, συνοχή κι ανταγωνιστικότητα;

5. Γνωρίζει αν το εν λόγω δάνειο για την κάλυψη του χρηματοδοτικού κενού των αυτοκινητοδρόμων προοριζόταν αρχικά για τις ανάγκες των επενδυτικών προγραμμάτων του Οργανισμού Σχολικών Κτιρίων (ΟΣΚ) και της Αττικό Μετρό ([4]); Αν ναι, σκοπεύει να συνεργαστεί με τις ελληνικές αρχές για την εξεύρεση εναλλακτικής χρηματοδότησης αυτών των έργων;

6. Ποια είναι η άποψή της σχετικά με την πιθανότητα δανεισμού για χρηματοδότηση *μη επιλέξιμων* προς συγχρηματοδότηση τμημάτων των έργων που πρόκειται να χρηματοδοτηθούν από το συγκεκριμένο δάνειο;

7. Είναι ενδεδειγμένη η τακτική επέκτασης του δανεισμού από το Κράτος σε περιπτώσεις απροθυμίας των τραπεζών να χρηματοδοτήσουν έργα που πραγματοποιούνται με συμβάσεις παραχώρησης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Αυγούστου 2013)

Συνεπεία της οικονομικής κρίσης στην Ελλάδα, για τα έργα κατασκευής αυτοκινητοδρόμων ισχύουν επικαιροποιημένα στοιχεία και χρονοδιαγράμματα τα οποία είναι υπό εξέταση. Το συνολικό κόστος του προγράμματος επενδύσεων για τις τέσσερις παραχωρήσεις αυτοκινητοδρόμων έχει αναθεωρηθεί προς τα κάτω, σύμφωνα με τις ελληνικές αρχές, από ποσό που είχε υπολογιστεί σε 8,57 δισ. ευρώ, κατά την ημερομηνία έναρξης της παραχώρησης, σε 7,6 δισ. ευρώ, επί του παρόντος. Η εν λόγω μείωση του κόστους αντικατοπτρίζει τη σοβαρή πτώση των εσόδων από τα διόδια και την ικανότητα των έργων να ανταπεξέλθουν στο χρέος. Όσον αφορά το κόστος από τυχόν ελλείψεις στο εθνικό σκέλος του Προγράμματος Δημοσίων Επενδύσεων, το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου οφείλει να απευθυνθεί στις ελληνικές αρχές.

Τα αναθεωρημένα χρονοδιαγράμματα που προβλέπονται για την ολοκλήρωση των έργων λαμβάνουν υπόψη ότι η ημερομηνία λήξης της επιλεξιμότητας καθορίζεται στις 31 Δεκεμβρίου 2015, για την περίοδο 2007-2013.

Κατά την περίοδο 2000-2006 η Ελληνική Δημοκρατία είχε δηλώσει ότι η δημόσια δαπάνη είχε ανέλθει σε 659 εκατ. ευρώ, εκ των οποίων ποσό 363,9 εκατ. ευρώ αποτελούσε τη συνεισφορά της ΕΕ. Οι αντίστοιχες μη επιλέξιμες δαπάνες ανήλθαν σε 8,3 εκατ. ευρώ.

([1]) http://www.tovima.gr/finance/article/?aid=511284&h1=true#commentForm
([2]) http://eib.europa.eu/projects/pipeline/2012/20120192.htm
([3]) http://www.mindev.gov.gr/?p=8903
([4]) http://eib.europa.eu/projects/loans/2010/20100240.htm

Όσον αφορά τον προϋπολογισμό του Προγράμματος Δημοσίων Επενδύσεων, οι δαπάνες για τα έργα αυτοκινητοδρόμων έχουν επιμερισθεί σε χρονικό διάστημα τριετίας, από το 2013 έως το 2015. Επιπλέον, σημαντικές δαπάνες είχαν ήδη δηλωθεί και καταβληθεί κατά τα προηγούμενα έτη.

Το προβλεπόμενο δάνειο από την ΕΤΕπ είναι συμπληρωματικό οποιασδήποτε χρηματοδότησης από την ΕΤΕπ για άλλα έργα, όπως για το μετρό ή τα δημόσια σχολεία. Σκοπός του είναι να ενισχυθεί η συνεισφορά που παρέχεται από την Ελληνική Δημοκρατία για την κάλυψη των δαπανών του αυτοκινητόδρομου και να διευκολυνθεί με τον τρόπο αυτό η ικανότητα των έργων να αντλήσουν περαιτέρω πόρους χρηματοδότησης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005394/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Increase in European Investment Bank loans for motorways

The Greek Government is considering ([1]) increasing recent loans ([2]) ([3]) from the European Investment Bank (EIB) in order to cover the shortfall in financing for franchised motorways in the Patras-Athens-Thessaloniki road network. EIB loans (this particular loan and previous loans for other projects ([4])) are used to finance project costs which are eligible for co-financing and form part of the country's annual borrowings. They are disbursed once certain quantitative and/or qualitative milestones laid down in the project contract have been reached. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have estimates of the total cost of completing these specific projects, compared with their initial approved costs? What, in its opinion, caused the shortfall? Has it estimated the cost of any shortfalls to the national section of the Public Investment Programme?

2. Is there any serious risk that projects programmed for the 2007-2013 period will not be completed by 2015 and that costs for non-operational, incomplete projects will be transferred to the national section of the budget and paid for by the State?

3. By how much was the budget for 'major' projects during the 2000-2006 programming period ultimately exceeded? Has any excess been charged to the national sub-programme of the Public Investment Programme?

4. Is the Public Investment Programme budget (co-financed actions) large enough to allow for programmed motorway projects to be completed without the need for additional funds to be transferred from headings for social policy, cohesion and competitiveness?

5. Does it know if the said loan to cover the shortfall in financing for motorways was initially intended to meet the needs of the investment programmes of the School Buildings Organisation and Attica Metro[4]? If so, does it intend to collaborate with the Greek authorities in finding alternative financing for those projects?

6. What does it think about the possibility of borrowing and using the loan in question to fund parts of projects which are *not eligible* for co-financing?

7. Is the tactic of increasing State borrowing, where banks have no wish to finance franchised projects, the right approach?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2013)

As a result of the economic crisis in Greece, the motorway projects will involve updated figures and timetables which are under assessment. The overall cost of the investment programme for the four motorway concessions has, according to the Greek Authorities, been revised downward from an estimated EUR 8.57 billion at the concession start date to EUR 7.6 billion at present. This reduction in costs reflects the severe decline in toll revenues and the capacity of the projects to sustain debt. As regards the cost of any shortfalls for the national section of the Public Investment Programme, the Honourable Member should address himself to the Greek Authorities.

The revised timetables envisaged for the completion of the projects take into account the end eligibility date of 31 December 2015 of the 2007-2013 period.

In the 2000-2006 period the Hellenic Republic declared public expenditure of EUR 659 million of which EUR 363.9 million is the EU contribution. The corresponding non-eligible expenditure amounts to EUR 8.3 million.

([1]) http://www.tovima.gr/finance/article/?aid=511284&h1=true#commentForm
([2]) http://eib.europa.eu/projects/pipeline/2012/20120192.htm
([3]) http://www.mindev.gov.gr/?p=8903
([4]) http://eib.europa.eu/projects/loans/2010/20100240.htm

As to the budget of the Public Investment Programme, the expenditure for the motorway projects is spread over three years from 2013 to 2015. In addition, significant expenditure has already been declared and paid in the previous years.

The envisaged loan by the EIB is additional to any EIB financing for other projects such as the Metro or public schools. It is intended to support the Hellenic Republic's contribution to the motorway costs and as such may facilitate the projects' capacity to raise further financing.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005395/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(15. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Abholzung von Regenwäldern auf Sumatra/Indonesien versus Ressourcennachfrage

Ein örtlicher Gouverneur auf Sumatra plant, in Indonesien in einem der unberührtesten Regenwälder Flächen in der Größe von Millionen von Fußballfeldern abzuholzen und Bergbau- und Palmölfirmen. anrücken zu lassen. Das nationale Forstministerium wird ihm vermutlich grünes Licht geben — es sei denn, der Präsident stoppt diesen für Orang-Utans tödlichen Plan. Es wird befürchtet, dass das nationale Forstministerium dafür aber grünes Licht geben wird. Dort findet man allerdings auch die größte Artenvielfalt des asiatisch-pazifischen Raums. Einige Gebiete sind außerdem Unesco-Welterbe. Der von den großen Bergbaufirmen unterstützte Plan würde große Teile Indonesiens verwüsten und ortsansässigen Gemeinschaften mit tödlichen Erdrutschen und Sturzfluten drohen. Auch die letzten Orang-Utans, Tiger, Elefanten und Nashörner könnten durch diese Vorgehensweise verschwinden. Generell wird die Zwickmühle aus Ressourcenabbau oder Nutzpflanzenanbau mit weltweiter Verkaufsmöglichkeit und Regenwaldschutz immer größer. Namhafte Tier- und Umweltschutzorganisationen rufen im vorgestellten Fall die Menschen auf, dagegen zu protestieren und eine dementsprechende Petition zu unterzeichnen: http://www.avaaz.org/de/the_plan_to_kill_orangutans_loc/?baciTdb&v=24861

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Was kann diese gefährliche Bedrohung unserer majestätischen Regenwälder stoppen und wie beurteilt die Kommission solche Vorhaben auf Sumatra?

2. Sieht die Kommission solche Vorhaben in direktem Zusammenhang mit der steigenden Palmölnachfrage auf Basis der zunehmenden Produktion und Beigabe von Biokraftstoffen auf Palmölbasis?

3. Falls ja, welche Auswirkungen sollte dies nach Sicht der Kommission auf die Verwendung von Biokraftstoffen haben, zumal Palmöl deutlich geeigneter und ergiebiger für Biokraftstoffe ist als Rapsöl?

4. Falls nein, welchen Grund sieht die Kommission für den stetigen Ausbau der Palmölproduktion?

5. Sieht die Kommission andere Möglichkeiten (Anreizsysteme, Anbaumethoden, Anbauverteilung, Vertragsgestaltung, etc.), um die vorhandene Zwickmühle aus hoher wirtschaftlicher Nützlichkeit des Palmöls und der Verhinderung der weltweiten Abholzung der Regenwälder zu lösen oder zu lindern?

6. Falls nein, erachtet es die Kommission als sinnvoll und möglich, intern eine kleine Gruppe (3-4 Personen) findiger Juristen und Ökonomen mit der Aufgabe zu betrauen, neue, intelligente und anreizkompatible Lösungsansätze für dieses weltweite und nachhaltige Problem zu erarbeiten, so dass eine dialektische Lösung gefunden werden kann?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juli 2013)

1) Die EU-Delegation in Jakarta ist sich der von Ihnen angesprochenen Lage, einschließlich des geplanten Straßenbaus, durchaus bewusst und hat mit den indonesischen Behörden bereits Kontakt aufgenommen. Die Europäische Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass alternative Entwicklungsmodelle in Betracht gezogen werden sollten, der legitime Wunsch nach Arbeitsplatzentwicklung und besseren Lebensbedingungen jedoch anerkannt werden muss.

2) Der Anteil an Palmöl, der in der EU für die Herstellung von Biokraftstoffen verwendet wird, ist gemessen an den für andere Zwecke verwendeten Palmölmengen nach wie vor gering. Die EU ist überdies nicht der wichtigste Palmölabnehmer. Nach der EU-Richtlinie über Dienstleistungen im Bereich erneuerbarer Energiequellen (EE) ([1]) dürfen Biokraftstoffe aus Palmöl, das auf frisch gerodeten Waldflächen gewonnen wurde, nicht auf die EE-Ziele eines Mitgliedstaats angerechnet werden.

([1]) Richtlinie 2009/28/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. April 2009 zur Förderung der Nutzung von Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen und zur Änderung und anschließenden Aufhebung der Richtlinien 2001/77/EG und 2003/30/EG.

3)/4) Um Fragen im Zusammenhang mit den indirekten Auswirkungen der Biokraftstoffherstellung zu klären, hat die Kommission vorgeschlagen, den Anteil von aus Nahrungspflanzen, darunter Palmöl, hergestellten Biokraftstoffen der ersten Generation, der auf die EE-Ziele angerechnet werden darf, auf 5 % zu begrenzen ([2]). Die steigende Nachfrage ist zwar ein Faktor, der die Ausweitung der Palmölproduktion erklärt, andere Faktoren wie die zunehmend sicheren Besitzverhältnisse oder steuerlichen Anreize in der Erzeugerländern sind jedoch ebenfalls relevant.

5)/6) In der „Zwickmühle" zwischen Regenwalderhaltung und Palmölproduktion (die Frage der Herstellung eines Gleichgewichts zwischen Agrarproduktion und den damit verbundenen Finanzvorteilen sowie der Erhaltung natürlicher Wälder und den von ihnen erbrachten allgemeineren Nutzen für Gesellschaft und Natur) befindet sich nicht nur Indonesien. Regierungen haben diese Frage bisher mit einer Mischung aus Regelungsmaßnahmen und Anreizen beantwortet. Darüber hinaus wird theoretisch und praktisch auch an der Einbeziehung der biologischen Vielfalt in Wirtschafts- und Raumordnungspolitiken gearbeitet (siehe TEEB-Initiative ([3]) und WAVES-Partnerschaft ([4])).

([2]) Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Änderung der Richtlinie 98/70/EG über die Qualität von Otto- und Dieselkraftstoffen und der Richtlinie 2009/28/EG zur Förderung der Nutzung von Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen.

([3]) Untersuchung über die Abschätzung des ökonomischen Werts von Ökosystemen und biologischer Vielfalt: http://www.teebweb.org

([4]) Globale Partnerschaft für Wohlstandsmessung und die Bewertung von Ökosystemleistungen: www.wavespartnership.org

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005395/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Deforestation of rainforests in Sumatra/Indonesia versus the demand for resources

A local governor in Sumatra is planning to allow the clearing of an area the size of millions of football pitches in one of the most untouched rainforests of Indonesia to make way for mining and palm oil businesses. It is likely that the national Ministry of Forestry will give the project the green light, unless the President calls a halt to this plan, which would have fatal consequences for orang-utans. It is feared, however, that the national Ministry of Forestry will grant its approval. Yet this is also the area with the greatest biodiversity in the Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, some areas are also Unesco World Heritage Sites. The plan, which is supported by the big mining companies, would cause large parts of Indonesia to be laid waste and would put local communities at risk of fatal landslides and flash floods. The last orang-utans, tigers, elephant and rhinoceroses could also disappear as a result. In general, the impasse between the destruction of resources and the cultivation of crops with worldwide sales prospects and the protection of the rainforest is becoming increasingly acute. In this case, well-known wildlife and environmental protection organisations are calling on people to protest and to sign the relevant petition:
http://www.avaaz.org/de/the_plan_to_kill_orangutans_loc/?baciTdb&v=24861

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. What can be done to stop this dangerous threat to our majestic rainforests and how does the Commission assess such projects in Sumatra?

2. Does the Commission recognise a direct link between such projects and the growing demand for palm oil due to the increasing production and use of bio-fuels based on palm oil?

3. If so, in the view of the Commission, what impact will this have on the use of bio-fuels, particularly as palm oil is much more suitable and efficient as a bio-fuel than rape seed oil?

4. If not, what reason does the Commission see for the ongoing expansion of palm oil production?

5. Does the Commission know of other options (incentive systems, cultivation methods, crop proportions, contract management, etc.) for resolving or relieving the current impasse between the high economic usefulness of palm oil and the need to prevent the worldwide destruction of the rainforests?

6. If not, does the Commission consider it reasonable and possible to commission a small group (3 or 4 persons) of resourceful lawyers and economists to draw up new, intelligent and incentive-compatible approaches to this ongoing worldwide problem, so that a solution can be found through dialogue?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

1. The EU Delegation in Jakarta is aware of the situation referred to in the question, including planned road construction, and has been in contact with the Indonesian authorities. The European Commission considers that alternative models of development should be considered, while recognising the legitimate aim of developing employment and livelihood opportunities.

2. The proportion of palm oil used for biofuels in the EU remains small compared to that used for other uses. Furthermore the EU is not the most important market for palm oil. The EU Renewable Energy Services Directive ([1]) does not permit biofuel produced from palm oil grown on recently deforested land to count towards Member State's renewable energy targets.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC.

3 and 4. In order to address issues related to indirect impacts of the production of biofuels, the Commission has proposed to limit the share of first-generation biofuels made from food crops, including palm oil, counted towards the renewable energy targets to 5% ([2]). While increased demand is one factor in expansion of palm oil production, other factors such as increased certainty of land tenure or fiscal incentives in producer countries are also relevant.

5 and 6. The 'impasse' between conserving rainforests and producing palm oil is an example of an issue that is not unique to Indonesia — how to balance agricultural production and related financial benefits with conservation of natural forests and broader benefits they provide for society and for nature. Governments have responded with a mix of regulatory measures and incentives. In addition, conceptual and practical work on the integration of biodiversity in economic and spatial policies is ongoing, e.g. the TEEB initiative ([3]) and WAVES Partnership ([4]).

([2]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 98/70/EC relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels and amending Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources.

([3]) The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity: http://www.teebweb.org

([4]) Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services: www.wavespartnership.org

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-005396/13
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(15. toukokuuta 2013)

Aihe: Asekoulutus Gazan kouluissa

Lehtitietojen mukaan Gazan palestiinalaisalueen kouluissa opetellaan Kalašnikov-rynnäkkökiväärien ja muiden aseiden käyttöä. Aseiden käsittely kuuluu normaaliin opetusohjelmaan ja se on tarkoitettu 15–17-vuotiaille poikaoppilaille. Heitä Gazan kouluissa on 37 000. Tämän lisäksi koululaisilla on mahdollisuus täydentää aseenkäsittelytaitojaan vapaaehtoisilla leireillä lomien aikana, joihin koulutuksessa avustaa Hamas-järjestön aseellinen siipi al-Qassamin prikaatit. Näillä leireillä voi perehtyä myös räjähteiden käsittelyyn.

Eikö EU:n tavoitteena ole rauhan edellytysten rakentaminen Lähi-idän alueelle?

Onko tämän kaltainen väkivaltaan rohkaiseva toiminta sopusoinnussa EU:n tavoitteiden kanssa?

Voiko EU tukea palestiinalaishallintoa, mikäli se ylläpitää rauhanomaisen ratkaisun vaarantavaa koulutusta koululaisten parissa?

Mitä komissio aikoo tehdä estääkseen sotilaallisen kulttuurin vahvistumista palestiinalaisnuorten keskuudessa?

Onko EU:n mahdollista asettaa palestiinalaishallinnolle maksamansa taloudellisen tuen ehdoksi tällaisen toiminnan kieltämistä?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(5. elokuuta 2013)

Ulkoasiainedustaja on tietoinen raporteista, jotka koskevat opetussuunnitelmaa Hamasin ylläpitämissä Gazan kouluissa. EU ei tue sotilaallisuuden iskostamista koululaisiin Palestiinassa eikä sotilaallisen koulutuksen sisällyttämistä koulujen opetussuunnitelmiin. EU:n varoja ei ole osoitettu Hamasille.

Niin kauan kuin Gaza on poliittisesti erotettu Länsirannasta, EU:lla on vain rajalliset mahdollisuudet ottaa tämä tai mikään muu asia esiin Gazan valtaa pitävien viranomaisten kanssa. EU kehottaa palestiinalaisia edelleen keskinäiseen sovintoon presidentti Abbasin johdolla.

Palestiinan kansalle myönnettävistä EU:n varoista päätetään vuosittain sen jälkeen, kun budjettivallan käyttäjä on tehnyt päätöksensä. Euroopan unioni myöntää suoraa rahoitustukea palestiinalaishallinnon toistuviin menoihin osana kahdenvälistä tukipakettia. Käytössä on tiukka ja kattava valvonta- ja tarkastusjärjestelmä, jonka avulla Euroopan unioni pystyy tarkistamaan, minne jokainen PEGASE-mekanismin kautta ohjattu euro tarkalleen ottaen päätyy. Tähän kuuluu erityisesti jokaisen maksun osalta jokaisen yksittäisen potentiaalisen tuensaajan etsiminen yleisesti luotettavana pidetystä, terrorismista epäiltyjen tietokannasta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005396/13
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Weapons training at schools in Gaza

According to reports in the press, lessons are being given at schools in the Palestinian territory Gaza on how to use Kalashnikov assault rifles and other weapons. Weapons handling forms part of the normal curriculum for male pupils aged 15-17. There are 37 000 of them in Gaza's schools. In addition, pupils have the opportunity to perfect their weapons-handling skills at voluntary camps during the holidays, where the training is assisted by Hamas's military wing the al-Qassam Brigades. At these camps, it is also possible to study the use of explosives.

Is it not the EU's aim to establish the preconditions for peace in the Middle East?

Does such activity, which encourages violence, accord with the EU's objectives?

Can the EU support the Palestinian Authority if it maintains education for school pupils which jeopardises a peaceful solution?

What will the Commission do to prevent the military culture from spreading among young Palestinians?

Is it possible for the EU to make its financial support for the Palestinian Authority conditional on the prohibition of such activity?

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

The HR/VP is aware of reports concerning the curriculum in Hamas-run Gaza schools. The EU does not support the military indoctrination of Palestinian school children or the inclusion of military training in the school curriculum. No EU funds are allocated to Hamas.

As long as the the Gaza Strip remains politically separated from the West Bank, the EU has limited means to directly address this or any other issue with the de-facto authorities in Gaza.

The EU continues to call for Palestinian reconciliation under the leadership of President Abbas.

As regards the allocation of EU funds to the Palestinian people, this is decided on an annual basis following the decision of the Budgetary Authority. As part of its bilateral assistance package, the European Union provides direct financial support to the recurrent expenditure of the Palestinian Authority (PA). A strict and extensive mechanism of audit and verification is in place which allows the European Union to verify the precise destination of every single Euro committed through the PEGASE Mechanism, including notably a check on each individual potential beneficiary for each payment on a recognised database of terror suspects.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005397/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(15 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Ritardi nei pagamenti

Lo scorso marzo i Vicepresidenti della Commissione, Tajani e Rehn, hanno dichiarato che il patto di stabilità e crescita permette di prendere in considerazione fattori significativi in sede di valutazione della conformità del bilancio di uno Stato membro con i criteri di deficit e di debito del patto stesso e che in tale ambito la liquidazione di debiti commerciali potrebbe rientrare tra i fattori attenuanti. Tale dichiarazione mira, nel rispetto della direttiva relativa alla lotta contro i ritardi di pagamento, a garantire che le imprese siano pagate in tempi certi dalle amministrazioni, evitando numerosi casi di fallimento dovuti a mancanza di liquidità.

Infatti, il 57 % delle imprese europee ha avuto problemi di liquidità a causa di tali ritardi e le insolvenze hanno portato alla perdita di 450 000 occupati in Europa. Sono circa 180 i giorni con cui in media l'Italia paga i fornitori, a fronte di una media unionale di 65 giorni. In Italia i debiti pregressi ammontano a più di 90 miliardi di euro e secondo alcune stime, se venissero rimborsati per due terzi si genererebbe un aumento del 13 % degli investimenti in cinque anni, mentre un loro pagamento completo creerebbe in cinque anni 250 000 nuovi posti di lavoro. Il governo italiano ha da poco adottato un decreto legge che sblocca pagamenti di debiti verso imprese, cooperative e professionisti per un importo di 40 miliardi, da erogare nei prossimi mesi.

Durante il Consiglio europeo di marzo è stato chiesto alla Commissione di portare avanti un risanamento di bilancio differenziato e favorevole alla crescita.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere:

— quali altre misure possono essere messe in campo, a livello europeo e nazionale, nell'ambito del patto di stabilità e crescita per stimolare crescita e occupazione, in particolare per quegli Stati che rispettano il vincolo del 3 %;

— se intende attivare una task force/cabina di regia e definire una tabella di marcia che assieme ai governi e agli enti locali (regioni e comuni) possa definire regole condivise europee in materia di opere e investimenti pubblici relativamente ai calcoli e ai criteri relativi ai patti di stabilità?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2013)

Nella dichiarazione comune cui rimanda l'onorevole deputata, i vicepresidenti Rehn e Tajani hanno precisato che, in base al patto di stabilità e crescita, occorre tener conto dei «fattori significativi» nel vagliare l'opportunità di avviare una procedura per disavanzi eccessivi nei confronti di uno Stato membro che non rispetta il criterio del disavanzo o del debito. In tale contesto la liquidazione dei debiti commerciali verso le imprese può essere considerata un fattore attenuante, in quanto contribuisce al conseguimento degli obiettivi della strategia dell'UE per la crescita (essenzialmente alleviando i problemi di liquidità delle imprese).

Più in generale, nell'attuale situazione economica la Commissione propugna una strategia di risanamento del bilancio differenziato e favorevole alla crescita (cfr. Analisi annuale della crescita 2013), che rispecchi il diverso margine di manovra sul bilancio di cui dispongono gli Stati membri, e la necessaria attribuzione di priorità a voci di spesa propizie alla crescita, quali gli investimenti produttivi, l'istruzione e formazione, la ricerca e sviluppo e l'innovazione. Nel contesto la Commissione sta altresì vagliando l'ipotesi di inserire una «clausola d'investimento» nel braccio preventivo del patto di stabilità e crescita (escludendo quindi gli Stati membri sottoposti a procedura per disavanzi eccessivi), al fine di raggiungere, a determinate condizioni, un equilibrio tra fabbisogno d'investimento e obiettivi di rigore di bilancio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005397/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Late payments

In March this year, Commission Vice-Presidents Tajani and Rehn stated that the Stability and Growth Pact allows the taking into account of relevant factors in the assessment of compliance with the deficit and debt criteria, and that in this context, the liquidation of overdue commercial debt would represent a mitigating factor. In accordance with the directive on combating late payments, this statement aims to ensure that undertakings will be paid by public authorities within a definite time frame, thereby preventing numerous bankruptcies as a result of a lack of liquidity.

57% of European businesses have encountered liquidity problems because of such delays and bankruptcies have resulted in the loss of 450 000 jobs in Europe. On average, the Italian State takes 180 days to pay suppliers as against an EU average of 65 days. In Italy, debt arrears amount to over EUR 90 billion and, according to some estimates, if two thirds of these arrears were paid off, there would be a 13% increase in investment over five years, whereas if they were paid in full, 250 000 new jobs would be created in five years. The Italian Government has recently adopted a decree-law authorising the payment of debts to undertakings, cooperatives and professionals amounting to EUR 40 billion, to be paid over the coming months.

During the European Council in March, the European Commission was asked to pursue differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation.

In light of the above, can the Commission state:

— what other measures can be implemented at EU and national level, in the context of the Stability and Growth Pact, in order to stimulate growth and employment, in particular, for those States that respect the 3% limit;

— whether it intends to set up a task force/'control room' and define a roadmap which, together with governments and local authorities (regional and municipal), lays down common European rules on stability pact calculations and criteria in the field of public works and investment?

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

The joint statement by Vice-Presidents Rehn and Tajani referred to in the question clarified that the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) foresees that 'relevant factors' should be taken into account when considering to open an Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) for a Member State breaching the deficit or debt criterion. In this context, the liquidation of commercial debt to firms can be considered as a mitigating factor in view of its contribution to the objectives of the EU growth strategy (essentially by alleviating liquidity constraints of firms).

More generally, the Commission advocates in the current economic context a differentiated and growth-friendly fiscal consolidation strategy (see the 2013 Annual Growth Survey), reflecting varying fiscal space across Member States, and the need to prioritise growth-friendly spending items such as productive investments, education and training, R&D and innovation. Within this framework the Commission is also exploring the possibility to introduce an 'investment clause' within the preventive arm of the SGP (i.e. excluding Member States under EDP) to balance, under certain conditions, investment needs with fiscal discipline objectives.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-005398/13
Komisi
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(15. května 2013)

Předmět: Právní ochrana volné přírody v Evropě

Evropský parlament přijal v roce 2009 velkou většinou hlasů usnesení (P7_TA(2009)0034), kterým vyzývá Komisi, aby se ujala určitého počtu iniciativ s cílem vymezit a prosazovat ochranu volné přírody v EU.

Nedostatek účinných politických opatření EU vede k zániku posledních nedotčených oblastí v EU a má znepokojující dopady na ochranu biologické rozmanitosti, zmírňování změn klimatu a na další oblasti životní prostředí.

Na druhé straně zájem evropské občanské společnosti o toto téma stoupá: například nezisková organizace PAN Parks zahájila „milionový projekt“, jehož cílem je ochránit milión hektarů volné přírody v EU do roku 2015, a v říjnu 2013 se bude ve Španělsku konat desátý Světový kongres na ochranu volné přírody.

S ohledem na doporučení, která jsou součástí usnesení z roku 2009, upřesní Komise pokrok v souvislosti

1. se zmapováním oblastí volné přírody v Evropském hospodářském prostoru;

2. s vypracováním zprávy o významu a přínosu volné přírody;

3. s účinnou ochranou oblastí volné přírody;

4. se zvážením zvláštních finančních prostředků přidělených v rámci fondu LIFE+ a jiných fondů EU na ochranu oblastí volné přírody;

5. se zveřejněním konečných pokynů na ochranu oblastí volné přírody?

Odpověď pana Potočnika jménem Komise
(8. července 2013)

V návaznosti na usnesení Parlamentu provádí Komise řadu iniciativ. V pokročilé fázi finalizace je příprava pokynů o volné přírodě v rámci soustavy Natura 2000, které budou zanedlouho zveřejněny. Nedávno byla zveřejněna zpráva o ekonomických přínosech soustavy Natura 2000 ([1]), které se stejnou měrou týkají i oblastí volné přírody v rámci této soustavy. Oblasti volné přírody v EU se zdají být z velké části zahrnuty do chráněné soustavy Natura 2000. Komise v současné době podporuje projekt, jehož cílem je vytvoření rejstříku a ukazatelů týkajících se volné přírody, které poskytnou rámec pro zmapování oblastí volné přírody v Evropě.

Oblasti volné přírody zahrnuté do soustavy Natura 2000 jsou zcela způsobilé pro financování v rámci nařízení LIFE+ a stejný stav se očekává i v rámci budoucího nařízení LIFE. S žádnými zvláštními příděly na volnou přírodu, ani s žádnou další kategorií řízení v rámci programu Natura 2000 se nepočítá, neboť výběr projektů v konečném důsledku závisí na jejich kvalitě a jejich přínosu pro soustavu Natura 2000 a pro dosahování cílů týkajících se biologické rozmanitosti. Možnosti spolufinancování sítě Natura 2000 ze strany EU jsou stanoveny v každém z příslušných nástrojů politiky EU, včetně politiky soudržnosti. Komise vyzvala členské státy, aby při sestavování svých programů pro tyto fondy braly náležitý ohled na potřeby soustavy Natura 2000. S ohledem na příští víceletý finanční rámec žádá členské státy, aby vypracovaly akční program zahrnující opatření na různém stupni priorit, jak je uvedeno v článku 8 směrnice 92/43/EHS ([2]) a ve směrnici o stanovištích, aby vytyčily priority a stanovily strategický přístup k širšímu využití různých odvětvových fondů EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/ENV-12-018_LR_Final1.pdf
([2]) Úř. věst. L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005398/13
to the Commission
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Legal protection of wilderness in Europe

In 2009 the European Parliament adopted with a large majority a resolution (P7_TA(2009)0034) calling on the Commission to undertake a certain number of initiatives with a view to defining and promoting the protection of wilderness in the EU.

A lack of effective EU policy action is leading to the disappearance of the last remaining pristine areas in the EU, with alarming consequences on biodiversity protection and climate change mitigation, and other environmental impacts.

Meanwhile, the interest of civil society in Europe in this issue is growing: for example, the not-for-profit organisation PAN Parks has launched the 'Million Project' aimed at safeguarding 1 million hectares of wilderness in the EU by 2015, and the 10th World Wilderness Congress will be taking place in Spain in October 2013.

With regard to the 2009 resolution's recommendations, will the Commission specify progress in relation to:

1. the mapping of wilderness areas in the European Economic Area;

2. the production of a report on the value and benefits of wilderness;

3. the effective protection of wilderness areas;

4. consideration for dedicated financial allocations in LIFE + or other EU funds for wilderness areas;

5. publication of final guidelines for the protection of wilderness areas?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

The Commission is undertaking a number of initiatives as follow-up to the resolution of the Parliament. The preparation of guidelines on wilderness in Natura 2000 is at an advanced stage of finalisation and they will shortly be published. A report on the economic benefits of Natura 2000, equally relevant to wilderness areas in Natura 2000, has recently been published ([1]). Wilderness areas in the EU appear to be largely covered by Natura 2000 protection. The Commission is currently supporting a project aimed at the development of a wilderness register and indicator, which will provide the framework for the mapping of wilderness areas in Europe.

Wilderness areas included in Natura 2000 are fully eligible for funding under the LIFE+ regulation and this is expected to continue under the future LIFE regulation. No specific allocation is foreseen for wilderness or any other management category under Natura 2000 as the selection of projects is ultimately determined by their quality and contribution to Natura 2000 and broader biodiversity goals. Possibilities of EU co-financing of Natura 2000 are provided in each of the relevant EU policy instruments, including cohesion policy. The Commission has encouraged Member States to give due consideration to the needs of Natura 2000 when establishing their programmes for these funds. With a view to the next multiannual financial framework the Commission is asking Member States to develop prioritised action frameworks, foreseen in Article 8 of Directive 92/43/EEC ([2]), the Habitats Directive, to identify priorities and provide a strategic approach for greater use of the different EU sectoral funds.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/ENV-12-018_LR_Final1.pdf
([2]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-005399/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(15 maj 2013)

Angående: Slutsatser av att vinsterna på it-brottslighet vida överstiger förlusterna

I sitt pressmeddelande av den 7 februari 2013 ([1]) informerar Europeiska kommissionen om den aktuella situationen vad gäller it-säkerhet, inklusive följande uttalande om it-brottslighet: ”de som utsätts för it-brott världen över förlorar sammanlagt cirka 290 miljarder euro varje år och […] it-brottsligheten [genererar] vinster på 750 miljarder euro årligen”.

Vilka slutsatser drar DG CONNECT och deras ansvariga medarbetare för nätverkssäkerhet av det faktum att de förluster som it-brottsligheten ger upphov till tycks vara mindre än hälften så stora som de vinster som samma verksamhet genererar?

Svar från Neelie Kroes på kommissionens vägnar
(2 juli 2013)

Generaldirektoratet för kommunikationsnät, innehåll och teknik instämmer i Europeiska utrikestjänstens svar på fråga E-001770/2013 och håller med om att det är svårt att få fram tillförlitliga uppgifter, eftersom företagen ofta inte avslöjar it-incidenternas antal och konsekvenser. I och med rapporteringsskyldigheten i förslaget till direktiv om nät- och informationssäkerhet ([2]) skulle de behöriga nationella myndigheterna få sådana uppgifter.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-94_en.htm
([2]) KOM(2013) 48.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005399/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Conclusions drawn from the fact that the profits of cybercrime vastly exceed the losses

In its press release of 7 February 2013 ([1]), the Commission provides information on the current situation with regard to cybercrime, including the following statement in this regard: 'cybercrime victims worldwide lose around EUR 290 billion each year, while […] cybercrime [generates] profits [of] EUR 750 billion a year'.

What conclusions do the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology and its employees responsible for network security draw from the fact that the losses resulting from cybercrime appear to be less than half the size of the profits generated by the same activity?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

In addition to the reply given by EEAS to Question E-001770/2013 the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology would like to add that it agrees with the difficulty to get reliable data since companies often do not reveal the number or impact of cyber incidents. A result of the reporting requirement in the proposed Directive on network and information security ([2]) would be to give competent national authorities such data.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-94_en.htm
([2]) COM(2013) 48.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-005400/13
komissiolle
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(15. toukokuuta 2013)

Aihe: EU:n uusi tietosuojalainsäädäntö uhka sukututkimukselle

Euroopan komissio julkaisi tammikuussa 2012 laajan ehdotuksen EU:n tietosuojalainsäädännön uudistamiseksi (ns. yleinen tietosuoja-asetus sekä tietosuojadirektiivi). Tietosuojapaketti keräsi parlamentissa yhteensä yli 4 000 tarkistusta, mikä kertoo tyytymättömyydestä komission ehdotusta kohtaan. Silti lainsäädäntöprosessia kiirehditään, ja se halutaan saada päätökseen vielä nykyisen parlamentin aikana.

Sukututkimuksen kannalta keskeinen vaatimus yleisessä tietosuoja-asetuksessa on suostumuksen edellyttäminen henkilötietojen kohteelta (7 artikla sekä historiantutkimuksen osalta 83 artikla).

Suostumuksen edellyttäminen olisi sukututkimuksen kannalta täysin kohtuuton vaatimus. Arviolta vain noin 10 % henkilöistä täydentää henkilötietojaan tai ylipäänsä edes ilmoittaa suostumuksestaan tietojen rekisteröimiseksi sukututkimustarpeisiin. Näin ollen suostumuksen vaatiminen edellyttäisi 90 %:n tietojen poistamista sukurekisteristä ja mahdollistaisi vain murto-osan tietojen esittämisen julkaistavissa sukukirjoissa.

Suostumuksen vaatiminen johtaisi sukukirjojen tekemisen rajoittamiseen vain kuolleiden henkilöiden tietoihin, mikä taas johtaisi kyseisten hankkeiden kannattamattomuuteen ja sukukirjojen julkaisujen loppumiseen.

Sukututkimusrekisteriin merkittävien henkilöiden yksityisyyden suojan tarpeen tulisi olla tasapainossa sukututkimusharrastuksen tarpeiden kanssa. Hätiköityjä ratkaisuja ei pitäisi tehdä eikä lainsäädännön laatua riskeerata.

— Onko komissio pohtinut tietosuojalainsäädäntömuutosta laatiessaan sen vaikutusta sukututkimukselle? Entä harkitseeko komissio vaikutustenarvioinnin laatimista ehdotettujen muutosten vaikutuksesta sukututkimukselle?

— Miten komissio aikoo mahdollistaa, että sukututkimuksen teko ja sukukirjojen julkaisu on jatkossakin mahdollista myös elossa olevien henkilöiden osalta?

— Mikä on komission näkemys siitä, helpottaisiko delegoitujen säännösten antaminen henkilötietojen käsittelystä mm. historiallisissa käyttötarkoituksissa sukututkimuksen tekoa?

Viviane Redingin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(4. heinäkuuta 2013)

Rekisteröidyn suostumus on nyt – ja myös komission yleistä tietosuoja-asetusta koskevan ehdotuksen ([1]) hyväksymisen jälkeen – vain yksi useista perusteista, joiden nojalla tietojenkäsittely voidaan laillisesti hyväksyä esimerkiksi sukututkimusta varten. Muita perusteita ovat esimerkiksi sopimuksen täytäntöönpano, laillinen velvoite, yleinen etu tai rekisterinpitäjän oikeutettu etu.

Ehdotuksen 83 artiklassa säädetään erityisistä edellytyksistä ja takeista, jotka koskevat henkilötietojen laillista käsittelyä muun muassa historiantutkimusta, kuten sukututkimusta, varten. Tällöin rekisteröidyn suostumus tarvitaan ainoastaan sellaisissa tapauksissa, joissa sukututkimusta suorittava taho haluaa julkaista tai muulla tavoin julkistaa henkilötietoja. Tällaisissakin tapauksissa rekisteröidyn suostumus on vain yksi kolmesta vaihtoehtoisesta edellytyksestä. Kaksi muuta edellytystä ovat seuraavat: a) henkilötietojen julkaiseminen on tarpeen tutkimustulosten esittämistä varten tai tutkimuksen helpottamiseksi tai b) rekisteröity on itse julkistanut tiedot.

Komission vaikutustenarviointiohjeiden ([2]) mukaisesti yleistä tietosuoja-asetusta koskevaan ehdotukseen oli liitetty perinpohjainen vaikutusten arviointi ([3]), jossa arvioidaan kolmea laajaa vaikutusluokkaa eli taloudellisia, sosiaalisia ja ympäristövaikutuksia. Tässä yhteydessä ei tarkasteltu erityisesti sukututkimukseen liittyviä näkökohtia.

([1]) COM(2012) 11 – Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston asetus yksilöiden suojelusta henkilötietojen käsittelyssä sekä näiden tietojen vapaasta liikkuvuudesta (yleinen tietosuoja-asetus).
([2]) SEC(2009) 92 – "European Commission Impact Assessment Guidelines", 15.1.2009, saatavissa osoitteessa: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/docs/iag_2009_en.pdf
([3]) SEC(2012) 72 final – saatavissa osoitteessa: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/document/review2012/sec_2012_72_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005400/13
to the Commission
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Threat to genealogical research posed by the EU's new data protection legislation

In January 2012, the Commission published a wide-ranging proposal to revise the EU's data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Directive). Altogether, more than 4 000 amendments to the data protection package were tabled in Parliament, which is indicative of the dissatisfaction felt concerning the Commission proposal. Nonetheless, the legislative procedure is being accelerated, the aim being to secure a decision on the package before the end of the current parliamentary term.

From the point of view of genealogical research, the main requirement in the General Data Protection Regulation is that of consent by the data subject for use of personal data (Article 7 and, with regard to historical research, Article 83).

From the point of view of genealogical research, the consent requirement would be wildly excessive. It is estimated that only about 10% of people supplement their personal data or indeed give notification of their consent for data to be registered for purposes of genealogical research. Therefore the consent requirement would make it necessary to delete 90% of data from genealogical registers and would permit only a fraction of data to be included in genealogies for publication.

The consent requirement would mean that genealogies could be compiled only on people who were dead, which in turn would render such projects unviable and would put an end to the publication of genealogies.

A balance should be struck between the need to protect the privacy of individuals entered in a genealogical register and the needs of those whose hobby is genealogical research. Precipitate decisions should be avoided, and the quality of legislation should not be jeopardised.

— In drafting the proposal for amendments to data protection legislation, did the Commission consider its impact on genealogical research? Is the Commission considering conducting an impact assessment on the proposed changes to establish how they would affect such research?

— How will the Commission make it possible for genealogical research and publication of genealogies to continue with regard to people who are alive as well?

— What view does the Commission take of whether the adoption of delegated legal acts concerning processing of personal data would facilitate genealogical research, *inter alia* for historical purposes?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

Consent is at present — and will remain under the Commission's proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([1]) — only one of the several grounds allowing for the lawful processing of data, such as for genealogical purposes. Processing can also be based on the performance of a contract, on a legal obligation, a public interest or on the legitimate interests of the controller, etc.

Article 83 provides for specific conditions and safeguards for the lawful processing of personal data necessary for historical research, which may also include genealogical research. Here the consent of the data subject is only applicable in cases where the entity conducting research would wish to publish or publicly disclose personal data. Even in such cases however, consent is only one among three alternative conditions, the other two being (a) that the publication of personal data is necessary to present research findings or to facilitate research; or (b) that the data subject has made the data public.

([1]) COM(2012)11 — Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation).

In accordance with the Commission's Impact Assessment Guidelines ([2]), the proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation was accompanied by a thorough impact assessment ([3]) which assessed three broad categories of impacts, namely economic, social and environmental impacts. The area of genealogical research was not specifically examined in this context.

([2]) SEC(2009)92 — European Commission Impact Assessment Guidelines of 15 January 2009, available at http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/docs/iag_2009_en.pdf

([3]) SEC(2012)72 final — available at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/document/review2012/sec_2012_72_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005401/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(15 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Gasto de fondos europeos

Recientemente medios de comunicación españoles han afirmado que «Bruselas critica a España por gastar los fondos europeos en carreteras en lugar de en I+D+i o empleo» en el periodo 2007-2013. Se afirma igualmente que este esfuerzo inversor contradice las recomendaciones de la UE, en las que se pedía destinar el grueso de los fondos a sectores que contribuyan a mejorar competitividad de la economía. España sería de los Estados miembros que menos ayudas europeas destinan a PYME, a mercado laboral y capital humano y a la inclusión social.

1. ¿Cuáles son las críticas que ha hecho la Comisión a las autoridades españolas en relación al gasto de las ayudas percibidas de fondos comunitarios?

2. ¿Qué información tiene la Comisión sobre el esfuerzo inversor hecho por el Gobierno de España, por sectores y territorios, durante el periodo 2007-2013 con fondos procedentes de la UE?

3. ¿Qué información tiene la Comisión sobre el gasto realizado por el Gobierno español en proyectos de I+D+i financiados por Fondos Estructurales, y su desglose territorial?

4. ¿Qué información tiene la Comisión sobre el gasto efectuado por el Gobierno de España en carreteras con fondos comunitarios?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de julio de 2013)

1. El Informe estratégico 2013 de la UE sobre la implementación de la política regional en el período 2007-2013 describe los progresos de la operaciones seleccionadas por los Estados miembros en los diferentes temas prioritarios de la política regional. La Comisión no criticó a España, pero indicó que, en algunos Estados miembros, se producen importantes retrasos en la selección de las operaciones en los ámbitos de la innovación y la I+D+i, los servicios TIC y de banda ancha, la energía y la capacidad administrativa. Es posible que algunos Estados miembros quieran reprogramar en 2013 los recursos entre los distintos temas, y la Comisión señaló que cualquier reprogramación debe orientarse claramente a las inversiones con el máximo impacto en el crecimiento y el empleo.

La Comisión invita a Su Señoría a que consulte el Informe estratégico 2013 de la UE antes mencionado, que está disponible en línea en la dirección:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/how/policy/strategic_report_en.cfm#sr2013

2., 3. y 4. Los informes anuales de aplicación de 2011 sobre los programas cofinanciados por los Fondos Estructurales en España contienen información sobre aspectos relativos a los gastos realizados en temas como I+D y carreteras, y pueden consultarse en la siguiente dirección:
http://www.dgfc.sgpg.meh.es/sitios/dgfc/es-ES/ipr/fcp0713/gs/feder/ia/Paginas/inicio.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005401/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Spending of EU funds

According to recent reports in the the Spanish media, Brussels has criticised Spain for spending EU funds on roads instead of on research, development and innovation, and jobs in the period 2007-2013. It is also reported that this investment runs counter to the EU's recommendations, which requested that funds be predominantly allocated to sectors that would help to improve the economy's competitiveness. Spain is one of the Member States allocating the lowest amounts of EU aid to small and medium-sized enterprises, the labour and human resources market and social inclusion.

1. What criticisms has the Commission expressed to the Spanish authorities in relation to the spending of aid received from EU funds?

2. What information does the Commission have on the investment of EU funds by the Spanish Government during the period 2007-2013, broken down by sector and region?

3. What information does the Commission have on expenditure by the Spanish Government on research, development and innovation projects financed by the Structural Funds, and their regional breakdown?

4. What information does the Commission have on expenditure on roads by the Spanish Government, using EU funds?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

1. The 2013 EU Strategic Report on the implementation of the regional policy in the 2007-2013 period describes the progress of the operations selected by the Member States in the different priority themes of regional policy. The Commission did not criticise the Spanish authorities but indicated that, in some Member States, there are important delays in the selection of operations in the areas of innovation and R&DT&I, ICT services and broadband, energy and administrative capacity. Some Member States may want to reprogramme resources between themes in 2013 and the Commission indicated that any reprogramming should be clearly oriented towards investments which maximise the impact on growth and employment.

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult the abovementioned 2013 EU Strategic Report which is available online:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/how/policy/strategic_report_en.cfm#sr2013

2, 3, 4. The 2011 annual implementation reports on the programmes co-financed by the Structural Funds in Spain contain information on spending on themes such as research and development and roads. They are available at:
http://www.dgfc.sgpg.meh.es/sitios/dgfc/es-ES/ipr/fcp0713/gs/feder/ia/Paginas/inicio.aspx

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005402/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(15 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Impago de ayudas procedentes del Feader a agricultores valencianos

Recientemente una asociación profesional agraria española ha presentado ante la Representación de la Comisión Europea en España más de 1200 protestas individuales por impago, por parte del Gobierno valenciano a los agricultores, de las ayudas procedentes del Feader. Estos impagos se remontarían en algunos casos al año 2010 y totalizarían una cifra de entre 120 y 150 millones de euros.

Denuncia esta asociación profesional agraria valenciana que el gobierno valenciano presuntamente ha podido percibir estas cantidades y no destinarlas a sus legítimos beneficiarios.

1. ¿Conoce la Comisión la existencia de los impagos denunciados?

2. Si es así, ¿conoce la Comisión las razones por las que no se ha producido el pago correspondiente con la debida diligencia?

3. ¿Tiene la Comisión algún indicio de que parte de estos fondos hayan sido atribuidos a finalidades distintas a las que estaban destinados?

4. Si es así, ¿qué piensa hacer la Comisión para depurar las posibles responsabilidades?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

1. El 2 de abril de 2013, la Comisión recibió una denuncia de una asociación agraria de la Comunidad Autónoma de Valencia, en la que se señalaban los hechos a los que alude Su Señoría. Esta denuncia se registró con el n° CHAP (2013) 01085 y está siendo examinada por los servicios competentes de la Dirección General de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural.

Desde el último trimestre de 2011, las declaraciones de gastos en el marco del Feader presentadas a la Comisión han sido muy modestas, lo que indica que los pagos a los beneficiarios finales han sido bastante limitados. Esta situación se debe a los problemas de tesorería de la Administración regional.

2. Los fondos del Feader están sujetos a disposiciones específicas en lo que respecta a los pagos del organismo pagador a los beneficiarios finales; así, la Comisión reembolsa al organismo pagador el gasto subvencionable correspondiente a la contribución del Feader abonada de manera efectiva al beneficiario. Los Reglamentos de la UE no establecen un plazo límite para los pagos a los beneficiarios.

3. La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de que se hayan asignado fondos a gastos no subvencionables en el marco del PDR.

4. La responsabilidad de la gestión de las ayudas en el marco del PDR recae en la autoridad de gestión. La Comisión vela por que los Estados miembros observen el principio de buena gestión financiera mediante diversas medidas, entre las que figuran las siguientes: i) auditorías; ii) reducción o suspensión de los pagos cuando fallan los sistemas de gestión o de control; iii) liberación de compromisos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005402/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Non-payment of aid from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to Valencian farmers

A Spanish farmers' association recently submitted to the Representation of the European Commission in Spain over 1 200 individual complaints regarding the non-payment, by the Valencian local government, of EAFRD aid to farmers. In some cases non-payment dated back to 2010, and the total figure was between EUR 120 and 150 million.

The Valencian farmers' association alleges that the Valencian local government may have received these sums but not paid them out to those lawfully entitled to them.

1. Is the Commission aware of the reported non-payments?

2. If so, does the Commission know why the relevant payments have not been made as they ought to have been?

3. Does the Commission have any indication as to what proportion of these funds has been allocated for purposes other than those for which they were intended?

4. If so, what does the Commission plan to do to ensure those liable are held responsible?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

1. The Commission received on 2 April 2013 a complaint of a farmers' organisation in the autonomous Spanish community of Valencia, reporting the facts evoked by the Honourable Member of Parliament. This complaint has been registered with No CHAP (2013) 01085 and is being examined by the competent services of the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development.

From the last term of 2011, the declarations of expenditure in the framework of the EAFRD submitted to the Commission have been very modest. That gives an indication that payments to final beneficiaries have been rather limited. This is due to treasury problems the regional administration is confronted to.

2. Specific provisions apply to EAFRD funds as regards payment from the Paying Agency to the final beneficiary, thus the Commission reimburses to the Paying Agency the eligible expenditure for which it has actually paid the corresponding EAFRD contribution to the beneficiary. No deadline is set up under the EU Regulations for the payment to the beneficiary.

3. The Commission is not aware of any funds allocated to expenditure not eligible in the framework of the RDP.

4. The Managing Authority is responsible for the management of the support in the framework of the RDP. The Commission ensures that Member States observe the principle of sound financial management through different measures, including: (i) audits; (ii) reduction or suspension of payments where the management or control systems fail; (iii) de-commitments.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005403/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Matrimoni forzati tra rifugiate siriane e cittadini della Giordania

Secondo quanto confermato nelle ultime settimane da UNICEF, UNHCR e da altre organizzazioni internazionali, l'emergenza umanitaria in Siria ha raggiunto livelli tali da costringere molte famiglie a vendere le proprie figlie per poche migliaia di euro, acconsentendo a «matrimoni temporanei» che di fatto rappresentano una forma di sfruttamento della prostituzione. Vittime di questa vergognosa tratta sono non solo le giovani donne, ma anche le bambine.

Occorre tener presente l'articolo 3 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, che fa espresso divieto di utilizzare il proprio corpo come fonte di lucro: «Ogni persona ha diritto alla propria integrità fisica e psichica».

Inoltre va osservato che, in base all'articolo 16, paragrafo 2, della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo, «Il matrimonio potrà essere concluso soltanto con il libero e pieno consenso dei futuri coniugi».

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza del fenomeno del matrimonio temporaneo forzato?

2. Quali misure intende adottare per contribuire a contrastare la suddetta pratica?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(14 agosto 2013)

L'UE è preoccupata per i presunti casi di matrimoni forzati tra donne rifugiate siriane e cittadini giordani.

L'Unione segue da vicino la situazione delle rifugiate siriane e mantiene contatti regolari con le autorità dei paesi vicini alla Siria, nonché con le agenzie delle Nazioni Unite e le organizzazioni internazionali non governative (ONG) su tali problematiche. Le preoccupazioni dell'UE saranno espresse alle autorità giordane competenti.

In termini di risposte umanitarie alla crisi in Siria, l'UE sostiene in totale nove partner per attività volte a combattere direttamente la violenza di genere e per la protezione dei minori. I progetti sono realizzati in Giordania, Siria, Libano, Turchia e Iraq, per un importo totale di 9,35 milioni di euro, già oggetto di contratti, che rappresenta circa il 5 % del totale dei finanziamenti per gli aiuti umanitari destinati alla crisi.

In Giordania in particolare, la CE sostiene il Fondo delle Nazioni Unite per la popolazione e il Comitato internazionale di soccorso per le operazioni umanitarie, concentrandosi sulla protezione delle donne rifugiate, con un importo complessivo pari a 2,6 milioni di euro. Gli interventi sono orientati all'ambito dell'igiene riproduttiva e della prevenzione e risposta nei casi di violenza di genere, sia nel campo profughi Zaatari che nelle zone urbane. Grazie a finanziamenti provenienti dal bilancio umanitario dell'UE, il Fondo delle Nazioni Unite per la popolazione (UNFPA) gestisce un *Comprehensive Women Centre* (centro polivalente per sole donne) a Zaatari e fornisce protezione e cure sanitarie alle donne rifugiate siriane. Inoltre, altri partner ricevono un sostegno per attività che includono la protezione delle donne e dei minori, quali ad esempio il Fondo delle Nazioni Unite per l'infanzia (UNICEF), la Commissione Cattolica Internazionale per le Migrazioni, il Consiglio norvegese per i rifugiati, il Consiglio danese per i rifugiati e Save the Children.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005403/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: Forced marriages between Syrian refugees and Jordanian nationals

According to reports in recent weeks from Unicef, UNHCR and other international organisations, the humanitarian situation in Syria has reached the point where many families are forced to sell their daughters for a few thousand euro, having agreed to 'temporary marriages' which, in practice, amount to exploitation of the prostitution of others. It is not just young women but also girls who are victims of this disgraceful trafficking.

It should be remembered that Article 3 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union expressly prohibits making the human body a source of financial gain: 'everyone has the right to respect for his or her physical and mental integrity'.

It should also be noted that, according to Article 16(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 'marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses'.

In light of the above, can the Commission reply to the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of the phenomenon of forced temporary marriages?

2. What measures will it adopt to help combat this practice?

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

The EU is concerned about the alleged cases of forced marriages between Syrian refugees and Jordanian nationals.

The EU follows closely the situation of Syrian refugees and keeps regular contacts with Syria's neighbouring countries' authorities as well as with UN Agencies and International non-governmental organisations (INGOs) on these matters. The EU's concerns will be expressed to the competent Jordanian authorities.

In terms of humanitarian response to the Syria crisis, the EU supports in total nine partners for activities directly tackling gender based violence (GBV) and child protection. The projects are implemented in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq for a total amount of EUR 9.35 million, already contracted, which represents approximately 5% of the total humanitarian funding for this crisis.

In Jordan in particular, the Commission supports the United Nations Population Fund and the International Rescue Committee for humanitarian operations focusing on the protection of women refugees with a total amount of EUR 2.6 million. The interventions target reproductive health issues and Gender Based Violence prevention and response, both in the Zaatri refugee camp and urban areas. Financed by the EU humanitarian budget, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) runs a 'Comprehensive Women Centre' in Zaatri to provide protection and healthcare to Syrian refugee women. In addition, other partners are supported for activities that include women and child protection, e.g. the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), the International Catholic Migration Commission, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Danish Refugee Council and Save the Children.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005404/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Persecuzioni contro i cristiani in Cina

Secondo recenti notizie diffuse a mezzo stampa, in Cina continuerebbero le persecuzioni a danno della minoranza cristiana e in particolare delle «chiese domestiche», ospitate clandestinamente nelle abitazioni private. Il governo cinese starebbe attuando un vero e proprio piano triennale di annientamento di questi centri di preghiera e la situazione si fa drammatica soprattutto nelle provincie di Henan, Shanxi e Sichuan dove sono stati numerosi gli arresti di parroci e le condanne a pene detentive particolarmente severe.

L'articolo 9 della Carta europea dei diritti dell'uomo (CEDU) riconosce la libertà di pensiero, di coscienza e di religione, sottolineando che ogni persona ha diritto di professare il proprio culto individualmente o collettivamente, in pubblico o in privato.

Inoltre, ai sensi dell'articolo 2 della Dichiarazione sull'eliminazione di ogni forma di intolleranza e di discriminazione fondata sulla religione e sul credo, adottata dall'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite nel 1981, «nessun individuo può essere soggetto a discriminazioni di sorta da parte di uno Stato, un'istituzione, di un gruppo o di un qualsiasi individuo sulla base della propria religione o del proprio credo».

Infine, la Dichiarazione di Vienna e il relativo programma d'azione, adottati durante la seconda Conferenza mondiale delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti umani nel 1993, auspicano che tutti i governi e le organizzazioni internazionali «prendano misure appropriate, in conformità agli obblighi internazionali e col dovuto rispetto dei propri sistemi giuridici, per contrastare l'intolleranza e la violenza ad essa connessa, basata sulla religione o sul credo».

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere:

— se è a conoscenza degli ultimi dati sulle persecuzioni dei cristiani in Cina e in tutta l'area del sud-est asiatico e

— quali misure intende adottare per promuovere il diritto alla libertà di religione in Asia?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(2 agosto 2013)

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza delle persecuzioni subite dai cristiani in Cina e in altri paesi asiatici e condivide le preoccupazioni dell'onorevole deputato.

Sebbene la libertà di religione sia garantita dalla Costituzione, il governo cinese continua a limitare le pratiche religiose alle chiese, alle moschee, ai templi e ai monasteri riconosciuti ufficialmente. I gruppi spirituali quali le «chiese domestiche» protestanti sono considerati illegali e i loro membri rischiano ammende, pene detentive e, in alcuni casi, violente persecuzioni. Secondo quanto segnalato di recente, il governo cinese ha inflitto vessazioni o disposto l'incarcerazione nei confronti di esponenti del clero cattolico non appartenenti all'Associazione patriottica cattolica, tra cui il vescovo ausiliario di Shanghai Thaddeus Ma Daquin, e ha rinviato a giudizio sette cristiani appartenenti a chiese domestiche accusati di far parte del gruppo vietato degli «urlatori».

Il SEAE segue da vicino la situazione dei diritti umani in Cina e organizza periodicamente dialoghi sui diritti umani con il governo cinese; l'ultima riunione si è tenuta il 25 giugno a Guiyang, nella provincia di Guizhou . Durante i dialoghi si affronta la questione delle diverse violazioni dei diritti umani in Cina, compresa la libertà di religione o di credo. L'UE continuerà inoltre a sollevare le questioni riguardanti i diritti umani e i casi individuali con le autorità cinesi in altre sedi bilaterali e multilaterali.

Della libertà di religione o di credo si discute regolarmente anche nell'ambito dei contatti bilaterali e dei dialoghi sui diritti umani con i partner dell'UE in Asia, in particolare con il Pakistan. L'UE ha inoltre deciso di rafforzare la promozione e la difesa della libertà di religione o di credo nel mondo elaborando specifiche linee guida su come promuovere ulteriormente questo diritto umano universale, adottate dal Consiglio «Affari esteri» del 24 giugno scorso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005404/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Persecution of Christians in China

According to recent media reports, China is continuing to persecute the Christian minority, in particular 'house churches', which are hosted clandestinely in private homes. The Chinese Government is reportedly launching a three-year plan to completely eradicate these prayer centres. The situation in the provinces of Henan, Shanxi and Sichuan, where countless priests have been arrested and the custodial sentences are particularly harsh, is giving the greatest cause for concern.

Article 9 of the European Charter of Human Rights (ECHR) recognises the freedom of thought, conscience and religion and emphasises that everyone has the right to practise their religion, either alone or in community with others, as well as in public or private.

Furthermore, in accordance with Article 2 of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1981, 'no one shall be subject to discrimination by a State, institution, group of persons, or person on grounds of religion or other beliefs'.

Lastly, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted during the Second World Conference on Human Rights held by the United Nations in 1993, calls on all governments and international organisations to 'take all appropriate measures in compliance with their international obligations and with due regard to their respective legal systems to counter intolerance and related violence based on religion or belief'.

In light of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative state:

— whether it is aware of the latest data on the persecution of Christians in China and throughout south-east Asia;

— what measures it will adopt to promote the right to religious freedom in Asia?

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

The HR/VP is indeed aware of the persecution of Christians in China and in other countries in Asia and shares the Honourable Member's concern.

Despite a constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion, the Chinese government continues to restrict religious practices to officially approved mosques, churches, temples, and monasteries. Unregistered spiritual groups such as Protestant 'house churches' are deemed unlawful, with their members risking fines, imprisonment, and in some cases, violent persecution. According to recent reports, the Chinese government harassed or detained Catholic clergy not affiliated with the government 'Catholic Patriotic Association,' including the auxiliary Bishop of Shanghai, Thaddeus Ma Daquin, and indicted seven house church Christians accused of being members of the banned group 'The Shouters'.

The EEAS monitors closely the Human Rights situation in China and regularly holds Human Rights Dialogues with the Chinese government, the last session of which took place on 25 June in Guiyang, Guizhou Province. During the Dialogue, various human rights violations in China, including freedom of religion or belief, are raised. In addition, the EU will continue to raise human rights issues and individual cases with the Chinese authorities in other bilateral meetings and multilateral for a

Freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) is also raised regularly in the context of bilateral contacts and human rights dialogues with EU partners in Asia, in particular with Pakistan. The EU has furthermore decided to enhance the promotion and defence of FoRB worldwide with the elaboration of specific EU guidelines on how to further promote this universal human right, which were adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 24 June.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005405/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Evoluzione della Strategia macroregionale europea per il nuovo periodo di programmazione della politica di coesione 2014-2020

Con la proposta di risoluzione del 27 giugno 2012 sull'Evoluzione delle strategie macroregionali dell'UE: pratiche attuali e prospettive future, in particolare nel Mediterraneo, il Parlamento europeo, al paragrafo 13 della risoluzione «invita la Commissione e il Consiglio a tenere conto delle strategie macroregionali dell'UE all'atto della decisione su talune dotazioni di bilancio, quali i fondi strutturali e di coesione, la ricerca e lo sviluppo e, in particolare, la cooperazione regionale».

La riforma della politica di coesione per il periodo 2014-2020 è in atto. Le macroregioni, agevolando la cooperazione tra aree europee appartenenti a Stati membri diversi, ma partecipi di uno stesso territorio e di problemi comuni, consentirebbero un uso più efficiente e mirato delle risorse. Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere se:

— Ha intenzione di rafforzare il ruolo delle macroregioni nell'ambito della programmazione dei fondi di coesione per il 2014-2020?

— Ha intenzione di aumentare la loro autonomia trasformandole in nuovi attori idonei a ricevere e a gestire in modo diretto e autonomo le risorse comunitarie nell'ambito dei diversi strumenti/fondi che saranno istituiti?

— Non reputa necessario mettere a punto un nuovo processo per il riconoscimento delle macroregioni, elaborando insieme alle regioni una «mappa previsionale delle macroregioni europee» che individui chiaramente gli attori che, su base volontaria, intendono collaborare più strettamente per risolvere in modo più efficiente i problemi condivisi?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(4 luglio 2013)

Le proposte della Commissione in merito al quadro legislativo per i Fondi strutturali e d'investimento europei 2014-2020 contengono disposizioni specifiche sulle strategie per le macroregioni e i bacini marittimi. Le strategie per le macroregioni prevedono quadri integrati per il coordinamento delle politiche pertinenti e delle risorse di finanziamento. Per queste strategie non sono previsti finanziamenti addizionali o accantonamenti poiché esse dovrebbero attirare finanziamenti dai Fondi strutturali e d'investimento europei ed anche dagli altri strumenti unionali e nazionali pertinenti.

Le strategie macroregionali sono attuate attraverso il coordinamento di progetti strategici identificati nell'ambito di piani d'azione. Tali progetti sono finanziati da diversi strumenti a livello unionale e nazionale. Poiché la gestione dei programmi a valere sui Fondi strutturali e d'investimento europei (un'importante fonte di finanziamento per tali strategie) è decentralizzata e affidata agli Stati membri e alle regioni, questi saranno in grado di decidere in che modo e in quale misura i programmi che interessano una macroregione debbano sostenere progetti strategici.

L'identificazione della copertura geografica delle strategie macroregionali e degli stakeholder avviene a livello macroregionale poiché tali strategie si basano sui bisogni specifici identificati e manifestati dagli Stati membri e dalle regioni interessate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005405/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Evolution of the EU macro-regional strategy for the new cohesion policy programming period 2014-2020

In paragraph 13 of the motion for a resolution of 27 June 2012 on the evolution of EU macro-regional strategies: present practice and future prospects, especially in the Mediterranean, Parliament 'calls on the Commission and the Council to take into account EU macro-regional strategies when deciding on budgetary envelopes such as cohesion and structural funds, research and development, and in particular regional cooperation.'

Cohesion policy reform for 2014-2020 is under way. The macro-regions, by facilitating cooperation between European regions belonging to different Member States, but sharing the same territory and common challenges, would allow a more efficient and targeted use of resources.

— Does the Commission intend to strengthen the role of the macro-regions when planning cohesion funds for 2014-2020?

— Does it intend to increase their autonomy, turning them into new stakeholders capable of receiving and directly and independently managing EU resources under the various instruments/funds to be implemented?

— Does it not think it should define a new process to give the macro-regions recognition, drawing up a 'provisional map of EU macro-regions' with the regions themselves that clearly identifies stakeholders which, on a voluntary basis, intend to work more closely together to resolve their shared problems more effectively?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

The Commission's proposals for the legislative framework for the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds include specific provisions on macro-regional and sea-basin strategies. The macro-regional strategies provide integrated frameworks for the coordination of relevant policies and funding resources. No additional or earmarked funding is planned for these strategies, as they are not only supposed to draw funding from the European Structural and Investment Funds, but also from other relevant EU and national instruments.

The macro-regional strategies are implemented through the coordination of strategic projects which are identified in Action Plans. These projects are financed by different funding instruments at EU and national level. As management of programmes under the European and Structural and Investment Funds (a major source of financing for the strategies) is decentralised to Member States and regions, they will be able to decide how and to what extent programmes covered by a macro-region shall support strategic projects.

Identification of the geographical coverage of macro-regional strategies and of stakeholders is done at the macro-regional level, as the strategies are based on specific needs identified and expressed by the Member States and regions concerned.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005406/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Nuovi casi di discriminazione di cristiani in Libia

Dall'inizio dell'anno cresce il numero dei casi di violenza e discriminazione a danno dei cristiani in Libia. Tra febbraio e marzo sono stati compiuti attacchi contro le chiese e decine di cristiani copti sono stati arrestati e torturati con l'accusa di proselitismo. All'inizio di marzo a Bengasi sono stati arrestati e maltrattati 48 cristiani copti, di cui uno deceduto in seguito alle violenze subite. Data la pericolosità della situazione, anche gli ordini religiosi cattolici sono stati costretti ad abbandonare il paese in seguito alle minacce di bande armate di estremisti islamici.

Nonostante il 13 marzo scorso la delegazione dell'Unione europea in Libia abbia espresso attraverso un comunicato la forte preoccupazione per la libertà religiosa nel Paese, la situazione non è migliorata. Infatti, nello stesso mese un'altra chiesa copta è stata data alle fiamme.

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei fatti accaduti?

Non ritiene necessario richiamare l'attenzione della comunità internazionale sulla questione?

Come pensa di interagire con le autorità libiche affinché queste adottino le misure necessarie a tutelare la comunità cristiana, ormai ridotta al 3 % della popolazione?

Quali altre misure considera opportune al fine di garantire i diritti umani e la libertà religiosa nel Paese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(28 giugno 2013)

L'UE è a conoscenza di questo e di altri avvenimenti verificatisi in Libia che implicano discriminazioni delle comunità religiose e limitazioni alla libertà di religione o di credo.

La situazione dei diritti umani nel paese viene discussa regolarmente con le autorità e di recente, nel corso della visita del Primo Ministro libico Ali Zeidan a Bruxelles (27 maggio 2013), i due Presidenti Barroso e Van Rompuy hanno sollevato la questione delle violazioni dei diritti umani in Libia. Il Primo Ministro libico ha riconosciuto il persistere delle violazioni dei diritti umani nel suo paese e ha assicurato che i ministeri della Giustizia e dell'Interno stanno facendo il possibile per migliorare la situazione.

L'UE continuerà a invitare le autorità libiche al rispetto delle norme in materia di diritti umani riconosciute a livello internazionale e a sostenere le autorità nell'assolvere le loro responsabilità previste dal diritto internazionale. A titolo di esempio, è opportuno ricordare che l'UE fornisce un pacchetto di sostegno di 20 milioni di euro per migliorare la protezione dei gruppi vulnerabili, tra cui i migranti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005406/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Further episodes of discrimination against Christians in Libya

Since the beginning of the year, the number of episodes of violence and discrimination against Christians in Libya has been growing. In February and March, churches were attacked and dozens of Coptic Christians were arrested and tortured, accused of proselytising. At the beginning of March, in Benghazi, 48 Coptic Christians were arrested and mistreated, with one of those arrested dying from the injuries he received. Given the dangerous situation, Catholic religious orders have also been forced to leave the country following threats from armed bands of Islamic extremists.

Despite the fact that on 13 March, the EU Delegation in Libya issued a statement expressing its strong concern over religious freedom in the country, the situation has not improved. Indeed, later that month, another Coptic church was burned down.

Is the Commission aware of these events?

Is it not necessary to draw the international community's attention to this matter?

How does it intend to interact with Libyan authorities so that they adopt the necessary measures to protect the Christian community, which now accounts for just 3% of the population?

What other measures does it consider appropriate in order to guarantee human rights and religious freedom in the country?

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

The EU is aware of this and other events which have taken place in Libya and which entail discrimination of religious communities and limitations to freedom of religion or belief.

The human rights situation in the country is regularly discussed with the authorities. Very recently, during the visit of the Libyan Prime Minister Ali Zeidan in Brussels (27 May 2013), both Presidents Barroso and Van Rompuy raised human rights violations in Libya. The Libyan Prime Minister acknowledged the persistence of human rights violations in the country and assured that Ministries of Justice and Interior were doing their utmost to improve the situation.

The EU will continue to call on the Libyan 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 E-005407/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Allarme Nuova Sars, due nuovi casi di contagio tra i turisti europei negli Emirati Arabi

Nuovi casi di contagio da coronavirus, responsabile della Nuova Sars, sono stati registrati negli Emirati Arabi. Diciotto sono i decessi e trenta i casi di contagio finora accertati causati da questo virus, più aggressivo della forma diffusasi nel 2003 quando un'epidemia di Sars aveva causato la morte di 800 persone in Cina, scatenando un'allerta sanitaria in tutto il mondo. Nonostante il nuovo virus richieda un contatto prolungato per trasmettersi da persona a persona, l'aumento dei contagi richiama l'attenzione sulla questione. Il Ministero della Salute francese ha confermato il contagio di due turisti di ritorno da un viaggio a Dubai. L'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità (OMS), attraverso una nota, ha chiesto agli Stati di prestare particolare attenzione alle condizioni di salute dei viaggiatori di ritorno dalle zone colpite dal virus per individuare eventuali casi sospetti.

La Commissione è al corrente di questi eventi?

Alla luce di quanto verificatosi nel 2003, non ritiene opportuno effettuare una valutazione di impatto nel caso si verificasse un' epidemia?

A fronte della minaccia di un potenziale contagio per i cittadini europei, la Commissione non ritiene necessario un aumento dei controlli da parte degli Stati membri e una adeguata preparazione per la rilevazione e la diagnosi di eventuali casi?

Quali ulteriori misure in materia intende adottare?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza degli eventi descritti nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole deputata in relazione alla sindrome respiratoria del Medioriente causata da un coronavirus di recente individuazione.

Su richiesta della Commissione europea il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie ha preparato tre valutazioni del rischio ([1]), l'ultima delle quali datata 17 maggio. In base alla valutazione attuale, la minaccia per i cittadini europei si stima di grado basso. Tuttavia, in seguito alla presentazione delle valutazioni, gli Stati membri hanno innalzato i loro livelli di allerta e risposta operativa per attuare interventi finalizzati a tutelare la salute dei cittadini e ridurre al minimo il rischio di diffusione della malattia.

A livello dell'Unione si è rafforzata la sorveglianza attiva per identificare celermente e gestire i casi che eventualmente si presentassero. Gli operatori sanitari attivi nell'Unione sono allertati sui pericoli presentati dai viaggiatori che, di ritorno dalle aree colpite, sviluppino sintomi respiratori. Sinora non vi sono prove del fatto che è in atto una trasmissione intensa da uomo a uomo. I casi notificati in Europa corroborano l'osservazione che il virus può essere trasmesso da una persona infetta a una persona sana; ciò avverrebbe, però, soltanto in seguito a un contatto ravvicinato.

Il Comitato per la sicurezza sanitaria dell'UE, in cui sono rappresentate le autorità della sanità pubblica degli Stati membri, sta preparando informazioni sanitarie per i viaggiatori e consigli per gli operatori sanitari, in stretta cooperazione con la Commissione e il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie. La Commissione continuerà a seguire la situazione a stretto contatto con l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità e con il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie e adatterà la propria risposta a seconda degli sviluppi della situazione.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/risk-assessment-middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus-MERS-CoV-17-may-2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005407/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: New severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) alert: two new cases involving European tourists in the United Arab Emirates

New cases of coronavirus infection, responsible for a new SARS-like disease, have been reported in the United Arab Emirates. It has been confirmed that the virus has caused 18 deaths and 30 cases of infection so far. This virus is more aggressive than the strain that spread in 2003 when a SARS epidemic killed more than 800 people in China, sparking off a worldwide health scare. Even though the new virus requires prolonged contact to spread from person to person, the rise in infections is focusing attention on the matter. The French Ministry of Health has confirmed that two tourists returning from a trip to Dubai have been infected. In a statement, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has advised countries to pay particular attention to the health of travellers returning from the infected area in order to identify possible cases.

Is the Commission aware of these events?

In light of what happened in 2003, does the Commission intend to carry out an impact assessment of what would happen were there to be another epidemic?

In view of the threat to European citizens of potential infection, does the Commission think that Member States should carry out more checks and put proper measures in place to identify and diagnose possible cases?

What other steps does it intend to take?

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

The Commission is aware of the events described in the question of the Honourable Member of the Parliament, in relation to the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.

Upon request of the European Commission the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control prepared three risk assessments ([1]), the last one updated on 17 May. Based on the current evaluation the threat to European citizens is currently considered to be low. Nonetheless, based on the assessments Member States raised their awareness and preparedness levels to implement actions to protect the health of citizens and minimise the risk of spread of the disease.

Active surveillance has been strengthened at Union level to quickly identify and manage possible cases. Healthcare workers in the Union are alerted about travellers returning from the affected areas who develop respiratory symptoms. So far there is no evidence that sustained human-to-human transmission is taking place. The cases notified in Europe support the evidence that the virus can be transmitted from an infected person to a healthy person. However, this appears to occur only through close contact.

The EU Health Security Committee, in which the public health authorities of the Member States are represented, is preparing health information for travellers and advice for healthcare workers in close cooperation with the Commission and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation in close contact with the World Health Organisation and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, and will adapt its response according to developments.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/risk-assessment-middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus-MERS-CoV-17-may-2013.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005408/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: ANLAC: pratiche sleali nel settore della produzione cunicola italiana

L'Associazione Nazionale Liberi Allevatori di Conigli (ANLAC) lancia un allarme: negli ultimi cinque anni la produzione italiana di conigli, leader a livello europeo, si è dimezzata a causa di comportamenti sleali da parte degli operatori stranieri. Nonostante la contrazione della produzione nel settore abbia raggiunto il 40 %, il consumo è rimasto sostanzialmente invariato dal momento che l'insufficiente produzione interna viene compensata da prodotti importati. L'ANLAC denuncia l'importazione di oltre 100.000 conigli ogni settimana, dei quali oltre il 60 % è rappresentato da prodotti congelati. Conigli importati spacciati per italiani penalizzano l'attività degli allevatori italiani che, rispettando invece le regole di mercato, vengono sopraffatti dalla vendita a prezzi fortemente competitivi di prodotti stranieri. I dati dimostrano che la Francia esporta in Italia conigli ad un prezzo più basso, circa la metà, rispetto al prezzo per lo stesso prodotto praticato all'interno del proprio paese, mettendo in atto un vero e proprio dumping. Tali speculazioni commerciali, agevolate dall'assenza di etichettatura obbligatoria di origine, danneggiano non solo gli allevatori, ma anche i consumatori la cui varietà di scelta al momento dell'acquisto viene ridotta a prodotti di dubbia provenienza e di qualità inferiore rispetto alla produzione made in Italy.

La Commissione:

— è a conoscenza del problema?

— non intende adottare misure di controllo più severe per garantire ai cittadini italiani la qualità dei prodotti che acquistano?

— non ritiene opportuno estendere l'obbligatorietà dell'etichettatura di origine, già prevista per altre carni, anche a quella di coniglio?

— non ritiene necessario tutelare i produttori italiani che si ritrovano a vendere a prezzi che non coprono nemmeno i costi di produzione e proprio per questo sono costretti a chiudere i loro allevamenti?

— come intende intervenire per far fronte a tale condotta anticompetitiva e correggere questa distorsione del mercato che penalizza gli allevatori italiani?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(8 luglio 2013)

Sulla base degli ultimi dati disponibili ([1]), nel marzo 2013 sono stati commercializzati in Italia 13 682 conigli vivi originari della Francia. Per quanto concerne le carcasse, nel primo trimestre del 2013 sono state commercializzate in Italia in totale 483 tonnellate di carne di coniglio originaria dal territorio dell'UE, 204 tonnellate delle quali provenivano dalla Francia, 159 dall'Ungheria, 113 dalla Spagna, 4 dai Paesi Bassi e 1,6 dalla Romania.

Queste operazioni sono affatto legali nell'ottica della legislazione unionale se è assicurato il rispetto delle regole sanitarie. Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti degli Stati membri assicurare che sia gli animali vivi sia le carni commercializzati sul loro territorio rispettino le regole sanitarie dell'UE.

A livello dell'UE non sono stati stabiliti standard di commercializzazione per questo tipo di carni.

([1]) Eurostat — Mercato interno.

La Commissione sta indicendo un bando di gara aperto per commissionare uno studio volto a valutare se l'etichettatura d'origine sia necessaria per certe carni non trasformate, come le carni cunicole. Questo studio fornirà l'input necessario per la relazione della Commissione sulla necessità di estendere l'etichettatura d'origine obbligatoria a tali carni di cui al regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, ([2]) relazione prevista per il 13 dicembre 2014.

Per quanto concerne i prezzi, sulla base dei dati disponibili ([3]) il prezzo dei conigli vivi nel primo trimestre del 2013 in Francia e Italia era quasi lo stesso.

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e (CE) n. 1925/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e abroga la direttiva 87/250/CEE della Commissione, la direttiva 90/496/CEE del Consiglio, la direttiva 1999/10/CE della Commissione, la direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, le direttive 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE della Commissione e il regolamento (CE) n. 608/2004 della Commissione, GU L 304 del 22.11.2011. Tale regolamento diverrà applicativo il 13 dicembre 2014.

([3]) Boer&Tuinder.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005408/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: ANLAC: unfair practices in Italian rabbit farming

ANLAC (L'Associazione Nazionale Liberi Allevatori di Conigli), the Italian rabbit breeders association, has raised the alarm: in the last five years, rabbit breeding in Italy, Europe's leading producer, has halved due to unfair practices by foreign operators. Even though production has shrunk by 40%, consumption has remained largely unchanged as insufficient domestic production has been compensated for by imports. According to ANLAC, over 100 000 rabbits are imported every week, of which more than 60% are frozen. Imported rabbits passed off as Italian rabbits are severely harming Italian farmers: as they are respecting market rules, they simply cannot compete with the extremely low prices of foreign products. Figures show that France exports rabbits to Italy that are cheaper — about half the price — than what they would cost on the French market, which is quite simply an act of dumping. Such commercial exploitation, made easier by the lack of mandatory labelling of origin, not only harms farmers, but also consumers as they are left buying produce of dubious origin and inferior quality compared with what they get when buying Italian.

— Is the Commission aware of this problem?

— Does it intend to adopt stricter controls to guarantee the quality of produce bought by Italians?

— Does it believe it should extend mandatory labelling of origin, which already applies to other meats, to rabbit meat as well?

— Does it not think it should protect Italian producers who find themselves selling at prices that do not even cover production costs and because of this are forced to close their farms?

— What does the Commission intend to do to counteract such anticompetitive behaviour and eradicate this distortion of the market, which is so harmful to Italian farmers?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

According to last available data ([1]), in the month of March 2013, 13 682 live rabbits originating from France were marketed in Italy. As regards carcases, in the first trimester of 2013, a total of 483 tonnes of rabbit meat originated from EU territory were marketed in Italy of which 204 tonnes were from France, 159 from Hungary, 113 from Spain, 4 from the Netherlands and 1,6 from Romania.

Those operations are perfectly legal as regards EC law if the sanitary rules are respected. It is up to the national competent authorities of the Member States to ensure that both the live animals and the meat marketed on their territory respect the EU sanitary rules.

There are no marketing standards established at EU level for this type of meat.

The Commission is launching an open call for tender for a study to evaluate whether the labelling of origin is necessary for certain unprocessed meats, such as rabbit meat. This study will provide the necessary input for the Commission report on the need to extend mandatory origin labelling to such meats, foreseen in Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]), for 13 December 2014.

As regards prices, according to available data ([3]) the price of live rabbits in the first trimester of 2013 in France and Italy were almost the same.

([1]) Eurostat internal market.
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011. This regulation will enter into application on 13 December 2014.
([3]) Boer&Tuinder.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005409/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Comuni secessionisti del Veneto e governance in Europa

La buona governance e il dialogo tra gli attori appartenenti a diversi livelli istituzionali rappresentano da sempre alcuni tra i più importanti obiettivi trasversali delle politiche comunitarie. Nel Libro bianco sulla governance, COM(2001)0428, la Commissione afferma che la buona governance europea implica che le autorità elette e gli attori della società civile collaborino per il bene comune. La Dichiarazione di Berlino, adottata il 25 marzo 2007 dai capi di Stato e di governo, stabilisce che per rispondere alle sfide globali l'Europa deve garantire una stretta cooperazione tra i diversi livelli di governo. Nel Libro verde sulla Coesione territoriale, COM(2008)0616, la Commissione auspica uno sviluppo armonioso dell'UE che permetta ai cittadini di trarre il massimo vantaggio dalle caratteristiche specifiche delle regioni in cui vivono.

Dal 2005 ad oggi, facendo appello all'articolo132 della Costituzione, nove comuni della provincia di Vicenza, Asiago, Conco, Enego, Foza, Gallio, Lusiana, Roana, Rotzo, Pedemonte, e cinque comuni della provincia di Belluno, Lamon, Sovramonte, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Colle Santa Lucia, Livinallongo del Col di Lana, hanno deciso attraverso un regolare referendum di distaccarsi dalla Regione Veneto per passare a quella del Trentino-Alto Adige. Altri due comuni veneti, Sappada in provincia di Belluno e Cinto Caomaggiore in provincia di Venezia, sempre attraverso un regolare referendum, hanno manifestato invece la loro intenzione di far parte della Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia. Nonostante la Regione Veneto abbia intrapreso le azioni prescritte per dar seguito al disposto costituzionale ex articolo 132 e realizzare la volontà manifestata dalle popolazioni dei comuni locali, il parlamento e il governo italiani non hanno invece ancora proceduto all'approvazione di una legge che stabilisca il passaggio di questi comuni dal Veneto al Trentino-Alto Adige o al Friuli Venezia Giulia.

La Commissione, alla luce di quanto contenuto nel Libro bianco, COM(2001)0428, nel Libro verde, COM(2008)0616, e nella Dichiarazione di Berlino del 2007:

— può far sapere come integrare la dimensione locale e le sue esigenze nell'elaborazione delle proprie politiche?

— Non ritiene che per migliorare la governance europea i livelli di governo locali dovrebbero essere sempre più ascoltati e coinvolti?

— Come intende incoraggiare gli Stati membri a implementare il dialogo con tutti i livelli istituzionali?

Risposta di Maroš Šefčovič a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2013)

La Commissione concorda sul fatto che, al fine di migliorare la governance europea, occorre consultare e coinvolgere sempre di più gli enti governativi locali. L'impatto regionale e territoriale è uno degli elementi fondamentali delle valutazioni d'impatto elaborate dalla Commissione, che accompagnano tutte le sue principali proposte legislative, e viene esaminato, in particolare nella sua dimensione finanziaria, anche nella scheda sulla sussidiarietà e sulla proporzionalità che ogni progetto di atto legislativo deve contenere conformemente all'articolo 5 del protocollo n. 2 ai trattati. Al fine di incoraggiare gli Stati membri ad avviare un dialogo a tutti i livelli istituzionali, i presidenti della Commissione e del Comitato delle regioni, in una dichiarazione congiunta rilasciata nel giugno 2010, hanno sottolineato che il principio di buon governo dovrebbe rispettare l'equilibrio istituzionale dell'Unione europea, le competenze degli Stati membri e le loro pratiche costituzionali, il che implica un'azione coordinata tra l'UE, gli Stati membri e le autorità regionali e locali sulla base di un partenariato.

Tuttavia, in virtù dell'articolo 4 del trattato sull'Unione europea (TUE), l'Unione europea non ha alcuna competenza per interferire nel rapporto tra i governi nazionali, le autorità regionali e locali. Il trattato prevede che l'UE rispetti l'identità nazionale degli Stati membri insita nella loro struttura fondamentale, politica e costituzionale, compreso il sistema delle autonomie locali e regionali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005409/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Secessionist municipalities in the Veneto region and governance in Europe

Good governance and dialogue between parties at various institutional levels have always been one of the most important cross-cutting objectives of EU policies. In the White Paper on European Governance, COM(2001)0428, the Commission states that good European governance entails elected authorities and components of civil society working together for the common good. The Declaration of Berlin, adopted on 25 March 2007 by the Heads of State or Government, specifies that in order to meet the global challenges, Europe must ensure close cooperation between the different tiers of government. In the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion, COM(2008)0616, the Commission expresses its desire to see the harmonious development of the EU so that its citizens are able to make the most of the specific features of the regions in which they live.

Since 2005, in accordance with Article 132 of the Italian Constitution, nine municipalities in the province of Vicenza — Asiago, Conco, Enego, Foza, Gallio, Lusiana, Roana, Rotzo and Pedemonte — and five municipalities in the province of Belluno — Lamon, Sovramonte, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Colle Santa Lucia and Livinallongo del Col di Lana — have decided, by means of a free and fair referendum, to detach themselves from the Veneto region and be incorporated into the Trentino-Alto Adige region. Again by means of a free and fair referendum, a further two municipalities in the Veneto region — Sappada in the province of Belluno and Cinto Caomaggiore in the province of Venice — have instead indicated their intention to be part of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region. Despite the fact that, in accordance with Article 132 of the Italian Constitution, the regional government of Veneto has taken the steps required to give effect to the desire shown by the populations of the local municipalities, Italy's parliament and government have still not adopted a law that incorporates these municipalities of the Veneto region into Trentino-Alto Adige or Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

In light of the White Paper, COM(2001)0428, the Green Paper, COM(2008)0616, and the Declaration of Berlin of 2007:

— Can the Commission state how the local dimension and its needs can be integrated into the development of its policies?

— Does it not believe that in order to improve European governance, local government levels should increasingly be consulted and engaged?

— How will it encourage the Member States to undertake dialogue at all institutional levels?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

The Commission agrees that in order to improve European governance, local government levels should increasingly be consulted and engaged. The regional and territorial impact is one of the basic elements of the Commission's impact assessments accompanying all its major legislative proposals and, in its financial dimension in particular, is also examined in the detailed statement on subsidiarity and proportionality which each draft legislative act shall contain according to Protocol 2 to the Treaties, Article 5. In order to encourage Member States to undertake dialogue at all institutional levels, the Presidents of the Commission and the Committee of Regions, in a joint statement in June 2010, underlined that the principle of good governance should respect the institutional balance of the EU, the competences of the Member States and their own constitutional practices, implying a coordinated action between the EU, the Member States and the regional and local authorities based on partnership.

However, in accordance with Article 4 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the European Union has no competence to interfere with the relationship between national governments, regional, and local authorities. The Treaty states that the EU shall respect the national identities of Member States, inherent in their fundamental structures, political and constitutional, inclusive of regional and local self-government.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005410/13
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Infestation par l'ambroisie

L'ambroisie à feuille d'armoise (Ambrosia artemisiifolia), originaire d'Amérique du nord, est apparue en France en 1863, vraisemblablement introduite par un lot de semences fourragères. Le pollen de l'ambroisie provoque chez de nombreuses personnes des réactions allergiques: 6 à 12 % de la population y sont sensibles. Il suffit de cinq grains de pollen par mètre cube d'air pour que les symptômes apparaissent.

Quand la Commission prévoit-elle de présenter une proposition législative pour arrêter la propagation de cette mauvaise herbe en France et en Europe?

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

La Commission européenne est bien consciente des conséquences écologiques, sociales et économiques négatives de plus en plus nombreuses causées par des espèces exotiques envahissantes (EEE) dans l'ensemble de l'Union. Le coût des dommages engendrés par les EEE et des activités de contrôle de ces espèces en Europe a été estimé au moins 12 milliards d'euros par an ([1]), et, en l'absence d'efforts coordonnés, ces coûts devraient continuer à augmenter. L'espèce mentionnée, à savoir l'ambroisie commune, représente en effet une source d'inquiétude car elle entraîne des coûts médicaux et une perte de productivité de la main-d'œuvre considérables. Par ailleurs, les dommages causés par cette espèce à l'agriculture dans l'Union pourraient atteindre 1 à 3 milliards d'euros par an ([2]).

Comme indiqué dans la communication sur la stratégie de l'Union européenne en faveur de la biodiversité à l'horizon 2020 ([3]), la Commission met actuellement au point un instrument législatif spécifique pour la prévention et la gestion de l'introduction et de la propagation d'espèces exotiques envahissantes.

([1]) IEEP (2010) Assessment of the impacts of invasive alien species in Europe and the EU: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/docs/Kettunen2009_IAS_Task%201.pdf

([2]) Bullock (2012) Assessing and controlling the spread and the effects of common ragweed in Europe, https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/d/d1ad57c8-327c-4fdd-b908-dadd5b859cff/Final_Final_Report.pdf

([3]) COM(2011)244 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005410/13
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Ragweed infestation

Common ragweed (Ambrosia artemisiifolia), which comes from North America, first appeared in France in 1863, having likely been introduced by a batch of forage seeds. Ragweed pollen causes allergic reactions in many people: 6 to 12% of the population are sensitive to it. It takes just five grains of pollen per cubic metre of air for symptoms to appear.

When does the Commission plan to present a legislative proposal to stop the propagation of this weed in France and Europe?

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

The European Commission is well aware of the increasing environmental, social and economic negative impacts caused by invasive alien species (IAS) across the Union. Damage and control of IAS in Europe have been estimated to cost at least EUR 12 billion per year ([1]), and without more coordinated efforts those costs are expected to keep rising. The species mentioned, common ragweed is indeed of concern because it is causing significant medical costs and workforce productivity loss. Moreover, its damage to agriculture in the Union has been estimated to reach EUR 1 to 3 billion per year ([2]).

As outlined in the communication on an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ([3]), the Commission is developing a dedicated legislative instrument for the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species.

([1]) IEEP (2010) Assessment of the impacts of invasive alien species in Europe and the EU, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/docs/Kettunen2009_IAS_Task%201.pdf

([2]) Bullock (2012) Assessing and controlling the spread and the effects of common ragweed in Europe, https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/d/d1ad57e8-327c-4fdd-b908-dadd5b859eff/Final_Final_Report.pdf

([3]) COM(2011) 244 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005411/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Política Europea de Vecindad con Armenia

Con el objetivo de fomentar las relaciones con los vecinos fronterizos de la Unión y evitar la aparición de nuevas líneas divisorias, así como de fomentar la estabilidad y la seguridad entre unos y otros, en 2004 se diseñó la Política Europea de Vecindad (PEV) en el contexto de la ampliación de la UE.

Desde entonces la Unión Europea ha desarrollado diferentes iniciativas con Armenia en el desarrollo de la PEV. Entre otros, cabe destacar el Documento estratégico 2007-2013 y el Programa indicativo nacional 2007-2010.

¿Podría la Comisión informar del estado en el que se encuentra esta Política Europea de Vecindad en relación con Armenia? ¿Cuáles son las medidas que tiene pensadas llevar a cabo en el corto y en el medio plazo?

Respuesta del Sr. Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

Armenia aprovecha activamente las oportunidades que ofrece la Asociación Oriental, la dimensión oriental reforzada de la Política Europea de Vecindad (PEV). Está negociando un Acuerdo de Asociación, que incluye una zona de libre comercio de alcance amplio y profundo como parte integrante del mismo y hay buenas perspectivas de que las negociaciones concluyan para la cumbre de la Asociación Oriental que se celebrará en Vilna en noviembre de 2013. Armenia ha firmado recientemente acuerdos de facilitación de visados y de readmisión, que entrarán en vigor en 2013. El Plan de Acción de la PEV se sustituirá por un programa de asociación centrado en la preparación de cara a la entrada en vigor del nuevo Acuerdo.

En lo que respecta a las prioridades de la ayuda, el Instrumento Europeo de Vecindad y Asociación (IEVA), así como el Documento de Estrategia Nacional (2007-2013) y la evaluación intermedia de los Programas Indicativos Nacionales (2007-2010 y 2011-2013), serán sustituidos por el Instrumento Europeo de Vecindad (IEV) en las próximas perspectivas financieras plurianuales. El marco único de apoyo se está elaborando.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005411/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: European Neighbourhood Policy with Armenia

In 2004 the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was designed in the context of EU enlargement with the aim of fostering relations with countries bordering the EU and preventing the appearance of new dividing lines, as well as to encourage stability and security between EU and non-EU countries.

Since then, the European Union has developed several initiatives with Armenia in the course of implementing the ENP. Of these, it is worth highlighting the strategic document 2007-2013 and the national indicative programme 2007-2010.

Could the Commission say what stage the European Neighbourhood Policy is at in relation to Armenia? What steps does it plan to take in the short and medium term?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

Armenia actively benefits from opportunities created by the Eastern Partnership, the strengthened Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). It is negotiating an Association Agreement, including Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area as its integral part, with good prospects that the negotiations will be finalised by the time of the Eastern Partnership Vilnius summit in November 2013. Armenia has recently signed Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements which will enter into force during 2013. The ENP Action Plan will be replaced by an Association Agenda focusing on the preparation for the entry into force of the new Agreement.

Regarding assistance priorities, the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), with the Country Strategy Paper (2007-2013) and the mid-term National Indicative Programmes (2007-2010, 2011-2013), will be replaced by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) in the next multiannual financial perspective. The relevant Single Support Framework (SSF) is being elaborated.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005412/13
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Limitation de la production européenne d'acier, fermeture de sites industriels, incitation à la fuite carbone et violation potentielle du droit européen de la concurrence

ArcelorMittal détient 29 % de la production d'acier en Europe et l'Union européenne importe en moyenne 10 % de ses besoins. ArcelorMittal, au vu de sa production et de l'écart qui le sépare de ses concurrents, se trouve en position dominante sur le marché européen de l'acier, qui est importateur.

Le 22 avril 2013, ArcelorMittal a fermé définitivement les hauts-fourneaux de sa filière à chaud sur un site qui comptait pourtant parmi les trois plus performants de son groupe selon le «rapport Faure» remis au gouvernement français à l'été 2012. Avant cette annonce, ArcelorMittal a systématiquement limité la production du site, transféré les commandes, et a renoncé au développement technique du site en abandonnant le projet ULCOS en décembre 2012, au grand étonnement de la Commission européenne. Le même procédé est employé dans de nombreux autres sites industriels en Europe, comme à Liège en Belgique, mais aussi à Brême et Ekosthal en Allemagne.

Selon l'arrêt du 13 février 1973 de la Cour de justice des Communautés européennes *Hoffmann-La Roche & Co. AG*, la limitation de la production et, partant, la limitation des débouchés et de l'innovation, peut conduire à la violation de l'article 102 b) et constituer un abus de position dominante. ArcelorMittal, par son exploitation abusive des sites industriels en sa possession et ses limitations volontaires de production sur le seul territoire de l'Union européenne, met en danger le marché européen de l'acier et affecte directement l'autonomie industrielle européenne et le commerce entre États membres, qui se trouvent obligés d'importer. Enfin, les sites de production d'acier hors de l'Union génèrent aussi une pollution qui dépasse jusqu'à 40 fois les normes européennes, ce qui constitue des fuites de carbone caractérisées, phénomène que la Commission s'est donné pour objectif d'empêcher.

Eu égard à ce qui précède, la Commission pourrait-elle répondre aux questions suivantes:

1. Considère-t-elle que le groupe ArcelorMittal viole les règles de la concurrence définies par l'article 102 b) du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne du fait de sa limitation abusive et volontaire de production et de débouchés sur le seul territoire européen?

2. Au regard des priorités établies lors du Sommet européen des 11 et 12 mars 2013 sur la compétitivité, que compte entreprendre la Commission pour remédier aux fuites de carbone?

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

La Commission est consciente des conséquences sociales de la fermeture récente de plusieurs sites industriels d'ArcelorMittal en Europe. Cependant, elle considère que l'article 102 du TFUE ne s'applique pas dans ce cas.

L'article 102 du TFUE interdit aux entreprises d'exploiter de façon abusive une position dominante sur le marché intérieur ou dans une partie substantielle de celui-ci, dans la mesure où le commerce entre États membres est susceptible d'en être sensiblement affecté.

Même si ArcelorMittal devait être considérée comme détenant une position dominante, la détention d'une position dominante n'est pas illégale en soi.

À ce stade, la Commission ne dispose d'aucun élément indiquant que les pratiques d'ArcelorMittal pourraient enfreindre l'article 102 du TFUE.

L'UE a choisi, dans le cadre de l'article 10 ter de la directive 2003/87/CE relative au système d'échange de quotas d'émission de l'UE ([1]), de recourir à des quotas alloués à titre gratuit et de donner accès aux crédits internationaux afin de réduire le risque de fuite de carbone pour ses industries à forte intensité d'énergie. Lors de la mise en place du système d'échange de quotas d'émission de l'UE, la Commission en a étudié attentivement les effets et a conclu que ces mesures sont appropriées pour protéger les industries européennes à forte intensité d'énergie. Le bas niveau actuel des prix du carbone contribue encore à atténuer tout effet éventuel de ce système.

([1]) JO L 140 du 5.6.2009.

Enfin, la Commission n'est pas en mesure de commenter les questions de pollution de l'environnement provoquée par la production d'acier en dehors de l'UE puisqu'elles ne relèvent pas de la directive précitée.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005412/13
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Limiting European steel production, closure of industrial sites, incentive towards carbon leakage and possible violation of European competition law

ArcelorMittal holds a 29% share of steel production in Europe, and the European Union imports 10% of its needs on average. In view of its production and the gap separating it from its competitors, ArcelorMittal is in a dominant position in the European steel market, which is an importer.

On 22 April 2013, ArcelorMittal permanently closed the blast furnaces in its heat plant on a site which was considered one of the three best performing sites in its group, according to the 'Faure' report submitted to the French Government in the summer of 2012. Prior to this announcement, ArcelorMittal systematically limited production at the site, transferred orders and gave up on technical development by abandoning the ULCOS project in December 2012, much to the surprise of the Commission. The same procedure was used in many other industrial sites in Europe, such as Liège in Belgium, but also in Bremen and Ekosthal in Germany.

According to the judgment of 13 February 1973 of the Court of Justice of the European Communities, *Hoffmann-La Roche & Co. AG*, limiting production and therefore limiting outlets and innovation could lead to a violation of Article 102(b) and represent abuse of a dominant position. ArcelorMittal, through its abusive use of the industrial sites in its possession and voluntary limiting of production on EU territory, is putting the European steel market at risk and directly affecting European industrial autonomy and trade between Member States, which are forced to import. Lastly, steel production sites outside the EU also generate pollution which is up to 40 times higher than European standards, representing blatant carbon leakages, a phenomenon which the Commission has set itself the goal of preventing.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it believe that the ArcelorMittal group is violating the competition rules defined in Article 102(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union as a result of its abusive and voluntary limiting of production and outlets on European territory?

2. With regard to the priorities established during the European Summit of 11 and 12 March 2013 on competitiveness, what does the Commission intend to do to remedy the problem of carbon leakages?

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

The Commission is aware of the social consequences of the recent closures by ArcelorMittal of several industrial sites in Europe. However, the Commission does not consider that Article 102 TFEU applies in this case.

Article 102 TFEU prohibits undertakings from abusing a dominant position within the internal market or in a substantial part of it, insofar as it may appreciably affect trade between Member States.

Even if ArcelorMittal were to be considered as holding a dominant position, it is not in itself illegal for an undertaking to be in a dominant position.

At this stage, the Commission possesses no information indicating that ArcelorMittal's actions might infringe Article 102 TFEU.

The EU has opted, in the framework of Article 10b of the EU Emission Trading Scheme (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. At the time of setting up the EU Emission Trading Scheme, the Commission had a close look at the impacts and concluded that these measures are adequate to protect the European energy intensive industries. The current low carbon prices further alleviate any possible impacts.

Finally, the Commission cannot comment on the issue of environmental pollution caused by steel production outside the EU as this falls outside the remit of the EU ETS Directive.

([1]) OJ, L 140, 5.6.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005413/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Νέος κορωνοϊός και μέτρα αντιμετώπισής του

Σύμφωνα με την Παγκόσμια Οργάνωση Υγείας, μέχρι τον Απρίλιο του 2013, 128 άνθρωποι είχαν προσβληθεί από τον νέο κορωνοϊό, εκ των οποίων 26 απεβίωσαν.

Πρόσφατα ο νέος παθογόνος παράγοντας έχει μεταδοθεί και στην Ευρώπη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιος είναι ο ακριβής αριθμός των κρουσμάτων που έχουν καταγραφεί στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, και σε ποια;

— Γνωρίζει ποια είναι η πηγή του νέου ιού, ποια η σχέση του με τον SARS, και αν υπάρχει κίνδυνος μετάλλαξής του;

— Πώς και κάτω από ποιες συνθήκες μεταδίδεται από άνθρωπο σε άνθρωπο, και τί μέτρα πρόληψης έχει λάβει ή προτίθεται να λάβει — μέσω και δράσεων των οργανισμών υγείας με τους οποίους συνεργάζεται — προκειμένου να αποφευχθεί ο οποιοσδήποτε κίνδυνος μετάδοσης του ιού ή και ενδεχόμενης επιδημίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Ιουλίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τον Παγκόσμιο Οργανισμό Υγείας έχουν αναφερθεί μέχρι σήμερα (18 Ιουνίου 2013) 64 επιβεβαιωμένα κρούσματα κορωναϊού του αναπνευστικού συνδρόμου της Μέσης Ανατολής, από τα οποία τα 38 ήταν θανατηφόρα, κυρίως στη Μέση Ανατολή. Στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση επιβεβαιώθηκαν 11 κρούσματα. Δύο κρούσματα καταγράφηκαν στη Γερμανία και από αυτά το ένα κατέληξε, τέσσερα στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο από τα οποία τα δύο θανατηφόρα. Στη Γαλλία αναφέρθηκαν δύο κρούσματα, από τα οποία το ένα ήταν θανατηφόρο, και στην Ιταλία τρία κρούσματα.

Σύμφωνα με την εκτίμηση επικινδυνότητας ([1]) που εκπόνησε το Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο Πρόληψης και Ελέγχου Νόσων (ECDC), η πηγή του νέου ιού, που αποκαλείται αναπνευστικό σύνδρομο της Μέσης Ανατολής, δεν έχει ακόμη εντοπιστεί. Αυτός ο νέος ιός δεν είναι ο ίδιος με αυτόν που προκαλεί το σύνδρομο SARS.

Δεν έχει ακόμη επιβεβαιωθεί πώς μεταδίδεται ο ιός από άνθρωπο σε άνθρωπο και δεν υπάρχει μέχρι σήμερα απόδειξη για το ότι υφίσταται συνεχής μετάδοση του ιού από άνθρωπο σε άνθρωπο. Τα κρούσματα που έχουν ανακοινωθεί στην Ευρώπη δείχνουν ότι ο ιός μπορεί να μεταδοθεί από ένα άτομο που έχει προσβληθεί από τον ιό σε άλλο υγιές. Ωστόσο, φαίνεται ότι αυτό συμβαίνει μόνο μέσω στενής επαφής. Γίνονται επίσης έρευνες όσον αφορά τυχόν μεταλλάξεις. Αν το άτομο πάσχει από χρόνια νοσήματα, τότε φαίνεται ότι αυξάνεται η ευπάθεια και ο κίνδυνος της μετάδοσης.

Η Επιτροπή — σε στενή συνεργασία με το ECDC και τον Παγκόσμιο Οργανισμό Υγείας — παρακολουθεί δραστήρια τις εξελίξεις. Το σύστημα έγκαιρης προειδοποίησης και απόκρισης, που θεσπίστηκε με την απόφαση 2119/98/ΕΚ ([2]) συντονίζει ενέργειες επιτήρησης και απόκρισης σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο. Τα κράτη μέλη συμμετέχουν επίσης ενεργά και ενημερώνουν τακτικά την επιτροπή ασφάλειας υγείας.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/risk-assessment-middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus-MERS-CoV-17-may-2013.pdf

([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexapi!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=EN&numdoc=31998D2119&model=guicheti

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005413/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: New coronavirus and measures to combat it

According to the World Health Organisation, 128 human cases of the new coronavirus, including 26 deaths, were reported up to the end of April 2013.

This new pathogen was recently transmitted to Europe.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Exactly how many cases have been reported and in which Member States of the EU?

— Does it know what the source of the new virus is, what relation it has to SARS and ifthere is a risk of its mutating?

— How and under what conditions is it transmitted between humans and what preventive measures have been taken or are planned, under actions by the health organisations with which it cooperates, in order to prevent any risk of transmission of the virus and/or the possibility of an epidemic?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

According to the World Health Organisation, to date (18 June 2013) 64 confirmed cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus have been reported, including 38 confirmed fatalities, mainly in the Middle East. In the European Union, 11 cases have been confirmed. Two cases were registered in Germany with one fatality, four in the United Kingdom with two fatalities; France has reported two cases with one fatality and Italy three cases.

According to the risk assessment ([1]) prepared by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the source of the new virus, called Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, has not yet been identified. This new virus is not the same that causes SARS.

It is not yet confirmed how the virus is transmitted from human to human and so far there is no evidence that sustained human-to-human transmission is taking place. The cases notified in Europe support the evidence that the virus can be transmitted from an infected person to a healthy person. However, this appears to occur only through close contact. Investigation is also ongoing as regards any mutation. Underlying medical conditions seem to increase the vulnerability and the risk of transmission.

The Commission — in close collaboration with the ECDC and the World Health Organisation — is actively monitoring developments. The Early Warning and Response System network under Decision 2119/98/EC ([2]) is coordinating surveillance and response at European level. Member States are also involved and regularly updated in the Health Security Committee.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/risk-assessment-middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus-MERS-CoV-17-may-2013.pdf

([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexapi!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=EN&numdoc=31998D2119&model=guicheti.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005416/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Política Europea de Vecindad con Libia

Con el objetivo de fomentar las relaciones con los vecinos fronterizos de la Unión y evitar la aparición de nuevas líneas divisorias, así como de fomentar la estabilidad y la seguridad entre unos y otros, en 2004 se diseñó la Política Europea de Vecindad (PEV) en el contexto de la ampliación de la UE.

Desde entonces la Unión Europea ha desarrollado diferentes iniciativas con Argelia en el desarrollo de la PEV. Entre otros, cabe destacar el Documento estratégico 2007-2013 y el Programa indicativo nacional 2007-2010.

¿Podría la Comisión informar del estado en el que se encuentra esta Política Europea de Vecindad en relación con Argelia? ¿Cuáles son las medidas que tiene pensadas llevar a cabo en el corto y en el medio plazo?

Respuesta del Comisario Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de julio de 2013)

La UE y Argelia están vinculadas por un Acuerdo de Asociación firmado en 2002, que entró en vigor en 2005. En diciembre de 2011, Argelia expresó su voluntad de iniciar la negociación de un Plan de Acción en el marco de la Política Europea de Vecindad renovada. Una primera ronda de negociaciones se celebró en Bruselas los días 17 y 18 de octubre de 2012. Una segunda ronda está prevista en los próximos meses.

Las reuniones de los organismos conjuntos en virtud del Acuerdo de Asociación se llevarán a cabo de forma periódica y permitirán un diálogo constructivo sobre el conjunto de los temas contemplados en el Acuerdo de Asociación. El diálogo político se ha intensificado gracias a unas visitas de alto nivel más frecuentes. Así, el presidente Barroso realizó una visita oficial al país este 7 de julio y tanto la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta de la Comisión como el Sr. Füle, comisario de Ampliación y Política Europea de Vecindad, visitaron Argel en 2012.

Un acuerdo de cooperación científica y tecnológica entre la UE y Argelia se firmó en marzo de 2012 y entró en vigor provisionalmente a la espera del procedimiento de ratificación. El presidente Barroso y el primer ministro Sellal firmaron un memorando de entendimiento sobre la cooperación en materia de energía con ocasión de la visita del Presidente al país.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005416/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: European Neighbourhood Policy with Libya

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in 2004 in the context of EU enlargement, with the objective of fostering relations with countries bordering the EU and avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines, as well as to encourage stability and security for all.

Since then, the European Union has developed several initiatives with Algeria in the course of implementing the ENP. Of these, it is worth highlighting the strategy paper 2007-2013 and the national indicative programme 2007-2010.

Could the Commission say what stage the European Neighbourhood Policy is at in relation to Algeria? What steps does it plan to take in the short and medium term?

Answer given by Commissioner Füle on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The EU and Algeria are linked by an Association Agreement (AA) signed in 2002, which entered into force in 2005. In December 2011, Algeria indicated its willingness to start negotiating an Action Plan under the renewed ENP. A first round of discussions was held in Brussels on 17-18 October 2012. A second round is expected to take place in the coming months.

The meetings of the joint bodies under the Association Agreement take place on regular basis and allow for constructive dialogue on the whole range of issues covered under the AA. Political dialogue has intensified through more frequent high level visits: President Barroso made an official visit to the country this 7 July and both HR/VP and Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Mr Füle visited Algiers in 2012.

An EU-Algeria Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation was signed in March 2012 and entered provisionally into force pending the ratification procedure. A memorandum of Understanding on energy cooperation was signed by President Barroso and Prime-Minister Sellal on the occasion of the visit of the President to the country.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005417/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Política Europea de Vecindad con Bielorrusia

Con el objetivo de fomentar las relaciones con los vecinos fronterizos de la Unión y evitar la aparición de nuevas líneas divisorias, así como de fomentar la estabilidad y la seguridad entre unos y otros, en 2004 se diseñó la Política Europea de Vecindad (PEV) en el contexto de la ampliación de la UE.

Desde entonces se han desarrollado Planes de Acción de la PEV con Israel, Jordania, Moldavia, Marruecos, Armenia y Azerbaiyán, entre otros.

¿Podría la Comisión informar del estado en que se encuentra la Política Europea de Vecindad en relación con Bielorrusia?

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

El 6 de marzo de 1995 se firmó el acuerdo de asociación y cooperación con Bielorrusia se firmó, pero su ratificación por los Estados miembros de la UE sigue en suspenso desde 1997. Por consiguiente, no se ha elaborado ningún plan de acción de la PEV para Bielorrusia.

Desde 2009, Bielorrusia participa en la senda multilateral de la Asociación Oriental, pero el mayor desarrollo de las relaciones bilaterales en el marco de dicha Asociación depende de que se registren avances en lo que respecta al respeto de los principios de la democracia, el Estado de Derecho y los derechos humanos por Bielorrusia.

La UE sigue apoyando una política de compromiso crítico con Bielorrusia, tal como se decidió por última vez en las conclusiones del Consejo de 15 de octubre de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005417/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: European Neighbourhood Policy with Belarus

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in 2004 in the context of EU enlargement, with the objective of fostering relations with countries bordering the EU and avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines, as well as to encourage stability and security for all.

Since then, ENP Action Plans have been developed with Israel, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, Armenia and Azerbaijan, among others.

Could the Commission say what stage the European Neighbourhood Policy is at in relation to Belarus?

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

A Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Belarus was signed on 6 March 1995, but the ratification by EU member states remains suspended since 1997. As a consequence, no ENP Action Plan has been developed for Belarus.

Since 2009, Belarus participates in the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership, but further development of bilateral relations under the Eastern Partnership is conditional on progress towards respect by Belarus for the principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

The EU remains committed to a policy of critical engagement with Belarus as most recently set out in the Council Conclusions of 15 October 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005418/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Fondo Europeo de ayuda a los más necesitados

En la Estrategia Europa 2020, la UE se compromete a reducir en al menos 20 millones el número de personas en situación de pobreza o en riesgo de pobreza. Una medida para ayudar a reducirlo es la creación del Fondo Europeo de ayuda a los más necesitados que propuso la Comisión.

De los 116 millones de personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social que hay en la EU, unos 40 millones sufren de privación material grave. Una de las principales características de la privación material es la incapacidad de acceder a alimentos de una calidad adecuada y en cantidades suficientes.

La utilización o no por parte de los Estados miembros de este Fondo es voluntaria. Por la importancia que puede llegar a tener este Fondo debido al aumento de las personas en riesgo de pobreza por la actual crisis financiera, me gustaría saber si la Comisión ha observado la posibilidad de destinar el presupuesto que no haya sido utilizado por parte de algunos Estados miembros a incrementar el presupuesto de otros que hayan sido afectados más duramente por la crisis financiera.

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión ha propuesto un fondo cuya finalidad es ayudar a los ciudadanos europeos más necesitados, sin importar dónde vivan. Esta expresión de la solidaridad europea no debe depender del país de residencia; por ello, la Comisión considera más adecuado no dejar el uso del Fondo de Ayuda Europea para los Más Necesitados al arbitrio de cada Estado miembro. La Comisión se congratula del apoyo expresado por el Parlamento Europeo a esta posición en el pleno del 11 de junio.

En cuanto a la transferencia de los recursos no utilizados hacia otros Estados miembros, la Comisión señala que el acuerdo sobre el marco plurianual no ha previsto esta posibilidad en el contexto de la política de cohesión que constituye la nueva base jurídica de este Fondo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005418/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Fund for European aid to the most deprived

The Europe 2020 strategy commits the EU to reducing the number of people in or at risk of poverty by at least 20 million. One measure to help to reduce that number is the Commission's proposal to set up the Fund for European aid to the most deprived.

Of the 116 million people in the EU who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, about 40 million are suffering from severe material deprivation. One of the main features of material deprivation is the inability to access appropriate quantities and quality of food.

The Member States' use of this fund is voluntary. Given the importance that this fund could come to have due to the increase in the number of people at risk of poverty as a result of the current financial crisis, I should like to know whether the Commission has considered the possibility of allocating the budget that has not been used by some Member States to increase the budget of others which have been more severely affected by the financial crisis.

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(8 juillet 2013)

La Commission a proposé un Fonds visant à aider les citoyens européens les plus démunis, où qu'ils vivent. Cette expression de la solidarité européenne ne doit pas dépendre du pays de résidence et c'est pourquoi la Commission considère comme plus approprié de ne pas laisser l'usage (ou non) du FEAD à l'appréciation de chaque État membre. La Commission salue le soutien à cette position exprimé par le Parlement européen lors de la séance plénière du 11 juin.

Concernant la question du transfert des ressources non-utilisées vers d'autres Etats-membres, la Commission constate que l'accord sur le cadre pluriannuel n'a pas prévu une telle possibilité dans le contexte de la politique de cohésion qui est la nouvelle base juridique pour ce Fonds.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005419/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Fondo Europeo de ayuda a los más necesitados

El Fondo Europeo de ayuda a los más necesitados tiene por objetivo financiar los programas de los Estados miembros destinados a suministrar alimentos a las personas más necesitadas, así como ropa y bienes esenciales a las personas sin hogar y a los niños que padecen privaciones materiales.

Este Fondo permite una gran flexibilidad a las autoridades nacionales para planificar y suministrar la asistencia en consonancia con sus programas nacionales. El establecimiento de criterios detallados para la asignación de la ayuda correspondería a los Estados miembros o, incluso, a las organizaciones asociadas, ya que son los más capacitados para determinar el destino de la ayuda en función de las necesidades locales.

La idea de dotar de flexibilidad a este fondo tiene ventajas claras, pero ¿se ha establecido un sistema específico de fiscalización y control?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión propone, en efecto, que los criterios de identificación de las personas que se benefician del Fondo de Ayuda Europea para los Más Necesitados sean determinados por los Estados miembros, para que estos puedan responder de manera óptima a sus necesidades a nivel local.

La propuesta de Reglamento contempla no solo un sistema de auditoría y control, sino también disposiciones de seguimiento y evaluación para garantizar la buena gestión financiera de los fondos europeos y un uso eficaz de los mismos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005419/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Fund for European aid to the most deprived

The Fund for European aid to the most deprived is aimed at supporting Member State schemes providing food to the most deprived people and clothing and other essential goods to homeless people and materially-deprived children.

This fund gives considerable flexibility to national authorities to plan and deliver the assistance in line with their national schemes. Detailed criteria to allocate assistance would be the responsibility of Member States, or even partner organisations, as they are best placed to target assistance to local needs.

The idea of making this fund flexible has clear advantages, but has a specific audit and control system been established?

(Version française)

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

La Commission propose effectivement que les critères d'identication des personnes qui bénéficieront du Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis soient déterminés par les États membres, afin qu'ils puissent répondre au mieux à leurs besoins au niveau local.

La proposition de règlement prévoit non seulement un système d'audit et de contrôle, mais aussi des dispositions en matière de suivi et d'évaluation, afin de s'assurer de la saine gestion financière des financements européens ainsi que de l'efficacité de leur usage.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005420/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Somalia

En el Informe elaborado conjuntamente por la FAO, la Organización de Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación, y la Red Alerta por el Hambre (Fews-Net) se ha publicado que «el hambre y la grave inseguridad alimentaria en Somalia han matado a unas 258 000 personas entre octubre de 2010 y abril de 2012, incluyendo a 133 000 niños menores de cinco años».

Según el balance de la crisis alimentaria, el 4,6 % de la población total y el 10 % de los niños menores de cinco años murieron en el sur y centro de Somalia.

Este balance supera al de la hambruna de 1992, que mató a 220 000 personas en doce meses aunque «aquella hambruna se consideró más grave ya que supuso la muerte de un mayor porcentaje de la población».

La hambruna registrada en Somalia entre mediados de 2011 y principios de 2012 afectó a 4 millones de personas, la mitad de la población somalí**.**

A la vista de que Somalia está viviendo una situación realmente alarmante, ¿podría decirme qué medidas podría tomar la Comisión a este respecto?

Respuesta de la Sra. Georgieva en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de julio de 2013)

La crisis alimentaria de 2010-2011 en Somalia ha sido la peor de los últimos 20 años, hasta llegar a una situación de hambruna en algunas partes del centro-sur de Somalia. La grave sequía de 2011 se vio agravada por los conflictos y el limitado acceso de las organizaciones humanitarias a las zonas controladas por Al-Shabaab.

Desde 2011, la situación humanitaria ha mejorado gracias a más lluvias y a un mejor acceso a las poblaciones vulnerables. En la actualidad, aproximadamente 1 000 000 somalíes permanecen en una grave situación de seguridad alimentaria (frente a 4,1 millones en 2011).

La UE ha participado activamente en Somalia desde el comienzo de la crisis, facilitando ayuda humanitaria urgente a las personas más necesitadas. La UE respondió pronto a las señales de creciente inseguridad alimentaria, reprogramando de manera inmediata su financiación en junio/julio de 2011 y aumentando su contribución financiera a 77 millones EUR para finales de 2011. En 2012, se asignaron a Somalia 60,8 millones EUR y en 2013, 45,5 millones EUR.

Como complemento de su respuesta humanitaria, la UE sigue proporcionando ayuda al desarrollo a más largo plazo para ayudar a los más vulnerables, mejorar la nutrición y prestar apoyo a la agricultura sostenible. Una lección importante aprendida de la sequía de 2011 es que los medios de subsistencia, comunidades y sistemas de respuesta deben mostrar más resiliencia ante las perturbaciones de la sequía.

Se espera que la financiación actual y futura [en el marco del próximo 11º Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo (2015-2020)] refuerce las capacidades de resiliencia de los hogares más vulnerables para hacer frente a las crisis de seguridad alimentaria en todos los países del Cuerno de África, en particular Somalia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005420/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Somalia

According to a joint report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), 'famine and severe food insecurity in Somalia claimed the lives of about 258 000 people between October 2010 and April 2012, including 133 000 children under five.'

According to the death toll of the famine, 4.6% of the total population and 10% of children under five died in southern and central Somalia.

These figures are higher than those for the 1992 famine, in which 220 000 people died over 12 months, although 'the earlier famine is considered more severe because a larger percentage of the population died.'

The famine in Somalia between mid-2011 and early 2012 affected 4 million people, or half the Somali population.

In view of the very alarming situation in Somalia, what measures could the Commission take on this issue?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

The 2010-2011 food crisis in Somalia was the worst in the last 20 years culminating in famine in some parts of South Central Somalia. The severe 2011 drought was aggravated by conflict and limited humanitarian access to Al-Shabaab controlled areas.

Since 2011, the humanitarian situation has improved thanks to better rains and increased access to vulnerable populations. Today, about 1 million Somalis remain in an acute food security situation (down from 4.1 million in 2011).

The EU has been actively involved in Somalia since the beginning of the crisis, providing urgent humanitarian assistance to the people most in need. The EU responded early to the signals of increasing food insecurity by immediately reprogramming its funding in June/July 2011 and increasing its financial contribution to EUR 77 million by the end of 2011. In 2012, EUR 60.8 million were allocated to Somalia and EUR 45.5 million in 2013.

In complementarity with its humanitarian response, the EU continues to provide longer term development support to assist the most vulnerable, improve nutrition and support sustainable agriculture. An important lesson from the 2011 drought is that livelihoods, communities and response systems need to be more resilient to drought shocks.

Current and future funding (under the upcoming 11th European Development Fund (2015-2020)) is expected to further strengthen the resilience capacities of the most vulnerable households in dealing with food security shocks in all countries of the Horn of Africa, including Somalia.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005421/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: PNR europeo

El día 24 de mayo de 2013 se votó en la Comisión LIBE del Parlamento Europeo el informe sobre utilización de datos del registro de nombres de los pasajeros (UE-PNR). El resultado de la votación fue rechazar el informe.

A través del PNR se recoge la información proporcionada por los pasajeros y se almacena en los sistemas de reserva y de salida de las líneas aéreas, con frecuencia solicitada por los Estados miembros para «prevenir, detectar o investigar delitos terroristas y delitos graves».

En la actualidad existe una falta de armonización a nivel europeo ya que, aunque algunos países de la Unión Europea ya han establecido procedimientos, otros están en la fase de planificación.

Debido a la clara importancia de este sistema en la lucha contra el terrorismo, ¿podría decirme la Comisión qué medidas va a tomar para que este informe no quede bloqueado y así conseguir una armonización a nivel europeo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión toma nota de la decisión adoptada por el Parlamento Europeo el 10 de junio de 2013 de devolver a la Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior el informe sobre la propuesta de la Comisión sobre la Directiva relativa a la utilización de datos del registro de nombres de los pasajeros para la prevención, detección, investigación y enjuiciamiento de delitos terroristas y delitos graves (Directiva PNR) [COM(2011) 32]. La Comisión se congratula de que continúen los debates en el Parlamento Europeo sobre esta importante propuesta legislativa a fin de alcanzar un compromiso.

La Comisión sigue abogando por la adopción de la propuesta de Directiva PNR de la UE con el fin de armonizar las disposiciones de los Estados miembros sobre el tratamiento de este tipo de datos. Solo un planteamiento coherente sobre el tratamiento de los datos PNR, según lo establecido por la propuesta de la Comisión, permitirá una mayor cooperación entre los Estados miembros en la lucha contra las formas graves de delincuencia y el terrorismo, además de garantizar una protección de datos adecuada y coherente en el tratamiento de la información PNR en la EU. La Comisión apoyará los esfuerzos para facilitar la adopción de la propuesta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005421/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: EU passenger name record data

On 24 May 2013, Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs voted on the report on the use of passenger name record data (EU PNR). The report was rejected.

The PNR system collects the information provided by passengers and stores it in airline reservation and departure systems. This information is often requested by Member States for 'the prevention, detection and investigation of terrorist offences and serious crime.'

There is currently a lack of harmonisation at EU level since, although some EU countries have already put procedures in place, others are at the planning stage.

In view of the obvious importance of this system in combating terrorism, could the Commission say what steps it will take to ensure that this report is not blocked and thus to achieve EU-wide harmonisation?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

The Commission takes note of the decision taken by the European Parliament on 10 June 2013 to refer the committee report on the Commission proposal for an EU Passenger Name Record (PNR) Directive (COM(2011) 32) back to the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. The Commission welcomes the fact that the discussions in the European Parliament on this important legislative proposal will continue with a view to reach a compromise.

The Commission continues to advocate the adoption of the proposal for an EU PNR Directive in order to harmonise Member States' provisions on the processing of PNR data. Only a coherent approach to the processing of PNR data, as set out by the Commission proposal, will allow for effective cooperation between Member States in the fight against serious crime and terrorism, and will ensure an adequate and consistent level of data protection for the processing of PNR data in the EU. The Commission will support efforts to facilitate the adoption of the proposal.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005422/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(16. maj 2013)

Om: Inddrivelse af erstatningsbeløb på tværs af medlemsstaterne

I Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 44/2001 fastlægges det, at en retsafgørelse, der er givet i en medlemsstat, skal anerkendes i en anden medlemsstat.

Der opleves imidlertid fortsat problemer i den praktiske grænseoverskridende anerkendelse af domsafgørelser og heraf følgende inddrivelse af bøder på tværs af medlemsstaterne.

Ifølge undersøgelser foretaget af det danske Fagforbund — 3F — fra 2004 til i dag har 80 % af de firmaer, der er dømt til at betale erstatning for lønsnyd, undladt at betale erstatning eller har lukket virksomheden, inden det har været muligt at inddrive erstatningen.

Vil Kommissionen forholde sig til de problemer, der fortsat opleves med at stille virksomheder til ansvar for udestående betalinger i forbindelse med det grænseoverskridende retssamarbejde på arbejdsmarkedsområdet?

Vil Kommissionen endvidere tage stilling til, hvordan effektiviteten af det grænseoverskridende retssamarbejde kan forbedres, herunder hvordan man vil kunne sikre en hurtigere inddrivelse, så man undgår situationer, hvor firmaer er gået konkurs eller holdt op med at eksistere, inden bødeinddrivelsen er foretaget?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(8. juli 2013)

Det ærede medlem refererer til forordning (EF) nr. 44/2001, som for nylig er blevet omarbejdet (forordning (EU) nr. 1215/2012, der finder anvendelse fra den 10. januar 2015). Ved forordningen afskaffes eksekvaturproceduren, hvilket betyder, at domme skal kunne fuldbyrdes på tværs af grænserne, uden at en eksigibilitetspåtegning er påkrævet. Når en virksomhed er blevet pålagt at betale et beløb, vil den grænseoverskridende inddrivelse af denne gæld blive lettere, hurtigere og billigere ved, at kreditor får mulighed for at henvende sig direkte til fuldbyrdelsesmyndigheden.

Kommissionen skal henvise det ærede medlem til det forslag til forordning om indførelse af en europæisk kendelse til sikring af bankindeståender (KOM(2011)0445 af 25. juli 2011), der er under behandling hos begge lovgivere. Med forslaget tilsigtes det at indføre en selvstændig europæisk procedure til sikring af indeståender på bankkonti, som vil gøre det muligt for kreditorer at forhindre, at debitor overfører eller hæver sine midler i en bank i Unionen ved at indefryse debitors konti, ikke blot når kreditor allerede har fået dom for sit krav, men også når der endnu ikke er afsagt en dom, hvorved det fastslås, at kravet er berettiget.

Både forordning (EF) nr. 44/2001 og ovennævnte forslag finder kun anvendelse på det civil- og handelsretlige område. Jeg skal henlede Deres opmærksomhed på, at en dom, hvorved der pålægges en bøde, ikke nødvendigvis udspringer af en civilretlig sag, idet der ofte er tale om en offentligretlig sag. Hertil kommer, at den foreslåede forordning ikke vil gælde for Danmark, fordi denne medlemsstat ikke deltager i vedtagelsen og anvendelsen af instrumenter under afsnit V i TEUF. Reglerne i forordning (EF) nr. 44/2001, såvel som den omarbejdede udgave heraf, gælder imidlertid for Danmark i henhold til en international aftale mellem sidstnævnte og EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005422/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Cross-Member State recovery of compensation

Council Regulation (EC) No 44/2001 stipulates that a judgment given in one Member State shall be recognised in another Member State.

However, problems are still being experienced in the practical cross-border recognition of court rulings and the subsequent cross-Member State recovery of fines.

Investigations carried out by the Danish trade union 3F have revealed that, between 2004 and the present day, 80% of the companies that have been ordered to pay compensation for wage fraud failed to pay the compensation or wound up the company before it was possible to collect the compensation.

Will the Commission address the problems that continue to be experienced when it comes to holding companies liable for outstanding payments in connection with cross-border legal cooperation in relation to the labour market?

Will the Commission also consider how cross-border legal cooperation can be made more effective, including how a faster recovery could be ensured so as to avoid situations where companies have gone bankrupt or ceased to exist before the fine has been recovered?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

The Honourable Member refers to Regulation (EC) No 44/2001 which has recently been recast (Regulation (EU) No 1215/2012, applying as from 10 January 2015). It abolishes the exequatur procedure thus meaning that judgments shall be enforceable cross border without any declaration of enforceability being required. When a company is held liable of a payment, the cross-border recovery of that debt will then be made easier, faster and at lower cost given that the creditor will be able to go directly to the enforcement authority.

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the proposal for a regulation creating a European Account Preservation Order (COM(2011)445 of 25 July 2011) under examination of both co-legislators. The proposal establishes a self-standing European procedure for the preservation of bank accounts, which will enable creditors to prevent the transfer or withdrawal of their debtors' assets in any bank in the Union by freezing their accounts, not only when the creditor has already the judgment, but also when he has not yet got the judgment establishing his entitlement to the claim.

Both Regulation 44/2001 and the abovementioned proposal apply only in civil and commercial matters. The Honourable Member should be aware that a judgment imposing a fine may not qualify as a civil matter but rather as an administrative matter. Moreover, the proposed Regulation will not apply to Denmark because it does not participate in the adoption or application of instruments under Title V of the TFEU. The rules of Regulation 44/2001 however, as well as its recast, apply to Denmark by virtue of an international agreement between the latter and the EU.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005423/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Απόφαση του Eurogroup

Στις 15 Μαΐου 2013, σε ερώτηση που σας είχα θέσει σχετικά με την απόφαση του Eurogroup όσον αφορά τις τραπεζικές καταθέσεις απαντήσατε ότι «τα μέτρα που αφορούν τους καταθέτες των τραπεζών δεν έχουν αποφασιστεί από το Eurogroup. Τα μέτρα αυτά συνιστούν μονομερείς δεσμεύσεις των κυπριακών αρχών». Απορώ, όμως, πώς αυτό ισχύει όταν η ανακοίνωση του Eurogroup, με ημερομηνία 16 Μαρτίου 2013, αναφέρει την «πολιτική συμφωνία που επιτεύχθηκε»; Πώς, δηλαδή, τα μέτρα αυτά «συνιστούν μονομερείς δεσμεύσεις των κυπριακών αρχών» όταν αποτελούν μέρος της πολιτικής συμφωνίας που επιτεύχθηκε μεταξύ των κυπριακών αρχών και του Eurogroup;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας της 16ης Μαρτίου 2013 έχει ως εξής: «Το Eurogroup χαιρετίζει την πολιτική συμφωνία που επιτεύχθηκε με τις κυπριακές αρχές σχετικά με τους ακρογωνιαίους λίθους των όρων ακολουθητέας πολιτικής για ένα μελλοντικό πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής».

Η «επιτευχθείσα πολιτική συμφωνία» αναφέρεται στους υποβόσκοντες όρους πολιτικής που διείπαν, την εποχή εκείνη, ένα μελλοντικό πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής. Μέτρα που αφορούν τις τραπεζικές καταθέσεις δεν αποτελούν μέρος των όρων του προγράμματος και κατά συνέπεια δεν καλύπτονται από την επιτευχθείσα πολιτική συμφωνία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005423/13
to the Commission
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Eurogroup decision

On 15 May 2013, further to my question concerning the Eurogroup decision on bank deposits, you replied that measures relating to bank deposits had not been decided by the Eurogroup and that such measures were unilateral undertakings by the Cypriot authorities. I wonder how that can be, given that the Eurogroup statement dated 16 March 2013 refers to the 'political agreement reached'? How can these measures be unilateral undertakings by the Cypriot authorities if they form part of the political agreement reached between the Cypriot authorities and the Eurogroup?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

The Eurogroup statement of 16 March 2013 reads 'The Eurogroup welcomes the political agreement reached with the Cypriot authorities on the cornerstones of the policy conditionality underlying a future macroeconomic adjustment programme'.

The 'political agreement reached' refers to the policy conditionality underlying, what was at the time, a future macroeconomic adjustment programme. Measures related to bank deposits are not part of the programme conditionality and are therefore not covered by the political agreement reached.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005424/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Καταστροφή των ελληνικών δασών

Στην Ελλάδα έχουν σημειωθεί τα τελευταία χρόνια καταστροφικές πυρκαγιές. Βάσει της πρόβλεψης του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ, κάθε χώρα υποχρεούται να υποβάλει αίτηση αποκατάστασης ζημιών εντός 10 ημερών από την πρώτη ζημιά στα δάση. Εν τω μεταξύ, μέχρι το καλοκαίρι του 2007 σε εκατομμύρια ευρώ ανέρχονταν τα μη απορροφηθέντα κοινοτικά κονδύλια για την πρόληψη ενδεχόμενων πυρκαγιών στα ελληνικά δάση, αγορά πυροσβεστικών αεροσκαφών και οχημάτων κοκ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Υπέβαλε η Ελλάδα σε όλες τις περιπτώσεις καταστροφής δασών, από το 2007 ως σήμερα, τις σχετικές αιτήσεις; Ποια ποσά εισέπραξε ως τώρα και ποια είναι σε εκκρεμότητα;

Υπέβαλε προτάσεις από το 2007 για την αγορά σύγχρονων πυροσβεστικών αεροσκαφών και οχημάτων, καθώς και για τη δημιουργία ζωνών πυρασφάλειας;

Ποια τα ποσά που πληρώθηκαν από την ΕΕ; Χάθηκαν πόροι της ΕΕ για την Ελλάδα λόγω της μη έγκαιρης υποβολής αιτήσεων, και τι ύψους;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Ιουλίου 2013)

Βάσει του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης, υποστήριξη μπορεί να δοθεί σε κράτη μέλη στην περίπτωση μείζονος φυσικής καταστροφής. Ως μείζων καταστροφή ορίζεται η καταστροφή που προκάλεσε ζημία πάνω από κάποιο κατώτατο όριο το οποίο, για την Ελλάδα, ανέρχεται επί του παρόντος σε 1,2 δισ. (0,6% του ακαθάριστου εθνικού εισοδήματος). Κράτος μέλος ή χώρα που διαπραγματεύεται την προσχώρησή της στην ΕΕ *μπορεί* να υποβάλει αίτηση ενίσχυσης από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ εντός 10 *εβδομάδων* από την ημερομηνία της πρώτης ζημίας.

Από το 2007 και μετά η Ελλάδα υπέβαλε αίτηση ενίσχυσης από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης σχετικά με δασικές πυρκαγιές δύο φορές: για τις δασικές πυρκαγιές του 2007 με κατ' εκτίμηση ζημία περίπου 2,1 δισεκατομμυρίων, για τις οποίες έλαβε ενίσχυση από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης ύψους 89,8 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ.

Το 2009 η Ελλάδα υπέβαλε αίτηση ενίσχυσης σχετικά με δασικές πυρκαγιές στην περιοχή της Αττικής (εκτιμώμενη ζημία 153 εκατομμύρια ευρώ). Η εν λόγω αίτηση δεν πληρούσε τις προϋποθέσεις του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης.

Η Επιτροπή δεν έλαβε αίτηση από την Ελλάδα πέραν της προθεσμίας των δέκα εβδομάδων. Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει κάποια περίπτωση κατά την οποία η Ελλάδα να έχασε την ευκαιρία να υποβάλει αίτηση ενίσχυσης από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης. Η αγορά αεροπλάνων κατάσβεσης πυρκαγιών και πυροσβεστικών οχημάτων δεν είναι επιλέξιμη δυνάμει του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης και δεν ζητήθηκε.

Δυνάμει των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων, κατά την προηγούμενη περίοδο προγραμματισμού συγχρηματοδοτήθηκε από το Ταμείο Συνοχής 2000-2006 στην Ελλάδα ένα πρόγραμμα με τίτλο «Προμήθεια πυροσβεστικών οχημάτων για την κατάσβεση πυρκαγιών» με κοινοτική συνεισφορά ύψους 24 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ. Κατά τη διάρκεια της τρέχουσας περιόδου προγραμματισμού εγκρίθηκαν 4 σχέδια δυνάμει του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Περιβάλλον και αειφόρος ανάπτυξη» σχετικά με τον εξοπλισμό για την πυροσβεστική σε 3 περιφέρειες και σε προστατευμένες περιοχές Natura 2000. Η κοινοτική συνεισφορά ανέρχεται σε 27 εκατομμύρια ευρώ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005424/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Destruction of Greek forests

There have been catastrophic forest fires in Greece over recent years. According to a provision of the EU Solidarity fund, every country must file an application for damage restoration within 10 days of the date of the first damage caused by the forest fire. In the meantime, EU funds not taken up for the purpose of preventing forest fires in Greece, buying water bombers and fire engines and so on had run into millions of euro by the summer of 2007.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Has Greece filed applications for every forest fire since 2007? How much has it received to date and how much is outstanding?

Has it filed proposals since 2007 for the purpose of purchasing of modern water bombers and fire engines and creating fire safety zones?

How much money has been paid by the EU? Has Greece missed out on EU funds by failing to file applications on time and, if so, by how much?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2013)

Under the Solidarity Fund support can be given to Member States in the event of a major natural disaster. A major disaster is defined as having caused damage above a certain threshold which for Greece is currently set at EUR 1.2 billion (0.6% of gross national income). A Member State or country negotiating its accession to the EU *may* apply for aid from the EU Solidarity Fund with 10 weeks of the date of the first damage.

Since 2007, Greece has applied for Solidarity Fund aid relating to forest fires twice: the forest fires in 2007 with estimated damage of some EUR 2.1 billion for which it received Solidarity Fund aid of EUR 89.8 million.

In 2009 Greece applied for aid relating to forest fires in the Attica region (estimated damage EUR 153 million).That application did not meet the conditions of the Solidarity Fund.

The Commission has not received any applications from Greece beyond the deadline of ten weeks. The Commission is not aware of any occasion where Greece missed the opportunity of applying for Solidarity Fund aid. The purchase of water bombers and fire engines is not eligible under the Solidarity Fund and was not requested.

Under the Structural Funds, during the previous programming period a project has been co-financed from the Cohesion Fund 2000-2006 in Greece, entitled 'Supply of fire vehicles for addressing forest fires' with a Community contribution of EUR 24 million. During the current programming period, 4 projects were approved under the operational programme 'Environment & Sustainable Development' concerning equipment for fire brigade in 3 regions and in Natura2000 protected areas. The Community contribution amounts to EUR 27 million.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005425/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιδότηση εξαγωγών προϊόντων υδατοκαλλιέργειας από την Τουρκία

Κατάπληξη προκαλεί η στάση της Επιτροπής, η οποία, παρά τις επανειλημμένες ερωτήσεις των συναδέλφων βουλευτών Αννυς Ποδηματά, Κρίτωνος Αρσένη (E-001540/2010) αλλά και του υποφαινομένου, αρνείται να ελέγξει την Τουρκία σχετικά με την πολιτική επιδότησης που εφαρμόζει στις εξαγωγές προϊόντων υδατοκαλλιέργειας, κατά παράβαση του καθεστώτος της Τελωνειακής Σύνδεσης ΕΕ-Τουρκίας. Μάλιστα, για το λαβράκι και την τσιπούρα η επιδότηση κυμαίνεται από 12% έως 18% της μέσης τιμής πώλησης στην Ευρώπη, ενώ το 2009 η Τουρκία επέβαλε φόρους και δασμούς ύψους 34% στις εισαγωγές γόνου για τα δύο προαναφερθέντα είδη, προκαλώντας αθέμιτο ανταγωνισμό για τα προϊόντα κοινοτικής προέλευσης.

Ωστόσο, δεν υπήρξε απολύτως καμία αντίδραση από πλευράς Επιτροπής.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Για ποιο λόγο δεν κινητοποιήθηκαν οι υπηρεσίες της για να διαπιστωθεί αν υπάρχει αθέμιτος ανταγωνισμός και να επιβληθούν οι σχετικές κυρώσεις στην Τουρκία;

Για ποιο λόγο δεν προστατεύονται οι ευρωπαίοι παραγωγοί προϊόντων υδατοκαλλιέργειας έναντι των μονομερών αυτών τουρκικών ενεργειών που νοθεύουν τον ανταγωνισμό;

Απάντηση του κ. De Gucht εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Ιουλίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 10 του βασικού κανονισμού κατά των επιδοτήσεων (κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 597/2009 του Συμβουλίου), η Επιτροπή κινεί συνήθως έρευνα κατά των επιδοτήσεων με βάση καταγγελία που έχει υποβληθεί από τον κλάδο παραγωγής της Ένωσης, η οποία πρέπει να περιλαμβάνει επαρκή, εκ πρώτης όψεως, στοιχεία σχετικά με τις αντισταθμίσιμες επιδοτήσεις και τον ζημιογόνο αντίκτυπό τους στην απόδοση του κλάδου παραγωγής της Ένωσης. Στο πλαίσιο αυτής της διαδικασίας, οι τουρκικές αρχές θα πρέπει να έχουν την ευκαιρία να απαντήσουν. Καμία έρευνα κατά των επιδοτήσεων δεν έχει διεξαχθεί στο παρελθόν και καμία έρευνα δεν βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη καθώς, μέχρι σήμερα, η Επιτροπή δεν δεν έχει λάβει καμία επίσημη καταγγελία για τις, κατά τους ισχυρισμούς, επιδοτήσεις που έχουν ληφθεί από τον τομέα υδατοκαλλιέργειας της Τουρκίας.

Επιπλέον, στο πλαίσιο της Τελωνειακής Ένωσης ΕΕ-Τουρκίας, η Επιτροπή θα ήταν διατεθειμένη να συζητήσει με τα κράτη μέλη τις δυσκολίες που αντιμετωπίζει ο τομέας υδατοκαλλιέργειάς τους με την Τουρκία βάσει συγκεκριμένων στοιχείων. Αυτό θα επιτρέψει στην Επιτροπή να θέσει το ζήτημα στις τουρκικές αρχές. Η Επιτροπή δήλωσε ότι είναι πρόθυμη να διεξαγάγει τέτοιες τεχνικές διαβουλεύσεις με τα κράτη μέλη κατά τη διάρκεια των προπαρασκευαστικών εργασιών για τις συνεδριάσεις της μεικτής επιτροπής τελωνειακής ενώσεως ΕΚ-Τουρκίας και της επιτροπής σύνδεσης ΕΚ-Τουρκίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005425/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Export subsidies for Turkish aquaculture products

The Commission has taken a surprising stand in refusing to control Turkey's policy of granting export subsidies for aquaculture products, in breach of EU-Turkey Customs Union, despite repeated questions tabled by my colleagues Anni Podimata and Kriton Arsenis (E-001540/2010) and by me. While subsidies for sea bass and sea bream range from 12% to 18% of the average selling price in Europe, Turkey imposed tax and duty of 34% on imports of fry for the two aforementioned species in 2009, thereby creating unfair competition for products of EU origin.

However, there has been no reaction whatsoever on the part of the Commission.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Why have its services taken no action to establish if there is unfair competition and impose the relevant sanctions on Turkey?

Why are European aquaculture producers not afforded any protection against this sort of unilateral action by Turkey, which is distorting competition?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

Pursuant to Article 10 of Basic Anti-subsidy Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 597/2009), the Commission normally initiates an anti-subsidy investigation on the basis of a complaint lodged by the Union Industry containing sufficient prima facie evidence concerning countervailable subsidisation and its injurious impact on the performance of the Union industry. Under this proceeding, the Turkish authorities would be given the opportunity to respond. There has been no anti-subsidy investigation in the past nor is there one ongoing and, as of today, no formal complaint has been received by the Commission on subsidies allegedly received by the Turkish aquaculture sector.

In addition, in the framework of the EU-Turkey Customs Union the Commission would be ready to discuss with Member States the difficulties their aquaculture sector encounters with Turkey on the basis of concrete information. This would allow the Commission to raise the issue with the Turkish authorities. The Commission expressed its readiness to conduct such technical consultations with Member States during the preparations of meetings of the EU-Turkey Customs Union Joint Committee and the EU-Turkey Association Committee.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005426/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Χρηματοδότηση των νοικοκυριών και των επιχειρήσεων στη νότια Ευρώπη

Η παρατεταμένη οικονομική κρίση και το αυστηρό πλαίσιο των δημοσιονομικών μεταρρυθμίσεων έχουν οδηγήσει — όπως άλλωστε διαπιστώνει και στις σχετικές εκθέσεις της η Επιτροπή — σε «παγίδα ρευστότητας» και παγίδα χρηματοδότησης τα νοικοκυριά και τις επιχειρήσεις στη νότια Ευρώπη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Εκτιμά ότι η αύξηση κεφαλαίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων κατά 10 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ στο αμέσως επόμενο διάστημα είναι επαρκής για την ανακούφιση της κρίσης ρευστότητας στον Νότο; Ποιο ποσό από τα 10 δισεκατομμύρια αντιστοιχεί στην Ελλάδα;

Διαθέτει στοιχεία για το κατά πόσον αναμένεται να αυξηθεί η δανειοδοτική ικανότητα των τραπεζών από αυτή την παρέμβαση της ΕΤΕπ; Θα υπάρξει σύντομα και νέα αύξηση κεφαλαίου και, αν ναι, τι ύψους;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η ΕΤΕπ συνεισφέρει σημαντικά για να αντιμετωπιστούν οι σημερινές οικονομικές προκλήσεις. Η αύξηση κεφαλαίου κατά 10 δισεκατ. ευρώ που εγκρίθηκε ομόφωνα από τα κράτη μέλη ενίσχυσε τον ισολογισμό της ΕΤΕπ. Κατά τα επόμενα τρία χρόνια, η αύξηση κεφαλαίου της ΕΤΕπ θα έχει ως αποτέλεσμα 60 δισεκατ. ευρώ επιπρόσθετης δανειοδότησης. Με βάση τα μέσα ποσοστά συγχρηματοδότησης, αυτή η επιπρόσθετη δανειοδότηση θα στηρίξει συνολικές επενδύσεις της τάξης των 180 δισεκατ. ευρώ ώστε να τονωθεί η βραχυπρόθεσμη και μακροπρόθεσμη οικονομική μεγέθυνση σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των πλέον ευάλωτων χωρών. Δεν υπάρχουν προκαθορισμένα ποσά για κανένα κράτος μέλος.

Δεδομένου ότι οι ΜΜΕ είναι οι βασικότεροι μοχλοί της ανάπτυξης και της απασχόλησης, η ΕΤΕπ επιτάχυνε τη στήριξη που χορηγεί στις ΜΜΕ μέσω ενδιάμεσων χρηματοπιστωτικών οργανισμών με την εφαρμογή πολλών μέτρων. Αύξησε σημαντικά τον όγκο δανεισμού της στις ΜΜΕ. Το 2012, οι υπογραφές για ΜΜΕ αυξήθηκαν φθάνοντας τα 10,7 δισεκατ. ευρώ. Επιπλέον, αναπτύσσει νέες χρηματοπιστωτικές δομές και προϊόντα για να διευκολύνει τη δανειοδοτική ικανότητα των τραπεζών. Στην Ελλάδα, για παράδειγμα, συστάθηκε ένα Ταμείο Εγγυήσεων στο οποίο διατέθηκαν πόροι του διαρθρωτικού ταμείου για να ενισχυθεί η χορήγηση δανείων της ΕΤΕπ υπέρ των ΜΜΕ.

Η ΕΤΕπ ανέπτυξε επίσης μια χρηματοδοτική διευκόλυνση εμπορίου ύψους 500 εκατ. ευρώ, για πρώτη φορά, με σκοπό τη στήριξη ενός όγκου συναλλαγών 1,5 δισεκατ. ευρώ ετησίως στην Ελλάδα και μελετά παρόμοιες διευκολύνσεις σε άλλες χώρες όπου δεν υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα κονδύλια από άλλες πηγές με λογικούς όρους. Όπως τονίζεται στην κοινή έκθεση Επιτροπής-ΕΤΕπ προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο του Ιουνίου 2013 ([1]), η ΕΤΕπ και η Επιτροπή εξετάζουν επίσης τον τρόπο αντιμετώπισης του κατακερματισμού των κεφαλαιαγορών και μελετούν εναλλακτικές λύσεις για την ανάκαμψη των πιστωτικών αγορών ώστε να ενισχυθούν ιδίως τα δάνεια προς τις ΜΜΕ, χωρίς αυτό ωστόσο να περιορίζεται στα ευάλωτα κράτη μέλη.

Στην τρέχουσα συγκυρία, δεν υπάρχουν σχέδια για άλλη αύξηση κεφαλαίου της ΕΤΕπ.

([1]) Αύξηση της χορήγησης πιστώσεων προς την οικονομία: εφαρμογή της αύξησης κεφαλαίου της ΕΤΕπ και κοινές πρωτοβουλίες Επιτροπής-ΕΤΕπ (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/eib_en.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005426/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Financing of households and undertakings in southern Europe

The extensive economic crisis and the strict framework of fiscal reforms have resulted — and this is confirmed by Commission reports — in a 'liquidity trap' and financing trap for households and undertakings in southern Europe.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Does it consider that the imminent EUR 10 billion capital increase by the European Investment Bank will suffice to relieve the liquidity crisis in the South? What part of the 10 billion is accounted for by Greece?

Does it have information as to whether the lending capacity of the banks is expected to increase as a result of this intervention by the European Investment Bank? Will there be another capital increase soon and, if so, by how much?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

The EIB contributes significantly to tackle the current economic challenges. The EUR 10 bn capital increase unanimously approved by Member States has strengthened the EIB's balance sheet. Over the next three years, the EIB capital increase will lead to EUR 60 bn of additional lending. Based on average co-financing rates, this additional lending will support total investments in the range of EUR 180bn to help to restore short-term and long-term economic growth across the EU including the most vulnerable countries. There is no pre-allocated quota to any Member State.

Since SMEs are the main drivers for growth and jobs, the EIB has stepped up its support for SMEs via financial intermediairies through numerous measures. It has increased its lending volumes to SMEs considerably. In 2012 signatures for SMEs increased to reach EUR 10.7bn. Moreover, it is developing new financial structures and products to facilitate lending capacity of banks. In Greece, for example, a Guarantee Fund was set up and endowed with Structural Fund resources to support EIB lending in favour of SMEs.

The EIB also developed a trade finance facility in Greece for up to EUR 500m for the first time to support a trade volume of EUR 1.5bn per year, and is studying similar facilities in other countries where funds are not available from other sources on reasonable terms. As highlighted in the joint Commission-EIB report to the European Council of June 2013 ([1]), the EIB and the Commission are also analysing how to deal with the fragmentation of capital markets, and are studying options for reviving the credit markets to support SME lending in particular, but not limited, to vulnerable Member States.

At the current juncture, there are no plans for another capital increase of the EIB.

([1]) Increasing lending to the economy: implementing the EIB capital increase and joint Commission-EIB initiatives (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/eib_en.pdf).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005427/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Πανευρωπαϊκό σχέδιο για ανοικτά μαζικά διαδικτυακά μαθήματα στα πανεπιστήμια

Με την υποστήριξη της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, έντεκα κράτη δρομολόγησαν από κοινού το πρώτο πανευρωπαϊκό σχέδιο ανοικτών μαζικών διαδικτυακών μαθημάτων (MOOC — Massive Open Online Courses). Τα MOOCs είναι διαδικτυακά πανεπιστημιακά μαθήματα που δίνουν τη δυνατότητα σε όλους να έχουν πρόσβαση σε εκπαίδευση υψηλής ποιότητας από το σπίτι.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Κατευθύνει ευρωπαϊκά κονδύλια για τη στήριξη της πολύ σημαντικής αυτής πρωτοβουλίας; Ποιο είναι το ύψος τους και ποιες συγκεκριμένες πτυχές χρηματοδοτούνται;

2. Με ποιο τρόπο προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να ευαισθητοποιήσει και να κινητοποιήσει τα πανεπιστήμια για συμμετοχή τους στο συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα;

3. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να προτείνει στα κράτη μέλη να συμπεριλαμβάνουν και ιδίως να αναγνωρίζουν επίσημα τις γνώσεις από το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα ως επιπλέον δεξιότητες και κατάρτιση;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει την ικανοποίησή της για τη δρομολόγηση του πρώτου πανευρωπαϊκού προγράμματος ανοικτών μαζικών διαδικτυακών μαθημάτων στα πανεπιστήμια (MOOCs). Η εν λόγω πρωτοβουλία είναι πλήρως σύμφωνη με τα σχέδια της Επιτροπής για το «άνοιγμα της εκπαίδευσης» (http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/docs/2013_eac_003_opening_up_education_en.pdf), της στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για την ενίσχυση της ενσωμάτωσης των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών στα συστήματα εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης, ιδίως με συνεκτική και συντονισμένη δράση των κρατών μελών και των ενδιαφερομένων.

Το «άνοιγμα της εκπαίδευσης» θα αποτελεί επίσης το σκεπτικό πίσω από νέες δυνατότητες χρηματοδότησης στο πλαίσιο του «Erasmus για όλους» και «Ορίζοντας 2020» για την εκμετάλλευση των ευκαιριών που προσφέρουν οι τεχνολογίες των πληροφοριών και των επικοινωνιών. Τα εν λόγω μέτρα μπορεί να περιλαμβάνουν ενέργειες όπως η «υποστήριξη της ανάπτυξης κοινοπραξιών της ΕΕ για διαδικτυακά μαθήματα υψηλής ποιότητας» συμπεριλαμβανομένων των MOOC, καθώς και προτάσεις για τη βελτίωση του τρέχοντος πλαισίου μάθησης, όπως τα μέτρα επικύρωσης και πιστοποίησης.

Η Επιτροπή διατηρεί σταθερή επικοινωνία με τα ευρωπαϊκά πανεπιστήμια και τις αρμόδιες αρχές των κρατών μελών για την προώθηση νέων ιδεών και πρωτοβουλιών, όπως τα εν λόγω προγράμματα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005427/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: European plan to launch massive open online courses in universities

Eleven States have joined forces to launch the first European plan to open massive open online courses (MOOC) with support from the European Commission. MOOCs are online university courses which provide broad access to a high standard of education from home.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it planning to provide European funding to support this very important initiative? If so, how much and for which particular aspects?

2. How does the Commission intend to bring this particular programme to the attention of universities and encourage them to participate?

3. Does the Commission intend to propose that the Member States should include and, more importantly, officially recognise knowledge from such programmes as additional skills and training?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2013)

The Commission welcomes the launching of the first pan-European Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) platform by eleven European universities. This initiative is fully in line with the Commission's plans on 'Opening up Education' (http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/docs/2013_eac_003_opening_up_education_en.pdf), an EU strategy to strengthen the integration of digital technologies in education and training systems, in particular through a coherent and coordinated action of Member States and stakeholders.

'Opening up Education' will also present the rationale behind new funding opportunities within Erasmus for All and Horizon 2020 to exploit opportunities offered by information and communication technologies. These may include actions like 'supporting the development of EU consortia for high quality online open courses', including for MOOCs, as well as proposals to improve the current learning framework, such as validation and certification measures.

The Commission has long-standing communication channels with European universities and relevant authorities in the Member States to promote new ideas and initiatives such as these.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005428/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: «Έξυπνες κατατάξεις» ευρωπαϊκών πανεπιστημίων

Σύμφωνα με απάντησή της (E-000430/2012) η Επιτροπή προωθούσε την ανάπτυξη ενός ευρωπαϊκού πολυδιάστατου εργαλείου κατάταξης πανεπιστημίων, με βάση μια σειρά κριτηρίων, όπως την ποιότητα της διδασκαλίας, την περιφερειακή δέσμευση, τη διεθνοποίηση και τη μεταφορά γνώσεων, καθώς και την έρευνα. Το σύστημα κατάταξης θα στηρίζεται στους χρήστες — οι χρήστες θα μπορούν να πραγματοποιούν εξατομικευμένες «έξυπνες κατατάξεις» με βάση τις δικές τους ανάγκες. Θα είναι δίκαιο — συγκρίνοντας όμοια στοιχεία — και ανεξάρτητο. Θα επιτρέπει στα ιδρύματα να αξιολογούν τη θέση τους σε σχέση με αντίστοιχα ιδρύματα σε εθνικό και διεθνές επίπεδο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιο είναι το χρονοδιάγραμμα υλοποίησης και πλήρους εφαρμογής της συγκεκριμένης πρωτοβουλίας;

— Καθώς ετησίως διάφοροι φορείς κατατάσσουν παγκοσμίως τα πανεπιστήμια, η πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής έρχεται να συμπληρώσει ή να αντικαταστήσει τις υπάρχουσες αξιολογήσεις;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η φάση υλοποίησης του U-Multirank, του νέου πολυδιάστατου εργαλείου διεθνούς κατάταξης ιδρυμάτων τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης με γνώμονα τις ανάγκες του χρήστη, άρχισε στα τέλη του 2012 και τα πρώτα αποτελέσματα θα δημοσιευθούν το πρώτο εξάμηνο του 2014.

Το U-Multirank θα συμπληρώσει τις υπάρχουσες διεθνείς κατατάξεις, συμπεριλαμβάνοντας όλες τις κατηγορίες ιδρυμάτων τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης και όχι μόνο τα πανεπιστήμια που είναι έντονα προσανατολισμένα στην έρευνα και παρέχοντας πληροφορίες όχι μόνο σχετικά με τις επιδόσεις της έρευνας, αλλά και με την ποιότητα της διδασκαλίας και της μάθησης, τον διεθνή προσανατολισμό, την περιφερειακή ολοκλήρωση και τη μεταφορά γνώσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005428/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: 'Smart ranking' of European universities

According to its reply to a previous question (E-000430/2012), the Commission has taken action to develop a multi-dimensional European tool for ranking universities, based on a series of criteria such as standard of teaching, regional engagement, internationalisation, knowledge exchange and research. The ranking system will be user-driven; in other words, users will be able to compile their own 'smart ranking' based on their own requirements. This ranking will be fair (it will compare similar data) and independent and will allow universities to assess their performance against other universities at national and international level.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— What is the timetable for the implementation and full application of this specific initiative?

— As various agencies issue global university rankings every year, will the Commission's initiative supplement or replace existing rankings?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

The implementation phase of U-Multirank, the new user-driven, multidimensional and international ranking of higher education institutions started at the end of 2012 and the first results will be published in the first half of 2014.

U-Multirank will complement existing international rankings by including all types of higher education institutions, not just research intensive universities, and by providing information not only on research performance, but also on the quality of teaching and learning, international orientation, regional integration and knowledge transfer.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005429/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Erasmus για νέους επιχειρηματίες

Η πρωτοβουλία «Erasmus για νέους επιχειρηματίες» από το 2009 μέχρι σήμερα έχει ωφελήσει 3 200 νέες επιχειρήσεις, και ιδίως νέους, να ξεδιπλώσουν το επιχειρηματικό τους ταλέντο, προωθώντας παράλληλα την καινοτομία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Διαθέτει συγκριτικά στοιχεία μεταξύ των κρατών μελών για το πόσο αξιοποιήθηκε αυτή η δυνατότητα από τους νέους; Ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

Είναι σε θέση να παράσχει ενημέρωση η Επιτροπή για τις πρωτοβουλίες που αναλαμβάνει για την περαιτέρω ενίσχυση του προγράμματος, δεδομένου ότι η κρίση αποκαλύπτει πως προγράμματα όπως το παρόν είναι απαραίτητα για την προώθηση της απασχόλησης των νέων και την ενίσχυση των εθνικών οικονομιών;

Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Ελλάδα κατατάσσεται έκτη όσον αφορά τον συνολικό αριθμό επιχειρηματιών εγγεγραμμένων στο πρόγραμμα, με 152 νέους επιχειρηματίες και 60 επιχειρηματίες υποδοχής, ενώ κατατάσσεται έβδομη από πλευράς επιχειρηματιών που έχουν συμμετάσχει σε πρόγραμμα ανταλλαγών με συνολικά 114 ανταλλαγές στις οποίες έχουν συμμετάσχει νέοι Έλληνες ή επιχειρηματίες υποδοχής.

Οι νέοι επιχειρηματίες αντιπροσωπεύονται καλύτερα στην Ελλάδα καθώς η χώρα κατατάσσεται τέταρτη σε αριθμό νέων εγγεγραμμένων επιχειρηματιών και νέων επιχειρηματιών που έχουν συμμετάσχει σε μια συνεργασία, ενώ κατατάσσεται δέκατη και ενδέκατη αντίστοιχα, όσον αφορά τους επιχειρηματίες υποδοχής.

Η Ισπανία, η Ιταλία και το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο είναι οι τρεις πρώτες χώρες στην κατάταξη.

Προς το παρόν υπάρχουν 6 ενεργά τοπικά σημεία επικοινωνίας στην Ελλάδα.

Η Επιτροπή αναγνωρίζει τη σημασία της αύξησης της επιχειρηματικότητας μεταξύ των νέων και της ενίσχυσης των επιχειρηματικών τους ικανοτήτων για την προαγωγή της απασχόλησης και τη συμβολή στην ανάπτυξη. Για το σκοπό αυτό η Επιτροπή έχει συμπεριλάβει μια προοδευτική αύξηση του προϋπολογισμού που έχει διατεθεί για το πρόγραμμα στο πλαίσιο της πρότασης COSME.

Η Επιτροπή τονίζει επίσης τη σημασία της εισαγωγής της εκπαίδευσης σε θέματα επιχειρηματικότητας σε πρώιμα στάδια, καθώς αυτό θα έχει σημαντικό αντίκτυπο στον αριθμό των νέων που εξετάζουν την ανάπτυξη επιχειρηματικής δραστηριότητας ως μια επιλογή σταδιοδρομίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005429/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs

Since 2009, the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs initiative has helped 3 200 new enterprises and young entrepreneurs to apply their business talents, while at the same time promoting innovation.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Does it have comparative statistics for the Member States on the take-up of this facility by young people? How does Greece rank?

Is it in a position to provide information on initiatives being taken to provide further support for the programme, given that the crisis has highlighted the need for such programmes to promote employment among young people and strengthen national economies?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

Greece ranks 6 in terms of total of entrepreneurs registered to the programme, with 152 New Entrepreneurs and 60 Host Entrepreneurs. It ranks 7 in terms of entrepreneurs having participated in an exchange with a total of 114 exchanges including a new Greek or host entrepreneurs.

New entrepreneurs are better represented for Greece as it ranks 4 in number of New Entrepreneurs registered and New Entrepreneurs having participated in a relationship, while it ranks 10 and 11 respectively for the Host Entrepreneurs.

Spain, Italy and United Kingdom are the top 3 countries in the ranking.

Currently there are 6 active local contact points in Greece.

The Commission acknowledges the importance of increasing entrepreneurship among young people and of strengthening their entrepreneurial capacities to promote employment and contribute to growth. To this end the Commission has included a progressive increase of the budget dedicated to the programe within the COSME proposal.

The Commission also stresses the importance of introducing entrepreneurship education at early stages, as this will have a significant impact in the number of young people considering entrepreneurship as a career option.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005430/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Μέτρα για το κόστος των τραπεζικών λογαριασμών

Σε πρόσφατη ανακοίνωσή της (8.5.2013), η Επιτροπή αναγνώρισε ότι, ενώ η νομοθεσία για την ενιαία αγορά έχει εξασφαλίσει ότι οι τράπεζες μπορούν να λειτουργούν σε όλη την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και να παρέχουν τις υπηρεσίες τους σε διασυνοριακό επίπεδο, η κινητικότητα αυτή δεν φθάνει μέχρι το επίπεδο των πολιτών, οι οποίοι συχνά δεν είναι σε θέση να ανοίξουν λογαριασμό σε άλλο κράτος μέλος ή να αλλάξουν εύκολα τράπεζα. Επιπλέον, οι καταναλωτές πληρώνουν συχνά υπέρ το δέον τις υπηρεσίες που τους προσφέρονται από την τράπεζά τους και πρέπει να καταβάλουν μεγάλη προσπάθεια για να έχουν σαφή εικόνα των διαφόρων εξόδων που καλούνται να καταβάλουν.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Διαθέτει συγκριτικά στοιχεία αναφορικά με τα κράτη μέλη των οποίων οι τράπεζες εμφανίζονται να επιβάλουν τις μεγαλύτερες χρεώσεις στις υπηρεσίες που προσφέρουν στους πελάτες τους; Ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

Με τη νέα δέσμη μέτρων που προτίθεται να προτείνει η Επιτροπή, έχει κοστολογήσει το όφελος που θα προκύψει για τους ευρωπαίους πολίτες; Ποιο το ύψος του;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Ιουνίου 2013)

Στις 8 Μαΐου 2013, η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε πρόταση οδηγίας σχετικά με τη συγκρισιμότητα των τελών που συνδέονται με λογαριασμούς πληρωμών, την αλλαγή λογαριασμού πληρωμών και την πρόσβαση σε λογαριασμούς πληρωμών με βασικά χαρακτηριστικά ([1]).

Η νομοθετική πρωτοβουλία βασίζεται σε στοιχεία που συγκέντρωσε η Επιτροπή στο πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας εκτίμησης επιπτώσεων, μεταξύ των οποίων και στοιχεία σχετικά με τις τιμές για τους λογαριασμούς πληρωμών στην Ένωση. Τα στοιχεία αυτά έχουν δημοσιοποιηθεί στην εκτίμηση επιπτώσεων και ένα μέρος τους συνοψίζεται επίσης στο ενημερωτικό δελτίο που δημοσιεύθηκε με τη νομοθετική πρόταση. Όσον αφορά την Ελλάδα, από τις πληροφορίες που έχουν συγκεντρώσει οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής προκύπτει ότι οι τιμές για τους λογαριασμούς οι οποίες προσφέρονται στη χώρα τείνουν να είναι χαμηλότερες από τον μέσο όρο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ([2]). Ωστόσο, οι τιμές για τις τραπεζικές υπηρεσίες είναι δυνατόν να μεταβληθούν σημαντικά σε σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα.

Ένας από τους βασικούς στόχους της πρότασης είναι να παρασχεθούν στους καταναλωτές τα απαιτούμενα μέσα για τη βελτιωμένη σύγκριση των υπηρεσιών που προσφέρουν οι πάροχοι υπηρεσιών πληρωμών στους λογαριασμούς πληρωμών και τα τέλη που χρεώνονται για αυτές. Με τον τρόπο αυτόν, οι καταναλωτές θα είναι σε θέση να αποφασίσουν ποια τράπεζα της ΕΕ προσφέρει τον καλύτερο λογαριασμό για τις ανάγκες τους στη χαμηλότερη τιμή και να ανοίξουν τον λογαριασμό τους σε τράπεζα που βρίσκεται σε άλλο κράτος μέλος της ΕΕ, αν το επιθυμούν.

Η πρόταση προβλέπει ότι το δελτίο πληροφόρησης για τα τέλη και το γλωσσάριο πρέπει να διατίθενται στους καταναλωτές δωρεάν και να είναι διαθέσιμα στις ιστοσελίδες τους ανά πάσα στιγμή, ώστε να παρέχονται στους καταναλωτές συγκρίσιμες πληροφορίες σχετικά με το κόστος και τα τέλη που καταβάλλουν ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/20130506-proposal_en.pdf
([2]) Βλ. πίνακα στο ενημερωτικό δελτίο http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/20130506-factsheet-3_en.pdf
([3]) Βλ. ιδίως την εκτίμηση κόστους-ωφέλειας στη σελίδα 175 της εκτίμησης επιπτώσεων της Επιτροπής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005430/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Measures concerning bank charges

The Commission acknowledged in a recent communication (dated 8 May 2013) that, while legislation on the single market ensures that banks can trade throughout the European Union and provide cross-border services, that mobility has not reached the public, who are often unable to open an account in another Member State or easily switch banks. Furthermore, consumers often pay overly high charges for services provided by banks and must put in tremendous effort in order to obtain a clear picture of the various charges which they are required to pay.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Does it have comparative information on the Member States whose banks appear to be imposing the highest charges for services provided to their customers? How does Greece rank?

Does the new package of measures which the Commission intends to propose cost their benefit to European citizens? What is that cost?

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

On 8 May 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on the comparability of fees related to payment accounts, payment account switching and access to payment accounts with basic features ([1]).

The legislative initiative is based on evidence gathered by the Commission during the impact assessment process, which includes data with respect to the prices of payment accounts in the Union. Such evidence is provided to the public in the Impact assessment and part of it was also summarised in the press information published with the legislative proposal. With respect to Greece, the information gathered by the Commission services indicates that the prices of the accounts offered in the country tend to be lower than the EU average ([2]). However, the prices for bank services may evolve considerably in a short span of time.

One of the key objectives of the proposal is to provide consumers with the necessary means to improve comparison of the services offered by payment service providers on payment accounts and the fees charged for them. This will allow consumers to decide which bank in the EU offers the best account for their needs at the lowest price and, if so they wish, purchase their account from a bank located in another EU Member State.

The proposal foresees that the fee information document and glossary have to be made available to consumers free of charge and made available on their websites at all times, with a view to contain the costs for consumers with respect to the provision of comparable information on the fees they pay ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/20130506-proposal_en.pdf
([2]) See table provided in the Fact Sheet at http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/20130506-factsheet-3_en.pdf
([3]) See in particular the assessment of cost and benefits contained in page 175 ff of the Commission's Impact Assessment.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005431/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Ρυθμός δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης στα κράτη μέλη

Σε πρόσφατη ομιλία του στις Βρυξέλλες, σε συνέδριο με θέμα το «Προσχέδιο για μια βαθύτερη Οικονομική και Νομισματική Ένωση», ο Επίτροπος Οικονομίας της ΕΕ, Όλι Ρεν, τόνισε πως ο βραδύτερος ρυθμός δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης στα κράτη μέλη είναι πλέον δυνατός, πρώτον, διότι έχει αυξηθεί η αξιοπιστία της δημοσιονομικής πολιτικής που εφαρμόζουν τα κράτη μέλη από το 2011, δεύτερον, επειδή οι αποφάσεις της ΕΚΤ σταθεροποιούν τις αγορές και τρίτον, χάρη στη μεταρρύθμιση της οικονομικής διακυβέρνησης της ΕΕ, η οποία παρέχει ένα αποτελεσματικό πλαίσιο για τη σταδιακή δημοσιονομική προσαρμογή και την πρόοδο των διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Θα καταθέσει η Επιτροπή το προσεχές διάστημα συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις αναφορικά με τους τομείς στους οποίους μπορεί να υπάρξει επιβράδυνση των ρυθμών αυτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Ιουλίου 2013)

Οι πλέον πρόσφατες προτάσεις της Επιτροπής όσον αφορά τους ξεχωριστούς για κάθε χώρα και διαφοροποιημένους ρυθμούς δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης περιλαμβάνονται στη δέσμη μέτρων του Ευρωπαϊκού Εξαμήνου που υποβλήθηκε στις 29 Μαΐου, η οποία περιλάμβανε συγκεκριμένα συστάσεις της Επιτροπής προς το Συμβούλιο με σκοπό την παράταση των προθεσμιών για τη διόρθωση του υπερβολικού ελλείμματος σε έξι χώρες: την Ισπανία, τη Γαλλία, τις Κάτω Χώρες, την Πολωνία, την Πορτογαλία και τη Σλοβενία ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_el.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005431/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Rate of fiscal consolidation in the Member States

During a recent speech in Brussels at a conference entitled 'Blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU', EU Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs Olli Rehn pointed out that a slower pace of consolidation in the Member States has been made possible by three factors: firstly, because the credibility of the fiscal policy achieved by the Member States since 2011 had increased; secondly, because the ECB had taken action to stabilise the markets and, thirdly, thanks to the reform of EU economic governance, which now provides an effective framework for gradual fiscal adjustment and the advancement of structural reforms.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Will the Commission table specific proposals in the near future on the sectors in which there may be a slower pace?

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

The most recent Commission proposals with regard to country-specific and differentiated pace of fiscal consolidation were presented in the European Semester package presented on the 29th of May, which notably included Commission Recommendations to the Council with a view to extend the deadlines for correcting the excessive deficit in six countries: Spain, France, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-005432/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(16 maj 2013)

Angående: Problem i direktiv 2001/29/EG

I sammanfattningen av förslaget till direktiv om förvaltning av kollektiva rättigheter uppger kommissionen att den håller på att kartlägga problem med ramen för undantag och begränsningar i direktiv 2001/29/EG (direktivet om informationssamhället).

Vad var det som fick kommissionen att inleda denna undersökning?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(7 augusti 2013)

Kommissionen har offentliggjort ett antal handlingar och samråd som rör förhållandet mellan exklusiva rättigheter enligt internationella fördrag och undantag från dessa rättigheter som är tillåtna enligt EU:s regelverk. Dessa dokument omfattar bl.a. en grönbok om upphovsrätten i kunskapsekonomin ([1]), ett meddelande om upphovsrätten i kunskapsekonomin ([2]), en grönbok om distribution av audiovisuella verk ([3]) och meddelandet ”En inre marknad för immateriella rättigheter” ([4]), där kommissionen pekade på en undersökning av huruvida de nuvarande undantagen och inskränkningarna i upphovsrätten som ges genom direktivet om upphovsrätt i informationssamhället (2001/29/EG) behöver uppdateras eller harmoniseras på EU-nivå.

Dessutom presenterade kommissionen i ett meddelande av den 18 december 2012 sin strategi för de kommande två åren för att säkerställa en effektiv digital inre marknad på det upphovsrättsliga området. Denna strategi omfattar två parallella åtgärdsspår. För det första kommer kommissionen att slutföra sin översyn och modernisering av EU:s upphovsrättsliga regelverk och bl.a. beakta undantag till och begränsningar av upphovsrätten i den digitala tidsåldern. För det andra har kommissionen inlett en strukturerad dialog med berörda parter för att tillhandahålla branschstyrda lösningar på en rad frågor.

Det är mot denna bakgrund som kommissionen undersöker de rådande undantagen och inskränkningarna som avses i frågan.

([1]) KOM(2008) 466, 16 juli 2008, s. 3.
([2]) KOM(2009) 532, 19 oktober 2009.
([3]) KOM(2011) 427, 13 juli 2011.
([4]) KOM(2011) 287, 24 maj 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005432/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Problems identified in Directive 2001/29/EC

In the executive summary of the proposal for a directive on collective rights management, the Commission states that it is working on identifying problems with the exceptions and limitations framework in Directive 2001/29/EC (the Information Society Directive).

What prompted the Commission to launch this investigation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The Commission has published a number of documents and consultations relating to the relationship between the exclusive rights granted by international treaty and exceptions to those rights which are permissible under the EU *acquis*. These documents include: a Green Paper on copyright in the knowledge economy ([1]); a communication on copyright in the knowledge economy ([2]); a Green Paper on the online distribution of audiovisual works ([3]) and a communication 'A Single Market for Intellectual Property Rights' ([4]) where the Commission pointed to an examination as to whether the current exceptions and limitations to copyright granted under the directive on Copyright in the Information Society (2001/29/EC) need to be updated or harmonised at EU level.

In addition, in its communication of 18 December 2012, 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, addressing i.a. exceptions and limitations to copyright in the digital age. On the other hand, the Commission has launched a structured stakeholder dialogue to deliver practical industry-led solutions to a number of issues.

It is against this background that the Commission is carrying out the studies on the current exceptions and limitations referred to in the question.

([1]) 16.7.2008, COM(2008) 466/3.
([2]) 19.10.2009, COM(2009) 532.
([3]) 13.7.2011, COM(2011) 427.
([4]) 24.5.2011, COM(2011) 287.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-005433/13
a Bizottság számára
Bánki Erik (PPE)
(2013. május 16.)

Tárgy: Az európai gyógyfürdők minőségi minimumkövetelményei

Noha a polgárok az Unióban a balneológiai szolgáltatások rendkívül széles és sokrétű kínálatából választhatnak, a gyógyfürdőkben igénybe vehető kezelések megbízható rangsorolásához máig nem létezik egységes minősítési rendszer. Az európai polgárok ezért nem tudnak tájékozott döntést hozni arról, hogy hol és milyen áron vásároljanak meg egy-egy balneológiai szolgáltatást. Ráadásul az egységes minőségi kritériumok hiánya ezáltal a határon átnyúló betegjogokról szóló irányelv nyújtotta előnyök kihasználásának is akadálya lehet, amely irányelv tagállami átültetésének határideje 2013. október 25-én jár le.

Mindezekre tekintettel mit tervez a Bizottság annak érdekében, hogy tájékozott fogyasztói döntések születhessenek a balneológiai szolgáltatások uniós piacán?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. június 24.)

A 2011/24/EU irányelv ([1]) – amelyet a tagállamoknak 2013. október 25-ig kell átültetniük – kimondja, hogy az egyes tagállamok feladata a területükön nyújtott ellátásra vonatkozó minőségi és biztonsági előírások megállapítása. Az irányelv több olyan kötelezettséget is tartalmaz, amely segíteni hívatott a betegeknek abban, hogy az általuk igénybe vett egészségügyi szolgáltatásokról megalapozottabb döntést tudjanak hozni.

Minden egyes tagállam létre fog hozni legalább egy nemzeti kapcsolattartó pontot, amely tájékoztatást fog nyújtani az érintett tagállamban alkalmazandó minőségi és biztonsági rendszerekről és előírásokról, valamint az előírások hatálya alá tartozó egészségügyi szolgáltatókról. Annak elősegítése érdekében, hogy a betegek megalapozott döntést hozhassanak, az egészségügyi szolgáltatóknak megfelelő tájékoztatatást kell nyújtaniuk többek között a kezelési lehetőségekről, valamint az általuk nyújtott egészségügyi szolgáltatások minőségéről és biztonságáról. A szolgáltatóknak ezenkívül világos számlákat kell biztosítaniuk és világos információkat kell nyújtaniuk az árakról.

Ami a képviselő úr konkrét kérdését illeti, fontos megjegyezni, hogy az irányelv 3. cikkének a) pontjában szereplő fogalommeghatározás szerint az „egészségügyi ellátás” olyan egészségügyi szolgáltatás, amelyet egészségügyi szakemberek nyújtanak. A 3. cikk f) pontja pedig az „egészségügyi szakembert” többek között az ellátás helye szerinti tagállam jogszabályai szerint egészségügyi szakembernek minősülő személyként határozza meg. Ezért az, hogy az irányelv milyen mértékben alkalmazandó a balneológiai szolgáltatásokra, attól függ, hogy a szóban forgó szolgáltatás egészségügyi szolgáltatás-e, valamint azt az érintett tagállam jogszabályai szerinti egészségügyi szakember nyújtja-e.

Hasonlóképpen, a 883/2004/EK rendelet ([2]) 1. cikke értelmében a betegségi természetbeni ellátások a valamely tagállam jogszabályai alapján előírt természetbeni ellátások. Ez utóbbi uniós jogszabály azonban csak az állami finanszírozású szolgáltatókra vonatkozik.

([1]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2011. március 9-i 2011/24/EU irányelve a határon átnyúló egészségügyi ellátásra vonatkozó betegjogok érvényesítéséről

([2]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2004. április 29-i 883/2004/EK rendelete a szociális biztonsági rendszerek koordinálásáról (HL L 166., 2004.4.30., 1. o.)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005433/13
to the Commission
Erik Bánki (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: European minimum requirements for spas

Although citizens in the Union have an extraordinarily wide and diverse range of balneological services from which to choose, there is still no uniform certification system making it possible to rank reliably the treatments which may be undergone at spas. European citizens therefore cannot take informed decisions as to where and at what price to purchase a given balneological service. Moreover, as a result the lack of uniform quality criteria may also present an obstacle to enjoyment of the benefits afforded by the directive on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, whose deadline for transposition is 25 October 2013.

In view of all this, what will the Commission do to make it possible to take informed consumer decisions on the market for balneological services in the Union?

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

Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]), which is due to be transposed by 25 October 2013, confirms that it is for each Member State to set quality and safety standards for treatment provided on its territory. The directive contains a number of obligations which are intended to help patients make more informed choices about the health services they use.

Each Member State will set up at least one National Contact Point to provide information on the quality and safety systems and standards it uses, and which providers are subject to those standards. Healthcare providers will be obliged to provide relevant information to help patients to make an informed choice, including on treatment options and on the quality and safety of the healthcare they provide. They are also obliged to provide clear invoices and clear information on prices.

With regard to the specific question asked by the Honourable Member, it is important to note that Article 3(a) of the directive defines 'healthcare' as 'health services provided by health professionals', and Article 3(f) defines 'health professionals' as, *inter alia*, 'a person considered to be a health professional according to the legislation of the Member State of treatment'. Therefore, the extent to which the provisions of the directive apply to balneological services depends upon whether it is a health service and whether it is provided by health professionals considered as such according to the legislation of a given Member State.

Similarly, under Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 ([2]) sickness benefits in kind are those which are provided under the national legislation. The latter EU legislation however applies only to the state funded providers.

([1]) Directive 2011/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems (OJ L 166 of 30 April 2004).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005434/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Comparsa di virus simili a quello della SARS in Europa

Ai primi di maggio 2013 un certo numero di agenzie di stampa ha riferito che un virus simile a quello della SARS o coronavirus, comparso per la prima volta negli Stati del Golfo Persico, segnatamente l'Arabia Saudita e gli Emirati Arabi Uniti, è ora ricomparso in Francia. Un 65enne rientrato di recente da Dubai è stato il primo caso confermato in Francia. Altri casi si sono verificati anche nel Regno Unito e in Germania. Esperti dell'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità si sono recati in Arabia Saudita per indagare sul virus.

Ci sono stati almeno 30 casi confermati del virus, e almeno 18 persone sono morte. Può causare insufficienza renale e polmonite. Stando ai rapporti, il virus non si è diffuso con la stessa facilità con cui si era manifestato nel 2003, quando quasi 800 persone sono morte di SARS (sindrome respiratoria acuta grave) in tutto il mondo.

1. Alla luce della comparsa di casi di virus simili alla SARS in Europa, quali passi stanno compiendo la Commissione e il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (CEPCM) per monitorare la diffusione del virus? Lavorano con l'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità per valutarne la natura?

2. Quali misure precauzionali raccomanderebbero la Commissione e il CEPCM a cittadini europei che prevedano di recarsi in regioni colpite dal virus?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(5 luglio 2013)

La Commissione segue gli sviluppi della situazione per quanto concerne il virus della sindrome respiratoria mediorientale (MERS-CoV), sin dalla notifica del primo caso nel settembre 2012, a stretto contatto con gli Stati membri, con il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie e con l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità.

La principale misura adottata sinora consiste nel rafforzare la sorveglianza per identificare, trattare e isolare celermente i casi di MERS-CoV importati dalle zone colpite, in particolare per ridurre al minimo il rischio di diffusione della malattia, anche in ambiente ospedaliero. I più recenti casi confermati di MERS-CoV nell'Unione sono stati notificati il 31 maggio dall'Italia (tre casi). Questi hanno portato a 11 il numero totale di casi confermati nell'Unione: due in Francia, due in Germania e quattro nel Regno Unito. Sin ora non vi sono prove di una trasmissione sostenuta da uomo a uomo. I casi notificati in Europa corroborano l'evidenza che il virus può essere trasmesso da una persona infetta a una persona sana. Ciò risulterebbe avvenire soltanto attraverso un contatto stretto.

In questa fase non si sono adottate misure cautelative al di là di quelle già concordate con gli Stati membri sulla base della valutazione della situazione preparata dall'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità e dal Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie ([1]). Inoltre, il Comitato per la sicurezza sanitaria ha discusso la problematica della MERS-CoV il 5 giugno e il 12 giugno e ha concordato azioni comuni relative all'informazione sanitaria destinata alle persone che si recano nei paesi a rischio e a consigli agli operatori sanitari a contatto con pazienti affetti da un'infezione confermata o possibile di MERS-CoV.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/risk-assessment-middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus-MERS-CoV-17-may-2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005434/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Appearance of SARS-like virus in Europe

In early May 2013 a number of news agencies reported that a SARS-like virus or coronavirus, which first appeared in Persian Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, had now emerged in France. A 65-year-old man who recently returned from Dubai has become the first confirmed case in France. Other cases have also occurred in the UK and Germany. Experts from the World Health Organisation are visiting Saudi Arabia to investigate the virus.

There have been at least 30 confirmed cases of the virus, and at least 18 people have died. It can cause kidney failure and pneumonia. Reports suggest that the virus has not spread as easily as was the case in 2003, when almost 800 people died from SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) around the world.

1. In light of the emergence of SARS-like cases in Europe, what steps are the Commission and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDPC) taking to monitor the spread of the virus? Are they working with the World Health Organisation to assess its nature?

2. What precautionary measures would the Commission and the ECDPC recommend for any European who plans to travel to regions affected by this virus?

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

The Commission monitors the development of the situation related to the Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) since the notification of the first case in September 2012, in close contact with the Member States, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the World Health Organisation.

The main step undertaken so far is to strengthen surveillance in order to quickly identify, treat and isolate cases of MERS-CoV imported from the affected areas, in particular to minimise the risk of the spread of the disease, including in the hospital setting. The most recent MERS-CoV confirmed cases in the Union were notified on 31 May by Italy (three cases). These brought the total number of confirmed cases in the Union to 11: two in France, two in Germany and four in United Kingdom. So far there is no evidence that sustained human-to-human transmission is taking place. The cases notified in Europe support the evidence that the virus can be transmitted from an infected person to a healthy person. However, this appears to occur only through close contact.

At this stage no precautionary measures have been taken in addition to the ones already agreed with the Member States on the basis of the assessments of the situation prepared by the World Health Organisation and by the European Centre for disease Prevention and Control ([1]). In addition, the Health Security Committee discussed MERS-CoV on 5 June and on 12 June and agreed upon common statements covering health information for persons travelling in countries at risk and advice to healthcare workers caring for patients with confirmed or possible MERS-CoV infection.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/risk-assessment-middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus-MERS-CoV-17-may-2013.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005435/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR— Forze UNIFIL e scontri con Hezbollah

L'1 maggio 2013, il giornale libanese Daily Star ha riferito che una riduzione del numero delle truppe libanesi nel sud del paese, al confine con Israele stava creando difficoltà insuperabili tra forze UNIFIL (Forza interinale delle Nazioni in Libano), e appartenenti al gruppo militante sciita Hezbollah. Molte delle truppe di UNIFIL provengono da Stati membri dell'Unione europea. Il giornale osserva che alcuni ufficiali dell'UNIFIL avevano espresso frustrazione per scontri umilianti con gli aderenti a Hezbollah. Alle Forze di pace non è stata data altra scelta che cedere.

La Risoluzione 1701 del Consiglio di Sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite chiede all'esercito libanese di prendere il controllo del distretto di confine meridionale, con l'UNIFIL a svolgere un ruolo di supporto. Ma, come ha osservato un ufficiale militare UNIFIL: «L'esercito libanese in questo momento non vi è neanche lontanamente arrivato. In realtà, ne sono ancora più lontani di prima».

Il problema è semplicemente che i soldati libanesi sono dispiegati in tutto il paese da Tripoli, a Sidone e al nord. Ce ne sono solo tremila nel distretto del confine meridionale, e solo il dieci per cento dei pattugliamenti è effettuato da soldati sia dell'UNIFIL che libanesi. I libanesi agiscono da interlocutori, ma senza di loro le truppe ONU sono più vulnerabili a vessazioni e agli attacchi di Hezbollah. Ci sono stati casi di soldati belgi e italiani umiliati da membri di Hezbollah nel sud del paese, e si teme che il gruppo possa attivare qualcuna delle proprie installazioni utilizzate durante il conflitto del 2006. Anche ora, nonostante il conflitto nella vicina Siria, la maggior parte delle attrezzature di combattimento di Hezbollah sono a sud e dirette contro Israele.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto alla maggiore vulnerabilità delle truppe UNIFIL ad attacchi e vessazioni da parte di appartenenti a Hezbollah?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta a esaminare il fatto che designare il gruppo come entità terrorista potrebbe aiutare a ridurre la sua forza operativa e consentire ai militari del Libano di mantenere una presenza più forte nel sud?

3. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'UE a Beirut in merito alle azioni intraprese da Hezbollah nel sud del Libano?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(15 luglio 2013)

L'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente sostiene appieno l'UNIFIL che svolge un ruolo essenziale per la stabilità del paese, un ruolo che è estremamente apprezzato e rispettato dalle autorità libanesi. In tale contesto, le informazioni sulla presunta vulnerabilità del personale dell'UNIFIL suscitano preoccupazione.

Quanto alla possibilità di inserire l'Hezbollah nell'elenco unionale delle organizzazioni terroristiche, questa è una decisione che compete agli Stati membri dell'UE. Tutte le modifiche dell'elenco unionale delle persone, dei gruppi e degli enti coinvolti in attività terroristiche richiedono una decisione unanime.

La delegazione dell'UE a Beirut segue la situazione generale del paese in materia di sicurezza e riferisce nel merito. Dalla sua valutazione emerge che la situazione della sicurezza è estremamente fragile e che in tutto il paese, compresi i quartieri meridionali di Beirut, Tripoli, Hermel, Baalbeck e lungo la frontiera, si verificano incidenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005435/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Unifil forces and confrontations with Hezbollah

On 1 May 2013, Lebanon's Daily Star newspaper reported that a reduction in Lebanese troop numbers in the south of the country on the border with Israel was creating deadlocks between Unifil (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) forces and members of the Shia militant group Hezbollah. Many of Unifil's troops come from EU Member States. The newspaper noted that some Unifil officers had expressed frustration at humiliating confrontations with Hezbollah personnel. Peacekeepers were given no choice but to back down.

UN Security Council Resolution 1701 calls on the Lebanese Army to take control of the southern border district, with Unifil playing a support role. But, as a Unifil military officer noted: 'The Lebanese Army is nowhere near that right now. In fact, they are further away from that than before'.

The problem is simply that the Lebanese troops are stretched across the country in Tripoli, Sidon and the north. There are only three thousand in the southern border district, and only ten per cent of patrols are conducted with both Unifil and Lebanese troops. The Lebanese act as interlocutors, but without them UN troops are more vulnerable to harassment and attacks by Hezbollah. There have been cases of Belgian and Italian troops humiliated by Hezbollah members in the south of the country, and there are fears that the group might activate some of their facilities used during the 2006 conflict. Even given the conflict in neighbouring Syria, the majority of Hezbollah's fighting equipment is in the south and directed against Israel.

1. What is the view of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the increased vulnerability of Unifil troops to attacks and harassment from Hezbollah members?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to consider that designating the group as a terrorist entity might help curtail its operational strength and allow Lebanon's military to maintain a stronger presence in the south?

3. What is the assessment of EU officials in Beirut regarding the actions taken by Hezbollah in the south of Lebanon?

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

The HR/VP is fully supporting Unifil which plays an essential role for the stability of the country — a role which is very much acknowledged and respected by the Lebanese authorities. In this context, reports about alleged vulnerability of Unifil personnel are a source of concern.

As to the possibility on designating Hezbollah under the EU autonomous terrorist list, this is a decision for EU Member States. All amendments to the EU list of persons, groups and entities involved in terrorist acts require a unanimous decision.

The EU Delegation in Beirut is monitoring and reporting on the overall security situation of the country. Its assessment is that the security situation is very fragile with incidents occurring all over the country including the southern suburbs of Beirut, Tripoli, in Hermel, Baalbeck and along the border.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005436/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — La mappa UNRWA cancella lo Stato di Israele

L'organizzazione *Palestinian Media Watch* riferisce che in occasione della cerimonia ufficiale per l'avvio di vari progetti dell'UNRWA (*United Nations Relief and Works Agency*) finanziati dai tedeschi, svoltasi il 2 maggio 2013, rappresentanti dell'UNRWA in Libano, fra cui la direttrice, hanno posato con una mappa che, invece di mostrare Israele, usava la denominazione «Palestina araba» e «Palestina» per indicare i territori della Cisgiordania e di Israele.

Secondo l'UNRWA, all'evento partecipavano anche un certo numero di alti funzionari libanesi e palestinesi nonché il responsabile per la Cooperazione Economica e lo Sviluppo presso l'Ambasciata tedesca in Libano.

1. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è a conoscenza del fatto che l'UNRWA cita lo Stato di Israele come «Palestina»?

2. Quali passi intende compiere la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per far sì che agenzie delle Nazioni Unite come l'UNRWA non diffondano informazioni fuorvianti su Israele?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(12 agosto 2013)

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza dell'incidente cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato.

L'UNRWA ha respinto categoricamente le accuse dei media secondo le quali l'Agenzia starebbe «cancellando Israele dalla carta geografica» perché i suoi funzionari e le parti interessate hanno posato a fianco di una carta su cui non figurava Israele. Si tratta in realtà di un ricamo che raffigura la Palestina storica pre-1948, cioè prima della creazione dello Stato di Israele. Le denunce sono quindi infondate.

L'organizzazione che ha riferito il fatto aveva già formulato in passato accuse analoghe circa la neutralità dell'UNRWA, ma si era vista costretta a ritirarle dopo che l'Agenzia ne aveva dimostrato l'infondatezza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005436/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — UNRWA map removes the State of Israel

The organisation Palestinian Media Watch reported that during an official event for various German-funded UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) projects which was held on 2 May 2013, representatives including the director of UNRWA affairs in Lebanon posed with a map which, instead of showing Israel, called both the West Bank and Israeli territories 'Arab Palestine' and 'Palestine'.

According to UNRWA, the event also featured a number of high-ranking Lebanese and Palestinian officials, as well as the head of Economic Cooperation and Development at the German Embassy in Lebanon.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of UNRWA promoting the State of Israel as 'Palestine'?

2. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative going to take in order to stop UN agencies such as UNRWA disseminating misleading information about Israel?

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

The EU is aware of the incident referred to by the Honourable Member.

UNRWA categorically rejected accusations in the media that the agency is 'erasing Israel from the map' because its officials and stakeholders stood next to a map which does not show Israel. The map in question was an embroidery depicting a pre-1948 map of historic Palestine and therefore ante-dates the creation of the state of Israel. The allegations are therefore false.

The organisation that originated the accusation has made similar allegations in the past about UNRWA's neutrality and was forced to retract after the agency also showed them to be false.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005437/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Presunto coinvolgimento di Hezbollah nel traffico di stupefacenti e riciclaggio di denaro sporco.

Nell'aprile 2013, il Wall Street Journal ha riportato che il governo degli Stati Uniti ha accusato il gruppo militante sciita Hezbollah di agire come cartello internazionale di droga. Le autorità statunitensi hanno agito per prevenire i trasferimenti di denaro al gruppo attraverso gli Stati Uniti. Si dichiara che il denaro della droga sia utilizzato per finanziare le attività terroristiche di Hezbollah, e il governo degli Stati Uniti ritiene che il gruppo si sia rivolto a questo commercio illegale per compensare la perdita di finanziamenti dall'Iran. Nel 2011 investigatori americani, che agivano a titolo della sezione 311 del Patriot Act degli Stati Uniti hanno consentito di identificare le società estere che possono riciclare il denaro e sostenere il terrorismo, hanno individuato la Banca Libano — Canadese. Secondo gli inquirenti, la banca ha agito da facilitatore per un sistema di traffico di droga originato nell'Africa occidentale e in America Latina.

Secondo un agente speciale della US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), «Hezbollah opera come grande cartello della droga». A seguito di indagini di vari rami del governo degli Stati Uniti, due Agenzie di cambio libanesi sono state iscritte nella lista nera per trasferimento di denaro per conto di Hezbollah: la Kassem Rmeiti & Co. For Exchange, e la Halawi Exchange Co. Il Tesoro USA ha definito entrambe le agenzie di cambio come «primarie aziende di riciclaggio di denaro sporco». In risposta, il governatore della Banca Centrale del Libano ha detto che si stanno prendendo le misure per vagliare le attività di entrambe le Agenzie di cambio.

1. Seguendo l'esempio degli Stati Uniti, l'Unione europea ha preso, o intende prendere, misure analoghe a quelle del Tesoro degli Stati Uniti per identificare le Agenzie di cambio e le banche che trasferiscono denaro riciclato per conto di Hezbollah?

2. Alla luce del ruolo ridotto dell'Iran nello sponsorizzare Hezbollah, quali passi è pronta a effettuare l'Unione europea, per aumentare il controllo delle attività di affari in Europa, sospettate di avere legami con Hezbollah?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2013)

L'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente non è in grado di esprimere un parere sulla possibilità di prendere a livello d'Unione provvedimenti simili a quelli presi dal Tesoro statunitense per individuare le agenzie di cambio e le banche che movimentano denaro riciclato per conto di Hezbollah.

Quanto alla possibilità di iscrivere Hezbollah nell'elenco UE dei terroristi, spetta al Consiglio decidere in materia. Qualsiasi modifica dell'elenco UE delle persone, dei gruppi e delle entità coinvolte in atti terroristici richiede una decisione unanime.

A livello di Unione inoltre la direttiva antiriciclaggio 2005/60/CE stabilisce le norme che consentono alle istituzioni finanziarie e ad altre persone o organismi interessati di prendere provvedimenti per evitare che tali enti siano sfruttati a fini di riciclaggio e di finanziamento del terrorismo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005437/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — alleged Hezbollah involvement in narcotics money laundering

In April 2013 the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the US Government has accused the militant Shia group Hezbollah of acting as an international drug cartel. US authorities have made efforts to prevent money transfers to the group through the United States. Drug money is allegedly being used to fund Hezbollah's terrorist activities, and the US Government believes the group has turned to this illicit trade in order to compensate for the loss of funding from Iran. In 2011 US investigators, acting under Section 311 of the US Patriot Act that allows for identifying foreign companies that may be laundering money and supporting terrorism, singled out the Lebanese Canadian Bank. According to the investigators, the bank was acting as a facilitator for a drug-trafficking scheme originating in West Africa and Latin America.

According to a special agent with the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), 'Hezbollah is operating like a major drug cartel'. As a result of investigations by various branches of the US Government, two Lebanese money exchange firms have been black-listed for moving money on behalf of Hezbollah: Kassem Rmeiti & Co. For Exchange, and the Halawi Exchange Co. The US Treasury has named both exchange houses as 'primary money laundering concerns'. In response, the Governor of Lebanon's Central Bank has said that measures are being taken to scrutinise the businesses of both exchange houses.

1. Following the US example, has the EU taken, or is it considering taking, any measures similar to those of the US Treasury to identify exchange houses and banks moving laundered money on behalf of Hezbollah?

2. In light of the reduced role of Iran in sponsoring Hezbollah, what steps is the EU prepared to take to increase scrutiny of business operations in Europe suspected of having links to Hezbollah?

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

The HR/VP is not in a position to comment on the possibility to take measures at EU level similar to those adopted by the US Treasury to identify exchange house and banks moving laundered money on behalf of Hezbollah.

As to the possibility on designating Hezbollah under the EU autonomous terrorist list, this is a decision for the Council. All amendments to the EU list of persons, groups and entities involved in terrorist acts require a unanimous decision.

Furthermore, at the EU level the Anti-money laundering Directive 2005/60/EC sets the rules allowing financial institutions and other concerned entities and persons to take measures to avoid being used for money laundering and terrorist financing purposes.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005438/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Grado di coinvolgimento dell'UE nei colloqui di pace proposti per la Siria

Il 7 maggio 2013 varie fonti di informazione hanno riferito che la Russia e gli Stati Uniti avevano convenuto di organizzare una conferenza, verso la fine del mese, sulla soluzione del conflitto in Siria. Ci si attende che sia l'opposizione sia i membri del regime di Assad si riuniscano per elaborare una tabella di marcia per una transizione politica, e che i colloqui di pace facciano rivivere il Comunicato di Ginevra delle Nazioni Unite, in cui si delinea un piano di transizione che vedrebbe una amministrazione in Siria composta da membri del governo attuale e da membri dell'opposizione.

Il ministro degli esteri russo Sergei Lavrov ha detto che la Russia e gli Stati Uniti si sono impegnati per un accordo che garantisca la «sovranità e l'integrità territoriale» della Siria e aderisca al Comunicato di Ginevra.

I russi hanno adeguato la loro politica nei confronti della Siria per timore di crescenti attività dei militanti di al-Qaeda e di Hezbollah, che potrebbero diffondersi al resto del Medio Oriente e, potenzialmente, alle loro stesse repubbliche del Caucaso settentrionale. Il *Los Angeles Times* ha riferito che il Segretario di Stato degli Stati Uniti, John Kerry, aveva dichiarato che le potenze mondiali devono usare tutta la forza disponibile per porre fine alla crisi. «L'alternativa è lasciare che la Siria vada diritta verso il baratro o addirittura precipiti nel baratro e nel caos».

1. Quale ruolo dovrebbe svolgere l'Unione europea nei colloqui di pace proposti per la Siria, in programma a fine maggio?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ha in programma di incontrare il Segretario di Stato americano e il ministro degli esteri russo nei prossimi giorni o nelle prossime settimane, per discutere ulteriormente il piano di transizione per la Siria?

3. Il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna o gli Stati membri stanno attualmente lavorando a qualche titolo con i membri del regime di Assad e dell'opposizione per convincerli a partecipare ai negoziati?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2013)

L'UE accoglie con favore la proposta congiunta degli USA e della Russia di organizzare una conferenza di pace sulla Siria per promuovere un processo politico fondato sui principi inclusi nel comunicato di Ginevra del 30 giugno 2012. L'UE è pronta a compiere qualsiasi sforzo per aiutare a creare le condizioni necessarie per garantire il successo della conferenza. Ha invitato le due parti del conflitto a rispondere positivamente a questo invito e a impegnarsi apertamente in autentici negoziati, guidati dai siriani, per conseguire una soluzione democratica e pacifica sulla base del comunicato di Ginevra del 30 giugno 2012, che prevede anche l'istituzione, fondata sul consenso reciproco, di un organo di governo transitorio con poteri esecutivi.

L'UE continua a collaborare con tutte le parti interessate, in particolare l'ONU, la Lega degli Stati arabi, il rappresentante speciale congiunto Lakhdar Brahimi e tutti coloro che si impegnano sinceramente per il successo di questa iniziativa.

La situazione in Siria è stata affrontata al vertice UE-Russia, tenutosi il 3 giugno a Ekaterinburg. L'UE resta in contatto con gli esponenti dell'opposizione e ne incoraggia la partecipazione al processo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005438/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Degree of EU involvement in the proposed Syria Peace Talks

On 7 May 2013, various news sources reported that Russia and the United States had agreed to organise a conference towards the end of that month on resolving the conflict in Syria. Both the opposition and members of the Assad regime are expected to come together to work out a road map for a political transition. The peace talks are expected to revive the UN Geneva Communiqué, which outlines a transition plan that would see an administration in Syria composed of members of the current government and members of the opposition.

Russia's foreign minister Sergei Lavrov said that both Russia and the US were committed to a deal that would guarantee the 'sovereignty and territorial integrity' of Syria and would adhere to the Geneva Communiqué.

The Russians have adjusted their policy towards Syria over fears of growing militancy by both al-Qaeda and Hezbollah, which could spread to the rest of the Middle East and potentially to their own North Caucasus republics. The Los Angeles Times reported that US Secretary of State John Kerry had said that the world powers must use all available force to bring the crisis to an end. 'The alternative is that Syria heads closer to the abyss, if not over the abyss, and into chaos.'

1. What role is the EU expected to play in the proposed peace talks for Syria scheduled at the end of May?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to meet the US Secretary of State and Russia's foreign minister in the coming days or weeks in order to further discuss Syria's transition plan?

3. Are the European External Action Service or the Member States currently working in some capacity with members of the Assad regime and the opposition to persuade them to enter into negotiations?

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

The EU has welcomed the joint US-Russian call for a peace conference on Syria to promote a political process based on the principles included in the Geneva communique of 30 June 2012. The EU is ready to spare no effort in helping to create the appropriate conditions for a successful convening of this conference. The EU has called on both sides of the conflict to respond positively to this call and to engage openly in a genuine Syrian-led process of negotiations, aiming at a democratic and peaceful political solution on the basis of the Geneva communique of 30 June 2012, which foresees *inter alia* the establishment, on the basis of mutual consent, of a transitional governing body, which would exercise full executive powers.

The EU continues to work with all interested parties, specifically with the UN, the League of Arab States, the Joint Special Representative Brahimi, and all those sincerely committed to the success of this initiative.

The situation in Syria was discussed at the EU-Russia summit in Yekaterinburg on 3 June. The EU remains in touch with the members of the opposition encouraging their participation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005439/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Possibile riallocazione dei fondi FESR-FSE nella Provincia di Rieti

Il territorio della Provincia di Rieti è stato negli ultimi anni particolarmente colpito da drammatiche situazioni di crisi che hanno investito la città di Rieti ed il suo nucleo industriale. Migliaia di posti di lavoro persi ed una completa desertificazione del tessuto produttivo hanno portato a un lento declino di tutta l'area. Al di là dei problemi derivanti dalle multinazionali che decidono di dismettere i propri siti per delocalizzare in altri Paesi, vi è il problema di una cattiva gestione dei fondi pubblici da parte dell'Amministrazione locale. In particolare, la nuova Amministrazione comunale ha tagliato in modo indiscriminato contratti a tempo determinato, borse lavoro e fondi ai servizi sociali, lasciando a casa di fatto 200 lavoratori, molti dei quali hanno più di 50 anni. Contemporaneamente, con il commissariamento della Provincia di Rieti, è prevista la chiusura delle società partecipate di cui l'Ente Provincia era socio unico e dunque la perdita di altri 200 posti di lavoro. Così facendo in pochi mesi vi saranno più di 400 disoccupati sul territorio di Rieti che non saranno ammessi ad alcun piano di reintegro o assistenza a causa dell'assenza di un piano strategico per l'occupazione da parte dell'Assessorato competente.

Tutto ciò premesso può la Commissione far sapere:

— se la Regione Lazio, vista la grave crisi del reatino, ha previsto un piano di riallocazione dei fondi FESR-FSE;

— se il Comune e la Provincia di Rieti hanno predisposto un piano strategico per l'occupazione;

— quali sono ad oggi i progetti approvati in materia di sostegno all'occupazione e lotta alla disoccupazione giovanile?

Risposta di a nome della Commissione
(5 luglio 2013)

Alla luce delle informazioni disponibili non esistono progetti di redistribuzione dei fondi FESR o FSE, in particolare per quanto riguarda la situazione esistente nella provincia di Rieti. Si è tuttavia riesaminato di recente il programma operativo (PO) della Regione Lazio FSE (27/05/2013) nell'intento di rendere più efficace la lotta alla disoccupazione in tutta la regione.

Secondo quanto risulta alla Commissione non si è definito alcun piano strategico per l'occupazione a livello né comunale né provinciale. Eventuali progetti locali non sono tuttavia di competenza della Commissione a meno che essi non siano direttamente finanziati da fondi UE. Si invita l'onorevole parlamentare a contattare direttamente le autorità comunali e provinciali della città di Rieti.

I rapporti annuali di esecuzione (RAE) del programma operativo FSE disponibili online ([1]) includono informazioni sui progetti attuati nella provincia di Rieti al fine di promuovere l'occupazione e combattere la disoccupazione giovanile. Le informazioni aggiornate saranno disponibili nel RAE 2012 una volta approvato dal Comitato di Sorveglianza PO nella riunione del 28 giugno 2013.

([1]) http://www.portalavoro.regione.lazio.it/portalavoro/fondo-sociale-europeo/rapporti-annuali-di-esecuzione.php

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005439/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Possible reallocation of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) funds in the province of Rieti

In recent years, the province of Rieti has been particularly hard hit by a series of severe crises affecting the city of Rieti and its industrial heartland. The loss of thousands of jobs and the total disappearance of manufacturing have led to a slow decline throughout the region. In addition to the problems caused by multinationals deciding to shut down sites and relocate to other countries, there is the problem of local authorities mismanaging public money. Of particular note, the new municipal authorities have indiscriminately cut fixed-term contracts, work bursaries and funds to social services, leaving some 200 workers, many of whom are over 50 years old, without jobs. At the same time, being as the province of Rieti has gone into administration, it is expected that its associated companies will close; as the provincial authority was the sole member that means another 200 jobs will be lost. Within a few months then, there will be over 400 people in Rieti without jobs; these people will not be entitled to any back-to-work scheme or support programme because the department in question does not have a strategic employment plan.

— Given the serious crisis in Rieti, can the Commission say whether the Region of Lazio has plans to reallocate ERDF-ESF funds?

— Have the Rieti municipal and provincial authorities drawn up a strategic employment plan?

— What projects have so far been approved to support employment and tackle youth unemployment?

Answer given by on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

On the basis of the information available, there are no plans to reallocate ESF or ERDF funds specifically in relation to the situation in the Province of Rieti. However, the Lazio ESF operational programme (OP) has been revised recently (27.5.2013) to address the employment crisis in the region as a whole better.

To the Commission's knowledge, no strategic employment plan has been drawn up at municipal or provincial level. However, unless local plans are funded by EU funds they do not fall within the Commission's competences. The Honourable Member is invited to contact the Rieti municipal and provincial authorities directly.

The Annual implementation reports (AIRs) for the ESF Operational Programme available online ([1]), include information on the projects implemented in the Rieti Province to support employment and tackle youth unemployment. Updated information will be available in the AIR for 2012, once it is approved by the OP Monitoring Committee at its meeting of 28 June 2013.

([1]) http://www.portalavoro.regione.lazio.it/portalavoro/fondo-sociale-europeo/rapporti-annuali-di-esecuzione.php

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005441/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Accident à Schellebelle: normes européennes de sécurité ferroviaire

Une personne a trouvé la mort et dix-sept ont été hospitalisées samedi près de Gand, en Belgique, après le déraillement et l'explosion de plusieurs wagons-citernes contenant un produit chimique liquide inflammable et très toxique car dégageant un gaz proche du cyanure.

Plusieurs parlementaires se sont demandés comment un tel événement avait pu se produire un an à peine après l'accident qui s'était produit à Godinne, impliquant lui aussi des wagons qui transportaient des matières dangereuses.

Des arrêtés ministériels ont été rédigés suite à cet événement, prévoyant des mesures de sécurité particulières (éloignement des wagons, place des wagons dans le convoi, etc.). Ils ont été soumis à la Commission européenne et à l'Organisation intergouvernementale pour les transports internationaux ferroviaires (OTIF) au mois de juillet.

1. Pourquoi la Commission n'a-t-elle pas répondu directement à l'État belge?

2. Quelle est la position de la Commission quant à l'instauration de règles particulières prévoyant, par exemple, l'éloignement des wagons ou encore la place des wagons dans le convoi?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle légiférer sur des règles plus strictes quant au fret de produits chimiques pour éviter que de telles tragédies ne se réitèrent en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(1er juillet 2013)

La Commission a répondu aux autorités belges par courriers du 8 octobre 2012 et du 4 décembre 2012.

En ce qui concerne l'accident survenu à Schellebelle, l'organisme belge chargé de l'enquête n'a pas encore livré ses conclusions mais il semblerait, selon les premières indications, que l'accident n'ait pas été dû au manque de règles appropriées mais plutôt au non-respect de règles existantes.

La Commission travaille en permanence avec les États membres et des organisations internationales pour renforcer la sécurité des transports de marchandises dangereuses.

Toute disposition relative aux distances de sécurité entre les différents wagons-citernes et d'autres wagons devrait être adoptée en tant que règle commune afin d'éviter des activités de triage supplémentaires inutiles aux frontières nationales, qui comportent un risque accru inhérent.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005441/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Accident in Schellebelle: European rail safety standards

One person was found dead and 17 were hospitalised on Saturday near Ghent in Belgium following the derailment and explosion of several tankers containing a flammable and highly toxic liquid chemical product because it was emitting gas near cyanide.

Several politicians have been asked how such an event could have happened barely one year after the accident in Godinne, which also involved tankers transporting dangerous materials.

Ministerial orders were drafted following this event, providing for specific safety measures (distance between tankers, position of tankers in the train, etc.). They were submitted to the Commission and to the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) in July.

1. Why has the Commission not responded directly to Belgium?

2. What is the Commission's position on the establishment of specific rules providing, for example, for the distance between tankers or the position of tankers in the train?

3. Does the Commission intend to legislate on stricter rules with regard to the freight of chemical products to prevent such tragedies from being repeated in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The Commission replied to the inquiry of the Belgian authorities by letters dated 8 October 2012 and 4 December 2012.

As regards the accident in Schellebelle, the Belgian Investigation Body have not yet concluded the accident investigation but there are early indications that the cause of the accident was not a lack of appropriate rules but a failure to comply with existing ones.

The Commission works continuously with the Member States and international organisations to improve safety in the transport of dangerous goods.

Any provisions on safety distances between different tank wagons and other wagons should be adopted as common rules to avoid unnecessary additional marshalling yard operations at national borders, which implies an increased risk itself.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005442/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Licence obligatoire sur les médicaments génériques

Depuis 2005, tous les médicaments innovants sont protégés, en Inde, par des brevets. Si, toutefois, le laboratoire pharmaceutique ne garantit pas l'accès de la population à un médicament à un prix raisonnable, une «licence obligatoire» peut être délivrée pour la commercialisation de sa version générique.

Le 4 mars 2013, le Conseil d'appel indien en propriété intellectuelle (IPAB) a ainsi maintenu l'autorisation de fabriquer, dans le pays, le générique d'un médicament anticancéreux mis au point par Bayer. En 2012, l'Inde avait eu recours pour la première fois à une «*licence obligatoire*» concernant ce médicament, le Sorafenib Tosylate, vendu par Bayer à 4 000 euros pour un traitement d'un mois. Un tarif rédhibitoire pour la quasi-totalité de la population indienne. Or, sa version générique ne coûte que 125 euros.

1. Comment se positionne la Commission à ce sujet?

2. Les accords négociés entre l'Union européenne et l'Inde prennent-ils en compte cette réalité?

3. Est-il vrai que, dans ce cadre, la Commission prône un allongement du droit de brevet?

4. Afin que chacun puisse profiter de soins selon ses moyens, la Commission pourrait-elle encourager le système de «licence obligatoire» indien? Dans la négative, pourquoi?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(2 août 2013)

Un certain équilibre entre une protection efficace de la propriété intellectuelle et la protection de la santé publique devrait être respecté et c'est sous cet angle que l'utilisation de licences obligatoires doit être examiné.

Les licences obligatoires ne sont pas la panacée (comme le reconnaît l'Organisation mondiale de la santé ([1])) — la situation, telle qu'elle est souvent présentée, est plus complexe. Si la Commission ne se prononce pas sur des cas individuels de licences obligatoires, elle constate avec inquiétude que les tendances observées récemment eu égard à l'utilisation de ces licences peuvent décourager l'innovation et entraîner finalement la réduction de l'accès, dans les pays en développement, à des médicaments efficaces. Elle craint également que de telles tendances puissent être induites par des mesures visant à protéger des intérêts industriels nationaux (notamment l'imposition de droits de douane sur des produits pharmaceutiques importés en dépit de leur mise à disposition finale aux patients à titre gracieux).

La Commission est consciente des problèmes sanitaires en Inde. C'est la raison pour laquelle l'UE a proposé qu'il soit stipulé dans l'accord de libre-échange UE-Inde qu'aucun élément susceptible de porter préjudice à la capacité de l'Inde de produire des médicaments abordables pour les personnes dans le besoin ne doit figurer dans ledit accord. La Commission est également parvenue à un accord politique avec l'Inde en 2010, selon lequel le chapitre relatif aux droits de la propriété intellectuelle dans l'accord de libre-échange prendrait seulement compte des législations des parties (sauf en ce qui concerne les indications géographiques) et, par conséquent, ne prolongerait pas la durée des brevets ou n'introduirait pas d'exclusivité des données en Inde.

La Commission est favorable à une approche globale de la question de l'accès aux médicaments, notamment à la participation des entreprises à des partenariats public-privé, à des dons de médicaments et à des programmes de subventions (par exemple, une grande entreprise pharmaceutique étrangère fournit gratuitement un médicament pour soigner le cancer à plus de 90 % des patients à qui ce médicament a été prescrit en Inde ([2])), ainsi qu'à des initiatives comme la tarification échelonnée.

([1]) Http://ictsd.org/i/news/bridgesweekly/159683/
([2]) Http://ictsd.org/i/news/bridgesweekly/159683/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005442/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Compulsory licence for generic drugs

Since 2005, all innovative drugs in India have been protected by patents. If, however, the pharmaceutical laboratory does not guarantee access for the population to a drug at a reasonable price, a 'compulsory licence' can be issued for its generic version to be marketed.

On 4 March 2013, the Indian Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB) therefore upheld the authorisation to manufacture in the country the generic version of an anti-cancer drug developed by Bayer. In 2012, India was able to use a 'compulsory licence' for the first time with regard to this drug, Sorafenib Tosylate, sold by Bayer at a price of EUR 4 000 for one month's treatment — a price that prohibits nearly all of the Indian population from buying it. However, the generic version only costs EUR 125.

1. What is the Commission's position on this subject?

2. Do the agreements between the European Union and India take this situation into account?

3. Is it true that, within this framework, the Commission advocates extending patent law?

4. So that everyone can benefit from healthcare within their means, could the Commission encourage the Indian 'compulsory licence' system? If not, please explain why.

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

There should be balance between efficient intellectual property (IP) protection and the protection of public health and the use of compulsory licensing must be considered from that perspective.

Compulsory licences are not a universal panacea (as the World Health Organisation recognises ([1])) — the situation is more complex than often shown. Whilst the Commission does not take a position on individual compulsory licences cases, it notes with concern recent trends in their use that may disincentivise innovation and ultimately lead to lower access in developing countries to effective medicines. It also has concern that such trends may be driven by policies to protect domestic industrial interests (including tariffs on imported pharmaceutical products despite their end provision free of charge to patients).

The Commission is aware of Indian health challenges. This why the EU has proposed that the EU-India Free Trade Agreement state that nothing therein should undermine India's ability to produce affordable medicines for people in need. The Commission also reached a political agreement with India in 2010 stating that the IP chapter in the FTA would merely reflect parties' legislations (except on Geographical Indications) and will, by consequence, not extend the duration of patents or introduce data exclusivity in India.

The Commission supports a comprehensive approach to the issue of access to medicines, including industry engagement in public-private partnerships, in drug donation and subsidisation programmes (e.g. one large foreign pharmaceutical company provides a cancer medicine free to over 90% of patients prescribed the drug in India ([2])), as well as initiatives such as tiered pricing.

([1]) http://ictsd.org/i/news/bridgesweekly/159683/
([2]) http://ictsd.org/i/news/bridgesweekly/159683/

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005443/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Taxation des panneaux solaires chinois

La Commission a proposé aux 27 États membres de taxer lourdement les importations de panneaux solaires chinois. La décision de taxer les panneaux chinois, à hauteur de 47 % environ, pourrait déclencher une guerre commerciale avec la Chine. De nombreux États s'en montrent préoccupés, en raison des conséquences pour d'autres secteurs industriels, notamment l'aéronautique. En 2011, la Chine a exporté en Europe pour 21 milliards d'euros de panneaux solaires.

Il faut saluer cette initiative de la Commission, mais, pour autant, quelques questions subsistent:

1. La Commission confirme-t-elle qu'en 2011, la Chine a exporté en Europe pour 21 milliards d'euros de panneaux solaires? Quid de 2012?

2. Quels seront les bénéfices obtenus si cette proposition aboutit?

3. La taxation permettra-t-elle de faire entrer les panneaux solaires chinois dans la même gamme de prix que ceux produits en Europe?

4. La Chine a déjà vivement critiqué cette proposition. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(8 juillet 2013)

En 2011, la Chine a exporté des panneaux solaires vers l'Union européenne pour un montant d'environ 21 milliards d'euros. Il a été établi que la valeur des importations avait nettement diminué pendant la période d'enquête, soit du 1er juillet 2011 au 30 juin 2012. La baisse de la consommation, combinée à l'effondrement des prix, a été à l'origine de ce phénomène. L'enquête n'a pas porté sur les chiffres de l'année 2012 complète.

Des mesures *anti-dumping* devraient rétablir une situation d'égalité dans l'Union, ce qui placerait le secteur industriel de celle-ci dans des conditions de concurrence équitable et lui permettrait de remonter ses prix à des niveaux durables et d'augmenter son volume de production.

Dans le cas qui nous occupe, les mesures sont établies en fonction du préjudice, ce qui devrait ainsi éliminer le préjudice subi par ledit secteur industriel. Il est difficile de prévoir avec précision les répercussions des droits sur le prix de revente dans le marché de l'Union, dans la mesure où il dépend de divers autres facteurs.

La Commission est en contact régulier avec les autorités chinoises et continue à examiner des possibilités d'accord à l'amiable. Elle examinera toute mesure que la Chine pourrait prendre à l'encontre des exportations de l'UE ou qui ne respecterait pas les règles de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC) et elle agira dans ce cadre, le cas échéant. Il est à noter que l'Union a récemment contesté avec succès auprès de l'OMC une mesure *anti-dumping* prise par la Chine concernant des scanners de fret en provenance des États membres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005443/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Tax on Chinese solar panels

The Commission has proposed that the 27 the Member States should heavily tax imports of Chinese solar panels. The decision to tax Chinese solar panels at a rate of approximately 47% could spark a trade war with China. Many countries are voicing their concern about this because of the consequences for other industrial sectors, including aeronautics. In 2011, China exported EUR 21 billion of solar panels to Europe.

This initiative from the Commission is to be welcomed, but questions remain nonetheless:

1. Can the Commission confirm that in 2011, China exported EUR 21 billion of solar panels to Europe? What were the figures for 2012?

2. What gains will be obtained if this proposal is approved?

3. Will the tax mean that Chinese solar panels will enter the market in the same price range as those produced in Europe?

4. China has already strongly criticised this proposal. What is the Commission's reaction?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

China exported around EUR 21 billion of solar panels to the EU in 2011. The investigation has established that the import value decreased significantly during the investigation period which ran from 1 July 2011 until 30 June 2012. This was due to the decrease in consumption combined with the collpase of prices. Figures for the full year 2012 were not part of the investigation.

Anti-dumping measures should restore the level playing field in the EU. This should allow the Union industry to compete under fair market conditions, to raise its prices to sustainable levels and increase its production volume.

In this case, measures are set at the injury level which should remove the injury suffered by the EU industry. It is difficult to predict the precise impact of the duties on the re-sales price in the Union market as this depends on various other factors.

The Commission is in regular contact with the Chinese authorities and is continuing to explore possibilities for finding an amicable solution. The Commission will scrutinize any action China may take against EU exports or inconsistent with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules and act if appropriate within this framework. It is noted that the European Union recently successfully challenged at WTO level an anti-dumping measure taken by China with regards to cargo scanners originating in the EU.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005445/13
aan de Commissie
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(16 mei 2013)

Betreft: Vrij verkeer van diensten — fraude en misbruiken — controlemiddelen — verplichtingen

In de bouwsector wordt gretig gebruik gemaakt van het vrij verkeer van diensten binnen de EU. Spijtig genoeg respecteren niet alle migrerende dienstverleners in deze sector de geldende verplichtingen in de lidstaat van ontvangst. Met andere woorden: er is duidelijk sprake van deloyale concurrentie en fraude. Het vrij verkeer van diensten moet natuurlijk gegarandeerd blijven, maar wanneer er sprake is van deloyale concurrentie — ongeacht de vorm (fraude, sociale dumping, misbruik van statuten, misbruik van Europees recht) — moet het toch mogelijk zijn om controle- en/of meldingssystemen in te voeren, opdat de inspectiediensten of de met controle belaste instellingen van de ontvangende lidstaten de misbruiken en fraudegevallen kunnen detecteren en bestrijden.

1. Kan de Commissie meedelen welke controlemiddelen of meldingssystemen opgezet en ontplooid kunnen worden door de ontvangende lidstaten, zonder dat dit beschouwd kan worden als een inbreuk op of een onverantwoorde belemmering van het vrij verkeer van diensten?

2. Welke verplichtingen mag een ontvangende lidstaat opleggen aan een dienstverlener (onderneming, werkgever of zelfstandige) om de fraudedetectie en -controle te bevorderen?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(2 juli 2013)

Voor een goede werking van de interne markt voor diensten is het nodig om met name sociale fraude te bestrijden. De Commissie beschikt niet over statistische gegevens om de omvang van deze fraude te beoordelen. Toch lijkt het erop dat er in bepaalde sectoren vaker misstanden voorkomen, zoals in de bouwsector.

In het Limosa-arrest van 19 december 2012 ([1]) heeft het Hof verklaard dat de lidstaten een verplichting tot voorafgaande melding kunnen opleggen aan dienstverrichters uit andere lidstaten, mits deze verplichting evenredig blijft. Het Hof heeft in het bijzonder verklaard dat een dergelijk systeem geen algemene strekking mag hebben, maar beperkt moet zijn tot de gevallen waarin reden is om te controleren of de dienstverrichter zijn fiscale en sociale verplichtingen is nagekomen, dat het beperkt moet worden tot de noodzakelijke informatie en dat de melding niet noodzakelijk een voorafgaand karakter hoeft te hebben.

Met betrekking tot werknemers die tijdelijk zijn gedetacheerd met het oog op het verrichten van diensten heeft de Commissie een voorstel voor een richtlijn betreffende de handhaving van Richtlijn 96/71/EG ([2]) gedaan, waarin wordt beschreven welke inspectie- en controlemaatregelen de lidstaten kunnen toepassen.

([1]) Zaak C-577/10.
([2]) PB L 18 van 21.1.1997, blz. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005445/13
to the Commission
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Free movement of services — fraud and abuse — control instruments — obligations

Full advantage is being taken in the construction sector of the freed movement of services within the EU. Sadly, not all migrant service providers in this sector respect the obligations applicable in the host Member State. In other words, it is plain to see that there is unfair competition and fraud. Naturally, the free movement of services should be guaranteed, but where there is unfair competition — regardless of the form (fraud, social dumping, abuse of statutes, abuse of European law) — surely it must be possible to implement control and/or reporting systems so that the host Member States' inspection services and supervisory institutions can detect and combat such cases of abuse and fraud.

1. Can the Commission indicate what control instruments or reporting systems can be set up and rolled out by the host Member States without it potentially being seen as an infringement of or an unjustified obstacle to the free movement of services?

2. What obligations can a host Member State impose on a service provider (a company, an employer or a self-employed person) to help detect and combat fraud?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(2 juillet 2013)

Le bon fonctionnement du marché intérieur des services exige de lutter contre la fraude notamment dans le domaine social. La Commission ne dispose pas de données statistiques permettant d'en évaluer l'ampleur. Il semblerait cependant que les abus soient plus fréquents dans certains secteurs dont celui de la construction.

Dans l'arrêt Limosa du 19 décembre 2012 ([1]), la Cour a indiqué que les États membres pouvaient imposer une obligation de déclaration préalable aux prestataires de services des autres États membres à condition que cette obligation reste proportionnée. En particulier, la Cour a indiqué qu'un tel système ne pouvait pas avoir une portée générale mais devait être limité aux hypothèses où dans lesquelles il y aurait lieu de vérifier que le prestataire a respecté ses obligations fiscales et sociales, aux informations nécessaires et ne pas impérativement avoir un caractère préalable.

En ce qui concerne les salariés détachés dans le cadre d'une prestation de services, la Commission a fait une proposition de directive relative à l'exécution de la directive 96/71/CE ([2]) qui indique les mesures de contrôle et les inspections qui peuvent être appliquées par les États membres.

([1]) Affaire C-577/10.
([2]) JO L 18, 21.01.1997, p. 0001-0006.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005446/13
aan de Commissie
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(16 mei 2013)

Betreft: Afleveren van detacheringsformulieren A1

Het detacheringsformulier A1 stelt de gedetacheerde in staat aan te tonen — in de lidstaat van ontvangst — dat hij reeds onderworpen is aan de sociale zekerheid van een andere EU-lidstaat. Een A1-formulierkan echter op elk moment worden afgegeven en zelfs voor een periode die reeds voorbij is. Hierdoor kunnen dienstverleners met minder goede bedoelingen zich zelfs op frauduleuze wijze onttrekken aan elke controle, en uiteindelijk nergens de nodige sociale bijdrage betalen. Dit zorgt voor deloyale concurrentie, waarbij het vrij verkeer van diensten gepercipieerd wordt als nefast voor de „eigen" bedrijven van een lidstaat in plaats van als een voordeel of zelfs een opportuniteit. Vooral in de bouwsector zorgt dit voor zware problemen.

1. Zou de Commissie daarom niet overwegen om de afgifte van het A1-formulier altijd en voorafgaand aan de detachering verplicht te stellen, zowel in het geval van werknemers als in het geval van zelfstandigen, eventueel beperkt tot de dienstverleners werkzaam in de bouwsector? De bonafide bedrijven zullen hiervan het minst last ondervinden, want zij zorgen er al voor dat ze het A1-formulier tijdig aanvragen.

2. Om zowel de afgifte van het A1-formulier alsook de controle op de afgifte ervan te vergemakkelijken, stellen wij ons de vraag of het gebruik van een Europese databank niet bevorderlijk kan zijn voor zowel de gedetacheerden (werknemers en zelfstandigen) als voor de inspectiediensten of de met controle belaste instellingen. Met betrekking tot de btw bestaat er reeds een dergelijke databank, namelijk de VIES-databank (VAT Information Exchange System). Hoe staat de Commissie ertegenover om een soortgelijke databank op te richten waarin de detacheringen vermeld worden en geconsulteerd kunnen worden?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(8 juli 2013)

Op basis van artikel 15 van Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 ([1]) dient het bevoegde orgaan waarvan de wetgeving van toepassing is overeenkomstig titel II van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 een meeneembaar document (Portable Document, PD) A1 te verstrekken aan de betrokkene en ook aan het aangewezen orgaan in de andere lidstaat of -staten waar de werkzaamheden worden verricht. Zoals het Hof van Justitie bevestigd heeft in de zaken *Fitzwilliam* ([2]) en *Banks* ([3]) creëert meeneembaar document A1 een *vermoeden* dat een werknemer of zelfstandige aangesloten is bij het socialezekerheidsstelsel van de lidstaat waar hij of zij vandaan komt. Dit document is weliswaar wettelijk bindend voor het bevoegde orgaan van de lidstaat waar de betreffende persoon een werkzaamheid uitvoert, maar is op zichzelf niet voldoende om vast te kunnen stellen dat er sprake is van detachering. Hoewel de Commissie het gebruik van het PD A1 vóór de aanvang van een detachering aanmoedigt, is er enige flexibiliteit nodig voor gevallen waar dat niet mogelijk is. In dit verband zijn alle lidstaten verplicht het beginsel van loyale samenwerking, zoals vastgelegd in artikel 4, lid 3, VEU, te respecteren. Dit betekent dat een orgaan dat een dergelijk document afgeeft de omstandigheden van de detachering dient te onderzoeken en op basis daarvan te garanderen dat de informatie in het PD A1 juist is.

Het systeem voor de elektronische uitwisseling van socialezekerheidsinformatie (Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information, EESSI) dat momenteel ontwikkeld wordt, zal de uiwisseling van de PD A1-documenten vergemakkelijken. Zodra dit systeem operationeel is, zal de Commissie een uitvoerbaarheidsstudie overwegen betreffende online-raadpleging van PD A1-documenten.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 16 September 2009 tot vaststelling van de wijze van toepassing van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 betreffende de coördinatie van de socialezekerheidsstelsels, PB L 284 van 30.10.2009.
([2]) Zaak C-202/97 Fitzwilliam, Jurispr. 2000, blz. I-00883.
([3]) Zaak C-178/97 Banks, Jurispr. 2000, blz. I-2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005446/13
to the Commission
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Submitting of A1 secondment forms

The A1 secondment form enables the holder to demonstrate — in the host Member State — that he/she is already subject to the social security system of another EU Member State. However, the A1 form can be issued at any time and even for a period which has already expired. This enables service providers with less honest intentions to fraudulently evade any controls and, as a result, not to pay the required social contribution anywhere. This creates unfair competition, with the result that the free movement of services is perceived as detrimental to the Member State's 'own' companies rather than as an advantage or even an opportunity. This creates serious problems, particularly in the construction sector.

1. Would the Commission therefore not consider making the issuing of the A1 form compulsory, in every case and prior to the secondment, both for employees and self-employed persons, possibly limiting this to service providers working in the construction sector? Bona fide companies will be inconvenienced by this the least, because they already make sure that they get the A1 form on time.

2. In order to facilitate both the issuing of the A1 form and monitoring thereof, we wonder if a European database would not be of benefit to both seconded persons (employees and self-employed persons) and inspection and supervisory services. Such a database already exists with regard to the VAT, namely the VIES database (VAT Information Exchange System). What is the Commission's position on the establishment of a database of this kind in which seconded persons would be listed and could be searched for?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

On the basis of Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 ([1]), the competent institution whose legislation is applicable on the basis of Title II of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 shall issue a Portable Document A1 to the person concerned as well as to the designated institution in the other Member State(s) where activities are being pursued. As the Court of Justice confirmed in cases *Fitzwilliam* ([2]) and *Banks* ([3]), the Portable Document A1 establishes a *presumption* that an employed or self-employed person is properly affiliated to the social security system of the Member State in which he/she is established. Whilst legally binding on the competent institution of the Member State in which a person carries out an assignment, it is not a constitutive condition for a posting to be valid. Although the commission encourages the application of a Portable Document A1 before a period of posting is initiated, some flexibility is needed for cases in which this is not possible. In this respect, all Member States are bound by the principle of sincere cooperation laid down in Article 4(3) TEU. This means that each issuing institution needs to carry out a proper assessment of the facts surrounding the posting and, consequently, guarantee the correctness of the information contained in the Portable Document A1.

The Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI) system that is currently under development will facilitate the exchange of Portable Documents A1. As soon as the EESSI system is operational, the Commission will consider launching a feasibility study on the online consultation of Portable Documents A1.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 284, 30.10.2009.
([2]) Case C-202/97 Fitzwilliam, [2000] ECR I-00883.
([3]) Case C-178/97 Banks, [2000] ECR I-2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005447/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Commission's state aid investigations

Can the Commission please explain how it takes into account the settled case-law of Member States when investigating state aid?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

With respect to state aid, it should be pointed out that the Commission and national courts have distinct roles. The Commission assesses both whether measures constitute state aid (Article 107(1) TFEU) and whether those measures are compatible with the internal market (in particular Article 107(2) and (3) TFEU). National courts, in contrast, have no competence to assess the compatibility of aid, but have a role in state aid enforcement ([1]). They can assess whether measures constitute state aid and, if so and if the aid was unlawfully granted, take any measures necessary to protect the rights of individuals affected by it. Since the notion of aid is an objective notion, both the Commission and the national courts are bound by the interpretation of this notion by the Court of Justice, so a uniform interpretation should be ensured.

When the Commission investigates state aid, it applies EC law, namely Article 107(2) and (3) and 106(2) TFEU, and guidelines based on it. Since case-law from national courts cannot deal with the compatibility of aid, it is in principle not relevant for this assessment. However, in a more general sense, there is a link with the Commission's assessment and the principles enshrined in national law and case-law. The Commission cannot declare a measure compatible with the internal market if there is a violation of general principles of EC law that is indissolubly linked to the object of the aid and cannot be assessed separately. These general principles of EC law (e.g. legal certainty, proportionality) may be derived from common legal principles in the EU Member states, international law, specific EU legal texts or the EU treaties.

([1]) Commission Notice on the enforcement of state aid law by national courts, OJ 2009 C 85/1.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-005448/13
do Komisji
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(16 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Projekt Jamał II i odstępstwa od trzeciego pakietu energetycznego

W kwietniu 2013 r. Gazprom i EuRoPol GAZ podpisały memorandum w sprawie możliwości budowy nowej nitki gazociągu z Białorusi – poprzez Polskę – na Słowację i Węgry.

Projekt ten został przedstawiony jako druga część projektu rurociągu Jamał-Europa, pomimo że trasa rurociągu bardzo się różni od obecnej trasy rurociągu Jamał-Europa (Białoruś-Polska-Niemcy).

Według środków przekazu Gazprom ma nadzieję, że jeśli nazwie ten rurociąg rurociągiem Jamał II, to odstępstwa od zasad polityki konkurencji, które mają zastosowanie do obecnego rurociągu Jamał, będą miały zastosowanie również do nowego rurociągu.

1. Czy Komisja postrzega dodatkowy rurociąg, którego docelowy punkt jest inny, jako zwykłe przedłużenie obecnego rurociągu?

2. Czy do budowy tego przedłużenia zostaną zastosowane, automatycznie lub na innych zasadach, te same odstępstwa, jakie zastosowano do budowy obecnego rurociągu, czy partnerzy będą musieli złożyć nowy wniosek?

3. Czy Komisja może potwierdzić, że wszelkie odstępstwa będą podlegały obecnie obowiązującym przepisom unijnym w zakresie energetyki (w szczególności trzeciemu pakietowi energetycznemu) a nie przepisom obowiązującym w czasie, kiedy powstał pierwotny rurociąg Jamał-Europa?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(17 czerwca 2013 r.)

Komisja pragnie poinformować Szanowną Panią Poseł, że żaden taki projekt nie został jej przedłożony. Nowego gazociągu z Białorusi przez Polskę na Słowację i Węgry nie uznano by za przedłużenie gazociągu Jamał.

Gazociąg Jamał nie podlega żadnym odstępstwom na terytorium UE. Wszelkie odstępstwa podlegałyby w istocie obecnie obowiązującym przepisom unijnym w zakresie energetyki, np. przepisom dyrektywy 2009/73/WE dotyczącej wspólnych zasad rynku wewnętrznego gazu ziemnego.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005448/13
to the Commission
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Yamal II proposal and third energy package exemptions

In April 2013, Gazprom and EuRoPol GAZ signed a memorandum of understanding on the possibility of building a new gas pipeline from Belarus through Poland to Slovakia and Hungary.

The project has been presented as a second part of the Yamal-Europe pipeline. This is despite the fact that the route of the pipeline is very different from the route of the current Yamal-Europe pipeline (Belarus-Poland-Germany).

Media reports have suggested that Gazprom is hoping that by calling this pipeline 'Yamal II' the competition policy exemptions that apply to the current Yamal pipeline will also apply to the new one.

1. Would the Commission view an additional pipeline with a different destination as merely an extension of the current pipeline?

2. Would an extension be granted the same exemptions as the current pipeline, automatically or otherwise, or would the partners have to file a new application?

3. Can the Commission reconfirm that any exemptions would be subject to current EU energy legislation (i.e. the third energy package) and not to the legislation in force at the time the original Yamal-Europe pipeline was built?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that no such project has been presented to it. A new pipeline from Belarus through Poland to Slovakia and Hungary would not be considered as an extension of the Yamal pipeline.

The Yamal pipeline is not subject to any exemptions on EU territory. Any exemptions would indeed be subject to current EU energy legislation, e.g. Directive 2009/73/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-005449/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Zahlungen 2013

Diese Anfrage betrifft die Zahlungen für 2013. In der heutigen Sitzung des Haushaltsausschusses wurde erklärt, dass die Kommission davon ausgeht, dass in diesem Jahr genügend Geld für ausstehende Zahlungen zur Verfügung stehen wird.

— Kann die Kommission eine ausführliche Darlegung/Beschreibung ihrer Berechnung übermitteln, wonach genügend Geld zur Verfügung steht beziehungsweise stehen wird, und somit bestätigen, dass nicht erneut eine Situation wie im Herbst letzten Jahres eintreten wird?

Antwort von Herrn Lewandowski im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juni 2013)

Die Frau Abgeordnete bezieht sich auf eine Diskussion im Haushaltsausschuss, bei der die Kommission erklärte, sie werde über genügend Mittel für ausstehende Zahlungen verfügen, wenn der Berichtigungshaushalt Nr. 2 von 2013 (BH 2/2013) verabschiedet wird. Mit dem BH 2/2013 werden zusätzliche Mittel für Zahlungen in Höhe von 11,2 Mio. EUR beantragt. Weitere Einzelheiten und Gründe der vorgeschlagenen Beträge finden sich im Text des BH 2 selbst: KOM(2013)183 kann unter
http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/2013/DAB/COM_2013_183_de.pdf abgerufen werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005449/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: 2013 payments

This question concerns the payments for 2013. A statement was made at today's meeting of the Committee on Budgets to the effect that the Commission 'predicts' that there will be enough money for outstanding payments this year.

— Can the Commission give a detailed outline/description of its calculation that there will be/is enough money, and thereby confirm that we will not be faced with a situation like the one we experienced in autumn last year?

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

The Honourable Member refers to a discussion in the Committee on Budgets, at which the Commission stated that there would be enough money for outstanding payments if the draft amending budget 2 of 2013 (DAB 2/2013) is approved. The DAB 2/2013 requests an additional EUR 11.2 billion in payment appropriations. Further analysis and justification of the proposed amounts are provided in the text of the DAB 2 itself — COM(2013) 183 available at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/2013/DAB/COM_2013_183_en.pdf.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-005450/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(16 mai 2013)

Subiect: Libertatea și pluralismul mass-media în Uniunea Europeană

Diversitatea culturală este una dintre caracteristicile de bază ale Uniunii Europene. În ceea ce privește serviciile audiovizuale, au fost făcuți pași înspre o anumită armonizare ca urmare a adoptării Directivei serviciilor mass-media audiovizuale (Directiva 2010/13/UE).

Însă în continuare modul de reglementare în ceea ce privește furnizarea de servicii audiovizuale este diferit la nivelul statelor membre.

Recent, Comisia a lansat o consultare publică privind o eventuală modificare a art. 30 al Directivei serviciilor mass-media audiovizuale.

Posibila revizuire a Directivei se referă inclusiv la asigurarea independenței organismelor de reglementare din statele membre.

O astfel de modificare ar putea conduce la consolidarea pluralismului și la o mai mare independență a mass-media.

Un alt aspect important într-o posibilă revizuire a Directivei 2010/13/UE îl constituie recomandările formulate în Raportul Grupului la Nivel Înalt privind Libertatea și Pluralismul Mass-Media, în luna ianuarie 2013.

Conform unora dintre recomandările Grupului, ar trebuie să fie asigurat faptul că în fiecare stat membru organizațiile mass-media dezvoltă coduri de conduită care să aplice principiul independenței editoriale. Însă reglementările la nivelul statelor membre sunt foarte diferite în această privință.

Are în vedere Comisia o eventuală modificare mai amplă a Directivei 2010/13/UE, luând în calcul inclusiv modificarea articolului 9, alineatul 2, prin lărgirea ariei de aplicare a acestui articol? Daca da, se ia în considerare încurajarea dezvoltării de către organizațiile media a codurilor de conduită și în alte domenii, altele decât cele referitoare la comunicațiile comerciale, spre exemplu coduri de etică profesională?

De asemenea, urmărește Comisia să țină cont de recomandarea Grupului la Nivel Înalt referitoare la posibilitatea extinderii prerogativelor Agenției pentru Drepturile Fundamentale sau instituirii unui centru de monitorizare independent la nivel european care să urmărească evoluțiile din statele membre în domeniul mass-media și să adreseze eventuale recomandări?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(26 iunie 2013)

Ca urmare a prezentării raportului independent al Grupului la nivel înalt pentru libertatea și pluralismul mass-media, Comisia a lansat recent două consultări publice — una privind recomandările Grupului și una referitoare la independența organismelor naționale de reglementare în domeniul audiovizualului. Decizia cu privire la eventuale acțiuni de monitorizare, inclusiv o posibilă inițiativă legislativă privind independența autorităților din domeniul audiovizualului, precum și oricare alte acțiuni potențiale referitoare la codurile de conduită, rolul Agenției pentru Drepturi Fundamentale în acest domeniu sau înființarea unui centru independent de monitorizare la nivelul UE va ține seama de răspunsurile primite în cadrul acestor consultări, precum și de cele mai recente rapoarte ale Parlamentului European, în special rapoartele Weber și Schaake.

Parlamentul European a prevăzut punerea în aplicare în 2013 a proiectului-pilot privind instrumentul de monitorizare a pluralismului în mass-media. În curând, Comisia va prezenta modul în care acest proiect-pilot va fi pus în aplicare. Decizia privind monitorizarea libertății și pluralismului mass-media va lua în considerare, de asemenea, răspunsurile primite în cadrul consultărilor publice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005450/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Media freedom and pluralism in the European Union

Cultural diversity is one of the basic characteristics of the European Union. Steps have been taken to harmonise audiovisual services following the adoption of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (Directive 2010/13/EU).

However, the way in which audiovisual services provision is regulated differs at Member State level.

The Commission recently launched a public consultation on a possible amendment of Article 30 of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

The possible revision of the directive includes a reference to ensuring the independence of regulatory bodies in the Member States.

Such an amendment could lead to a strengthening of pluralism and greater media independence.

Another important aspect of the possible revision of Directive 2010/13/EU is the January 2013 High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism report's recommendations.

According to some of the Group's recommendations, media organisations should guarantee to develop codes of conduct that apply the principle of editorial independence in each Member State. However, regulations at Member State level are very different in this regard.

Does the Commission envisage a possible broader amendment of Directive 2010/13/EU, taking into account the modification of Article 9(2), by widening the scope of application of this Article? If so, is it considering encouraging media organisations to develop codes of conduct in other areas, other than those relating to commercial communications, such as codes of professional ethics?

Similarly, will the Commission take account of the High Level Group recommendation on the possibility of extending the powers of the Agency for Fundamental Rights or the establishment of an independent EU-wide monitoring centre to follow media developments in Member States and to address any possible recommendations?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

Following the presentation of the independent report of the High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism, the Commission has recently launched two public consultations, one on the recommendations of the group and one specifically on the independence of National Audiovisual Regulatory Authorities. The decision on any possible follow-up actions, including a possible legislative action in the field of independence of audiovisual authorities, as well as any potential action concerning codes of conduct, the role of the Agency for Fundamental Rights in this field or the establishment of an independent EU-wide monitoring centre will take account of the responses to those consultations as well as the most recent reports by the European Parliament especially the Weber and the Schaake reports.

The European Parliament has foreseen the implementation of the pilot project on Media Pluralism Monitor tool in 2013. The Commission will announce very soon how this pilot project will be implemented. The decision on the monitoring of media freedom and pluralism in the future will take also account of the responses to the public consultations.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-005451/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(16 maj 2013)

Angående: UEFI och ARM, ett förtydligande

I sitt svar på skriftliga frågan E-003006/2013 hänvisar kommissionen till Microsofts ställning på mobiltelefonimarknaden. Den ursprungliga frågan rörde dock processorer med ARM-arkitektur som inte med nödvändighet behöver användas i mobiltelefoner, utan också skulle kunna användas i andra apparater. Den konkurrensrättsliga frågan kommissionen bör ta ställning till är inte nödvändigtvis slutkonsumenters relation till Microsofts inflytande över slutkonsumentelektronik, utan snarare Microsofts inflytande över högre marknadsled. I detta fall vilket chipset och vilken arkitektur tillverkare eller sammanställare av persondatorer har att välja mellan när de utformar sina produkter på ett sätt som säkerställer slutanvändares valfrihet.

Vilka verktyg har kommissionen för att analysera konkurrenssituationen på chipmarknaden och dess inflytande över vilka produkter och vilka funktionaliteter som blir tillgängliga för slutkonsumenter på marknaden? Hur ser kommissionen på situationen att Microsofts särbehandling av x86-arkitekturer och ARM-arkitekturer med avseende på UEFI Secure Boot riskerar att förhindra utveckling av persondatorer med ARM-processorer?

Svar från Joaquin Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(28 juni 2013)

Artiklarna 101 och 102 i EUF-fördraget och de utredande befogenheter som tilldelats kommissionen enligt förordning (EG) nr 1/2003 ger lämpliga verktyg för att analysera konkurrenssituationen på chipmarknaden och dess inflytande över vilka produkter och funktioner som är tillgängliga för slutkonsumenterna på marknaden. Se även kommissionens ingående analys av den elektroniska chipsmarknaden i sitt beslut enligt artikel 102 i EUF-fördraget i ärende COMP/C-3/37.990 – Intel.

När det gäller Microsofts påstådda särbehandling ifråga om x86- och ARM-arkitekturer för systemet Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI) Secure Boot har kommissionen för närvarande inga indikationer på att bestämmelserna i Microsofts certifieringsprogram för UEFI för Windows 8 skulle hindra utvecklingen av persondatorer med ARM-arkitektur. Enligt den information som kommissionen för närvarande har tillgång till verkar ARM-arkitektur i huvudsak användas i mobila enheter.

Kommissionen övervakar dock noga marknadsutvecklingen för att säkerställa full överensstämmelse med EU:s konkurrensbestämmelser.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005451/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Clarification with regard to UEFI and ARM

In its answer to Written Question E-003006/2013, the Commission refers to Microsoft's position on the mobile telephony market. However, the original question concerned processors with the ARM architecture, which do not necessary need to be used in mobile telephones but could also be used in other devices. The question in terms of competition law that the Commission ought to consider is not necessarily Microsoft's influence on end-user electronics in relation to final consumers, but rather Microsoft's influence on upstream markets. In this case, it concerns which chipset and architecture are available for manufacturers or assemblers of personal computers to choose between when designing their products in a way that ensures end-user choice.

What tools does the Commission have for analysing the state of competition on the chip market and its influence over what products and functionalities are available to final consumers on the market? What is its view of the situation that Microsoft's unequal treatment of the x86 and ARM architectures in respect of the Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI) Secure Boot system risks preventing the development of personal computers with ARM processors?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2013)

Articles 101 and 102 TFEU and the investigative powers granted to the Commision under Regulation 1/2003 provide for appropriate tools for analysing the state of competition on the chip market and its influence over what products and functionalities are available to final consumers on the market. Please note the Commission's decision under Article 102 TFEU in Case COMP/C-3 /37.990 — Intel, in which the Commission made an in-depth analysis of the computer chip market.

Regarding Microsoft's allegedly unequal treatment of the x86 and ARM architectures in respect of the Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI) Secure Boot system, the Commission does not currently have any indications that the provisions of Microsoft's Windows 8 Certification Program regarding UEFI Secure Boot would prevent the development of personal computers with ARM processors. On the basis of the information currently available to the Commission, the ARM architecture seems mainly to be used in mobile devices.

The Commission is however, closely monitoring market developments in order to ensure full compliance with the EU competition rules.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-005452/13
an die Kommission
Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE)
(16. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Schwarze Sulm

Die Schwarze Sulm in der Steiermark (Österreich) ist ein 83 Kilometer langer Nebenfluss der Mur und als Natura-2000-Gebiet nach der EU-Fauna-Flora-Habitat-Richtlinie ausgewiesen. Dennoch wird seit vielen Jahren versucht, an dieser einzigartigen Flussstrecke ein Wasserkraftwerk zu errichten.

Bereits am 17.10.2007 stellte daher die Europäische Kommission fest, dass die Genehmigung des Wasserkraftwerks an der Schwarzen Sulm durch den Landeshauptmann vom 24.5.2007 eine Verletzung der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie und der Natura-2000-Richtlinie darstellt. Der Vorteil der Energiegewinnung könne den Nachteil der Naturzerstörung nicht aufwiegen, so dass eine Verschlechterung des Gewässerzustands durch das Kraftwerk nicht zu rechtfertigen sei, so die Kommission.

Diese Rechtsansicht der Kommission wurde in der folgenden Berufungsentscheidung des Umweltministeriums (BMLFUW) berücksichtigt, doch wurde diese europarechtskonforme Entscheidung vom Betreiber beim Verfassungsgerichtshof (VfGH) bekämpft. Der VfGH erkannte die Einrichtung des berufenden Wasserwirtschaftlichen Planungsorgans als verfassungswidrig und hob die Berufungsentscheidung des BMLFUW am 16.3.2012 auf. Damit erlangte die alte — europarechtswidrige — Genehmigung wieder Gültigkeit. Diese Woche sind Baumaschinen aufgefahren, konnten aber durch den Protest von UmweltschützerInnen vor Ort noch gestoppt werden.

1. Wie ist der Stand der Prüfung eines Vertragsverletzungsverfahrens gegen die Republik Österreich aufgrund der europarechtswidrigen Genehmigung dieses Kraftwerksbaus?

2. Mit Strafzahlungen in welcher Höhe ist bei einem europarechtswidrigen Bau dieses Kraftwerks zu rechnen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(13. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission hat ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen Österreich eingeleitet. Sie sieht sich derzeit nicht in der Lage, die Höhe der Geldbuße zu bemessen, die Österreich im Fall einer Verurteilung durch den Europäischen Gerichtshof gemäß Artikel 260 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union zu zahlen hätte.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005452/13
to the Commission
Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Schwarze Sulm power plant

The Schwarze Sulm (Black Sulm) is an 83 km long subsidiary of the Mur in Styria, Austria, and is designated a Natura 2000 area under the EU's Habitats Directive. For many years, however, attempts have been made to obtain authorisation to build a hydroelectric power plant on this unique stretch of river.

On 17 October 2007 the Commission declared that the licence to build a hydroelectric power plant on the Schwarze Sulm granted by the provincial governor on 24 May 2007 constituted a violation of the Water Framework and Natura 2000 directives. The gains to be made by generating energy would not outweigh the damage caused to the environment, according to the Commission, such that justification for the worsening of water quality by the power plant could not be found.

The Commission's view was heeded by the Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMLFUW) when it decided on appeal to revoke the licence initially granted, though this decision, which was in full conformity with European law, was opposed by the operator before the Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court considered unconstitutional the establishment of the water management body which had lodged the appeal, and overturned the Environment Ministry's decision to revoke the licence on 16 March 2012. The original licence thus regained its validity, despite being contrary to European law. Construction vehicles arrived at the site this week, although they were halted by a demonstration by environmentalists.

1. What is the state of play with regard to the possible initiation of infringement proceedings against Austria for granting a licence for the construction of this hydroelectric power plant which is in contravention of European law?

2. How much will have to be paid out in fines if construction of this power plant goes ahead in contravention of European law?

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

The Commission has initiated an infringement procedure against Austria. The Commission is not currently in a position to assess the amount of the fine that Austria may have to pay if it was to be condemned by the European Court of Justice pursuant to Article 260 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005455/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Criação de emprego

Tendo em conta que:

— A Estratégia de Lisboa tinha como objetivo tornar a Europa, até 2010, «a economia baseada no conhecimento mais dinâmica e competitiva do mundo, capaz de garantir um crescimento económico sustentável, com mais e melhores empregos e coesão social»;

— Após a Estratégia de Lisboa, a Comissão Europeia definiu a sua nova orientação para os próximos 10 anos, denominada Estratégia Europa 2020, em que um dos 7 pilares é precisamente a agenda para as novas qualificações e os novos empregos, na qual se refere que o objetivo consiste em «incentivar as estratégias de flexigurança, a formação dos trabalhadores e dos estudantes, mas também a igualdade de género e o emprego dos cidadãos mais idosos»;

— A nível europeu, verifica-se uma forte retração do crescimento económico, níveis de desemprego cada vez maiores e uma situação social da maioria dos europeus a degradar--se drasticamente ao longo dos últimos anos, obrigando a União Europeia e os Estados--Membros a adotarem diversas medidas de promoção de emprego;

— Segundo a última informação estatística disponibilizada pelo Eurostat e relativa a fevereiro de 2013, a União Europeia apresentava uma taxa de desemprego de 10,9 %, enquanto na Zona Euro a taxa de desemprego atingia os 12 %; a Europa a 27 tinha 26,3 milhões de desempregados e, destes, cerca de 19,1 milhões pertenciam à Zona Euro; nos últimos anos verifica-se uma tendência claramente crescente, sendo esta constante na generalidade dos países;

— Segundo a Comissão Europeia, «a Estratégia Europa 2020, que preconiza um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo, estabelece uma meta de 75 % para a taxa de emprego da população com idades entre 20 e 64 anos. Para que este objetivo seja cumprido, a UE terá de contar com 17,6 milhões de postos de trabalho adicionais relativamente à situação atual do emprego»;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quais as iniciativas que estão a ser desenvolvidas para recuperar o crescimento económico e a confiança dos cidadãos?

2. Quais os setores estratégicos da economia europeia que irão criar mais emprego até 2020 e que deverão merecer uma aposta dos Estados-Membros a nível de formação?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(15 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia adotou a Estratégia Anual para o Crescimento de 2013 ([1]), que sublinhou a necessidade de uma consolidação fiscal favorável ao crescimento, com políticas de emprego e sociais que desempenhem um papel fundamental. A referida estratégia assenta num certo número de iniciativas anteriores, mais pormenorizadas. No que diz respeito à garantia de uma recuperação geradora de emprego, a iniciativa principal é o pacote emprego ([2]). Incluía propostas concretas para criar mais e melhores postos de trabalho e incentivava os Estados-Membros a concentrar-se no reforço da procura de mão de obra. A UE lançou igualmente a Grande Coligação para a criação de empregos na área digital, com vista a aumentar a oferta de profissionais especializados em TIC e um Panorama de Competências na UE ([3]) para centralizar informações sobre a procura, a oferta e os desfasamentos de competências, para apoiar a identificação dos setores mais necessitados em termos de formação.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1039&langId=en
([3]) http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu

Com o desemprego juvenil a constituir uma preocupação pública essencial, a UE lançou iniciativas específicas destinadas aos jovens e ao emprego. Entre essas iniciativas contam-se: o Pacote para o Emprego dos Jovens ([4]), que inclui uma Recomendação sobre Mecanismos de Garantia à Juventude ([5]), bem como iniciativas em matéria de estágios de aprendizagem, estágios profissionais e reforço da mobilidade laboral.

Além disso, a Comissão aprovou o Pacote de Investimento Social ([6]), que insta os Estados-Membros a dar uma maior ênfase aos investimentos sociais, com vista a lutar contra os crescentes riscos de pobreza e de exclusão.

O Pacote Emprego identificou a economia menos dependente do carbono e eficiente na utilização dos recursos («empregos verdes»), os setores da saúde e social («empregos brancos») e a economia digital como os setores que oferecem o melhor potencial de criação de postos de trabalho até 2020.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1036
([5]) Adotada pelos Estados-Membros em abril de 2013: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st07/st07123.en13.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005455/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Job creation

The Lisbon strategy aims to make Europe 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' by 2010.

Following the Lisbon strategy, the Commission set out its new guidelines for the next 10 years, the Europe 2020 strategy, one of the seven pillars of which is the agenda for new skills and jobs, which has the stated aim of encouraging 'the strategies of flexicurity, worker and student training, but also gender equality and the employment of older workers.'

Across the EU, economic growth has contracted sharply, unemployment levels have been going up and the social situation of most Europeans has dramatically deteriorated in recent years, forcing the EU and the Member States to take a range of measures to boost employment.

According to the latest Eurostat statistics for February 2013, the EU unemployment rate was 10.9%, while the unemployment rate in the euro area stood at 12%. There are 26.3 million people out of work in the EU-27, around 19.1 million of whom live in the euro area. In recent years these figures have been clearly rising steadily in most countries.

According to the Commission, 'Europe's 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth sets a target of 75% of 20-64 year olds in employment by 2020. If the target is to be met, employment in the EU will have to increase by 17.6 million additional jobs from its current level.'

1. What initiatives are being developed to restore economic growth and to win back public confidence?

2. Which strategic sectors of the EU economy will create more jobs by 2020 and which should be supported by the Member States in terms of training?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The European Commission adopted the Annual Growth Strategy for 2013 ([1]) , which stressed the need for growth friendly fiscal consolidation with employment and social policies having a key role The AGS built on a number of earlier, more detailed initiatives. With respect to ensuring a job rich recovery, the key initiative is the Employment Package ([2]). It included concrete proposals to bring about more and indeed better jobs and encouraged Member States to focus on enhancing labour demand. The EC also launched the Grand Coalition for Digital jobs to increase the supply of skilled ICT practitioners and the EU Skills Panorama ([3]) for centralising intelligence on skills demand, supply and mismatches, to support identification of the most needed sectors in terms of training.

With youth unemployment a key public concern, the EC has launched specific initiatives targeted at young people and employment. These, include: The Youth Employment Package ([4]) which includes a recommendation on Youth Guarantee ([5]) and initiatives on apprenticeships, traineeships and improved labour mobility.

Furthermore, the Commission adopted the Social Investment Package ([6]), which calls on Member States to put more emphasis on social investment to address growing risks of poverty and exclusion.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1039&langId=en.
([3]) http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1036.
([5]) Adopted by Member States in April 2013: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st07/st07123.en13.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en.

The Employment Package identified the low-carbon, resource-efficient economy ('green jobs'), the health and social sectors ('white jobs') and the digital economy as the sectors which offer the best job creation potential in the years leading to 2020.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005456/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Aumentar os apoios às empresas europeias

Tendo em conta que:

— A Estratégia de Lisboa tinha como objetivo tornar a Europa, até 2010, «a economia baseada no conhecimento mais dinâmica e competitiva do mundo, capaz de garantir um crescimento económico sustentável, com mais e melhores empregos e coesão social»;

— Após a Estratégia de Lisboa, a Comissão Europeia definiu a sua nova orientação para os próximos 10 anos, denominada Estratégia Europa 2020, em que um dos 7 pilares é precisamente a agenda para as novas qualificações e os novos empregos, na qual se refere que o objetivo consiste em «incentivar as estratégias de flexigurança, a formação dos trabalhadores e dos estudantes, mas também a igualdade de género e o emprego dos cidadãos mais idosos»;

— A nível europeu, verifica-se uma forte retração do crescimento económico, níveis de desemprego cada vez maiores e uma situação social da maioria dos europeus a degradar--se drasticamente ao longo dos últimos anos, obrigando a União Europeia e os Estados--Membros a adotarem diversas medidas de promoção de emprego;

— Segundo a última informação estatística disponibilizada pelo Eurostat e relativa a fevereiro de 2013, a União Europeia apresentava uma taxa de desemprego de 10,9 %, enquanto na Zona Euro a taxa de desemprego atingia os 12 %; a Europa a 27 tinha 26,3 milhões de desempregados e, destes, cerca de 19,1 milhões pertenciam à Zona Euro; nos últimos anos verifica-se uma tendência claramente crescente, sendo esta constante na generalidade dos países;

— Segundo a Comissão Europeia, «a Estratégia Europa 2020, que preconiza um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo, estabelece uma meta de 75 % para a taxa de emprego da população com idades entre 20 e 64 anos. Para que este objetivo seja cumprido, a UE terá de contar com 17,6 milhões de postos de trabalho adicionais relativamente à situação atual do emprego»;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quais as iniciativas em curso para aumentar o apoio às empresas europeias, sobretudo às PME?

2. Quais as estratégias definidas para apoiar a internacionalização das empresas europeias?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(20 de junho de 2013)

1. A Comissão concede apoio financeiro e não financeiro às PME, entre outros meios, através do Programa-Quadro para a Competitividade e a Inovação ([1]). Este programa inclui medidas destinadas a melhorar o acesso das PME ao financiamento, aos serviços às empresas e à inovação. No que diz respeito em especial ao acesso das PME ao financiamento, a Comissão adotou em 2011 um Plano de Ação ([2]) que enumera uma série de ações destinadas a abordar esta questão. Para o próximo período de programação, a Comissão apresentou uma proposta de um novo Programa para a Competitividade das Empresas e PME ([3]), que prosseguirá as iniciativas bem sucedidas adotadas no âmbito do PCI, incluindo uma nova geração de instrumentos financeiros. Estas medidas permitirão melhorar o acesso das PME ao financiamento através de capital próprio e de garantias de empréstimos. Estes dois mecanismos complementarão os instrumentos financeiros do novo programa «Horizonte 2020», dando apoio à investigação e à inovação.

([1]) PCI.
([2]) «Plano de ação para melhorar o acesso das PME ao financiamento», COM(2011) 870 final de 7.12.2011.
([3]) COPME.

2. A Comissão está firmemente empenhada em apoiar a internacionalização das PME, conforme refletido na Comunicação «Pequenas empresas, grande mundo — uma nova parceria para ajudar as PME a aproveitar as oportunidades à escala mundial» ([4]). A abordagem é dupla. O apoio a infraestruturas e um inventário das medidas de apoio existentes nos Estados-Membros e nos países terceiros, a fim de orientar melhor as novas iniciativas da Comissão. O apoio aos agrupamentos, a rede europeia de empresas, serviços de assistência em matéria de DPI (China, ASEAN, em breve Mercosul), bem como Centros Empresariais da UE (por exemplo, Centro Europeu das PME em Pequim) poderão ser exemplos das principais iniciativas. Além disso, num esforço para ajudar as empresas da UE a penetrar em mercados estrangeiros, a Comissão realiza missões de crescimento em países com um crescimento rápido.

([4]) COM(2011) 702 final de 9.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005456/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Increasing support for European businesses

The Lisbon strategy aims to make Europe 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' by 2010.

Following the Lisbon strategy, the Commission set out its new guidelines for the next 10 years, the Europe 2020 strategy, one of the seven pillars of which is the agenda for new skills and jobs, which has the stated aim of encouraging 'the strategies of flexicurity, worker and student training, but also gender equality and the employment of older workers.'

Across the EU, economic growth has contracted sharply, unemployment levels have been going up and the social situation of most Europeans has dramatically deteriorated in recent years, forcing the EU and the Member States to take a range of measures to boost employment.

According to the latest Eurostat statistics for February 2013, the EU unemployment rate was 10.9%, while the unemployment rate in the euro area stood at 12%. There are 26.3 million people out of work in the EU-27, around 19.1 million of whom live in the euro area. In recent years these figures have been clearly rising steadily in most countries.

According to the Commission, 'Europe's 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth sets a target of 75% of 20-64 year olds in employment by 2020. If the target is to be met, employment in the EU will have to increase by 17.6 million additional jobs from its current level.'

1. What initiatives are under way to increase support for European businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises?

2. What strategies have been established to support the internationalisation of European businesses?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2013)

1. The Commission provides financial and non-financial support to SMEs, among others, via the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme ([1]). It includes measures to improve SMEs' access to finance, business services and innovation. With regard in particular to SME access to finance, the Commission adopted in 2011 an Action Plan ([2]) which lists a series of actions aimed at tackling this issue. For the forthcoming programming period, the Commission presented a proposal for a new Programme for Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs ([3]) which will continue the successful initiatives taken under the CIP, including a new generation of financial instruments. These will improve access to finance for SMEs via equity and loan guarantee facilities. These two facilities will complement financial instruments in the new Horizon 2020 programme providing support to research and innovation.

2. The Commission is strongly committed to supporting the internationalisation of SMEs, as reflected in the communication 'Small Business, Big World — a new partnership to help SMEs seize global opportunities ([4])'. The approach is two-fold. Support to infrastructure and an inventory of the existing support measures in the Member States and third countries, in order to better target new initiatives of the Commission. Support to clusters, the Enterprise Europe Network, IPR Helpdesks (China, ASEAN, soon Mercosur), as well as EU business Centres (e.g. EU SME Centre in Beijing) could be examples of major initiatives. Moreover, in an effort to help EU businesses penetrate foreign markets, the Commission carries out missions for growth to fast-growing countries.

([1]) CIP.
([2]) 'An action plan to improve access to finance for SMEs', COM(2011) 870 final, 7.12.2011.
([3]) COSME.
([4]) COM(2011) 702 final, 9.11.2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005457/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Criação de Comunidades de Conhecimento e Inovação (CCI)

Tendo em conta que:

— A Estratégia de Lisboa tinha como objetivo tornar a Europa, até 2010, «a economia baseada no conhecimento mais dinâmica e competitiva do mundo, capaz de garantir um crescimento económico sustentável, com mais e melhores empregos e coesão social»;

— Após a Estratégia de Lisboa, a Comissão Europeia definiu a sua nova orientação para os próximos 10 anos, denominada Estratégia Europa 2020, em que um dos 7 pilares é precisamente a agenda para as novas qualificações e os novos empregos, na qual se refere que o objetivo consiste em «incentivar as estratégias de flexigurança, a formação dos trabalhadores e dos estudantes, mas também a igualdade de género e o emprego dos cidadãos mais idosos»;

— O Instituto Europeu de Inovação e Tecnologia (EIT), criado no âmbito da Estratégia de Lisboa, elegeu como grande objetivo a promoção do crescimento sustentável e o fortalecimento da competitividade da União Europeia, capitalizando as atividades de inovação, investigação, negócio e empreendedorismo existentes na Europa;

— Para concretizar estes objetivos, o EIT criou recentemente as três primeiras Comunidades de Conhecimento e Inovação (CCI);

— Estas comunidades serão parcerias colaborativas privadas com personalidade jurídica (sociedade europeia), que reúnem as grandes instituições líderes em inovação, investigação e criação de negócio, de modo a criar uma massa crítica que coloque a Europa no topo do chamado triângulo do conhecimento (educação, investigação e inovação) e a operar a sua transferência para o contexto empresarial, comercial e social;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como avalia a atividade das Comunidades de Conhecimento e Inovação (CCI) já criadas e como se poderá melhorar o seu trabalho?

2. No próximo período de programação financeira para 2014-2020, está a ponderar a criação de mais alguma rede de inovação e conhecimento entre entidades públicas (câmaras municipais, regiões, universidades) e entidades privadas (empresas, «venture capital», «business angels»)?

3. Quais as principais áreas setoriais que merecerão a atenção do Instituto Europeu de Inovação e Tecnologia (IET) com vista a criar novas CCI?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(3 de julho de 2013)

A avaliação externa do IET, incluindo uma avaliação dos resultados das CCI durante o período inicial, foi publicada em maio de 2011. A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-005458/2013 ([1]).

Em conformidade com o regulamento que estabelece o IET, as CCI são independentes na escolha dos parceiros mais adequados para aplicar a sua estratégia a longo prazo. Os requisitos mínimos no que se refere à parceria estão igualmente previstos no regulamento que estabelece o IET: uma CCI deve incluir, pelo menos, três instituições diferentes de três Estados-Membros diferentes, sendo, pelo menos, um dos parceiros proveniente do setor empresarial.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pt/parliamentary-questions.html

A proposta da Comissão para futuros temas das CCI faz parte da sua proposta de Programa Estratégico de Inovação (PEI) do IET, cujo debate está em curso no Parlamento Europeu e no Conselho. Para um primeiro convite à apresentação de propostas em 2014, a Comissão propõe: Inovação para uma vida saudável e o envelhecimento ativo; Matérias-primas — exploração sustentável, extração, tratamento, reciclagem e substituição; e Food4future — cadeia de abastecimento sustentável, dos recursos até aos consumidores. Para um segundo convite, em 2018, serão considerados os temas Mobilidade Urbana, Indústria de Valor Acrescentado e Sociedades Seguras e Inteligentes, sem deixar de ter em conta desafios novos e imprevistos que possam surgir entretanto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005457/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Creation of Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs)

The Lisbon strategy aims to make Europe 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' by 2010.

Following the Lisbon strategy, the Commission set out its new guidelines for the next 10 years, the Europe 2020 strategy, one of the seven pillars of which is the agenda for new skills and jobs, which has the stated aim of encouraging 'the strategies of flexicurity, worker and student training, but also gender equality and the employment of older workers.'

The main aim of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), set up under the Lisbon strategy, is to promote sustainable growth and make the EU more competitive, capitalising on Europe's innovation, research, business and entrepreneurship.

To achieve these goals, the EIT recently launched the first three Knowledge and Innovation Communities.

These communities are private collaborative partnerships with legal personality (in the form of a European company), which bring together the leading major innovation, research and business development institutions, so as to reach a critical mass that puts Europe at the top of the 'knowledge triangle' (education, research and innovation) and to translate it into a business, commercial and social context.

1. What is the Commission's view of the KICs already created and how could it help them to work better?

2. In the next financial programming period 2014-2020, is the Commission considering creating another innovation and knowledge network between public bodies (local and regional authorities, universities) and private entities (businesses, venture capital, business angels)?

3. What are the main sectoral areas that the European Institute of Innovation and Technology will focus on with a view to creating new KICs?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

The external evaluation of the EIT, including an evaluation of the performance of KICs during the initial period, was published in May 2011. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E/005458/2013 ([1]).

According to the EIT Regulation, KICs are independent to choose the partners best fit to implement their long-term strategy. The minimum requirements with regards to the partnership are also laid down in the EIT Regulation: a KIC has to include at least three different institutions from three different Member States, with at least one being a partner from the business sector.

The Commission proposal for future KIC themes forms part of its proposal for a Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) for the EIT, presently being discussed by Parliament and Council. For a first call in 2014 the Commission proposes: Innovation for Healthy Living and Active Ageing; Raw Materials — sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution; and Food4future — sustainable supply chain from resources to consumers. For a second call in 2018 the themes Urban Mobility, Added-Value Manufacturing and Smart Secure Societies will be considered, whilst also taking into account new and unforeseen challenges which may arise in the meantime.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html .

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005458/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Avaliação do Instituto Europeu de Inovação e Tecnologia (EIT)

Tendo em conta que:

— A Estratégia de Lisboa tinha como objetivo tornar a Europa, até 2010, «a economia baseada no conhecimento mais dinâmica e competitiva do mundo, capaz de garantir um crescimento económico sustentável, com mais e melhores empregos e coesão social»;

— Após a Estratégia de Lisboa, a Comissão Europeia definiu a sua nova orientação para os próximos 10 anos, denominada Estratégia Europa 2020, em que um dos 7 pilares é precisamente a agenda para as novas qualificações e os novos empregos, na qual se refere que o objetivo consiste em «incentivar as estratégias de flexigurança, a formação dos trabalhadores e dos estudantes, mas também a igualdade de género e o emprego dos cidadãos mais idosos»;

— O Instituto Europeu de Inovação e Tecnologia (EIT), criado no âmbito da Estratégia de Lisboa, elegeu como grande objetivo a promoção do crescimento sustentável e o fortalecimento da competitividade da União Europeia, capitalizando as atividades de inovação, investigação, negócio e empreendedorismo existentes na Europa;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como avalia a atividade do Instituto Europeu de Inovação e Tecnologia (IET)?

2. Como é possível melhorar a atividade do Instituto Europeu de Inovação e Tecnologia (IET)?

3. Quais as principais atividades que o Instituto Europeu de Inovação e Tecnologia (IET) tem vindo a realizar para promover o crescimento sustentável na UE?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(3 de julho de 2013)

Em maio de 2011 foi publicada uma avaliação externa do IET. As conclusões e recomendações da avaliação foram principalmente: que o IET transite no seu formato atual para o próximo período de programação; que a sua abordagem demonstrou um sólido potencial; que o IET deverá expandir-se de forma gradual; e que deve continuar a centrar-se no reforço dos centros de excelência existentes.

Estas conclusões e recomendações foram subscritas pela Comissão e incorporadas na proposta de Programa Estratégico de Inovação (PEI) para o IET, atualmente em fase de negociação no Parlamento Europeu e no Conselho. Para mais informações sobre o relatório de avaliação e o PEI, convidamos o Senhor Deputado a consultar o seguinte sítio Web: http://ec.europa.eu/education/eit/eit-docs_en.htm

O IET contribui de forma importante para o crescimento económico sustentável na UE, mediante a promoção de uma cultura empresarial; formando os empresários de amanhã; e equipando as PME, os estudantes e os investigadores com os conhecimentos e as competências de que necessitam para transformar ideias inovadoras em oportunidades comerciais. Para mais informações, em particular sobre o Relatório Anual de Atividades do IET, deverá o Senhor Deputado consultar o seguinte sítio Web: www.eit.europa.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005458/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Assessment of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

The Lisbon strategy aims to make Europe 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' by 2010.

Following the Lisbon strategy, the Commission set out its new guidelines for the next 10 years, the Europe 2020 strategy, one of the seven pillars of which is the agenda for new skills and jobs, which has the stated aim of encouraging 'the strategies of flexicurity, worker and student training, but also gender equality and the employment of older workers.'

The main aim of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), set up under the Lisbon strategy, is to promote sustainable growth and make the EU more competitive, capitalising on Europe's innovation, research, business and entrepreneurship.

1. What is the Commission's view of the EIT's work?

2. What improvements can be made to the way the EIT operates?

3. What are the main activities the EIT has been carrying out to promote sustainable growth in the EU?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

An external evaluation of the EIT was published in May 2011. It mainly recommended that the EIT should continue in its current format for the next programming period; that its approach had demonstrated a strong potential; that the EIT should expand on an incremental basis; and that is should continue to focus on strengthening existing centres of excellence.

These findings and recommendations were endorsed by the Commission and incorporated into the proposal for a Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) for the EIT, currently under negotiation in Parliament and Council. For more information on the evaluation report and the SIA, the Honourable Member is invited to consult the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/education/eit/eit-docs_en.htm.

The EIT makes a major contribution to sustainable economic growth in the EU by promoting an entrepreneurial culture; training the entrepreneurs of tomorrow; and equipping SMEs, students and researchers with the knowledge and skills they need to turn innovative ideas into commercial opportunities. For further information, in particular on the EIT's Annual Activities Report, the Honourable Member is invited to consult the following website: www.eit.europa.eu.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005459/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Importância do Banco Europeu de Investimento para apoiar o Emprego Jovem

Tendo em conta que:

— A 8 e 9 de fevereiro realizou-se o Conselho Europeu, tendo sido aprovada uma nova proposta, apresentada por Herman Van Rompuy, Presidente do Conselho, intitulada «Projeto de Conclusões»;

— No sentido de combater o grave flagelo social que decorre da elevada taxa de desemprego entre os jovens, o Presidente do Conselho, Herman Van Rompuy, propôs que fosse criada uma Iniciativa de Emprego Jovem com um orçamento de 6 mil milhões de euros;

— A origem do financiamento segue os seguintes pressupostos:

— Destes 6 mil milhões, 3 mil milhões de euros não serão mais dinheiro atribuído aos Estados-Membros, sendo antes retirados de uma verba previamente inscrita no Fundo Social Europeu e que cada Estado-Membro já iria receber. Na globalidade da UE, a verba é calculada de acordo com o número total de desempregados nas regiões europeias. Os outros 3 mil milhões de euros proveem de uma nova rubrica financeira inscrita no subcapítulo da Política de Coesão (1b). Este montante será atribuído aos Estados-Membros e acrescentado à dotação do Fundo Social Europeu.

— Segundo o Eurostat, Portugal tem uma taxa de desemprego jovem de 42,1 %. Esta mesma taxa de desemprego atinge os 55,9 % na Espanha, 59,1 % na Grécia e 38,4 % na Itália;

— A Alemanha e a França pretendem criar um «New deal for Europe» que tem como objetivo criar um fundo de 6 mil milhões de euros que servirá de garantia ao Banco Europeu de Investimento (BEI) e que lhe permitirá conceder crédito no valor de 60 mil milhões de euros;

— Para o presidente do BEI, e segundo um jornal alemão citado pelo «Expansión», «seria concebível estabelecer um vínculo entre as condições de crédito oferecidas e a criação de postos de trabalho e oportunidades de formação»;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quais os critérios que estarão na base da distribuição destes 6 mil milhões de euros pelos Estados-Membros?

2. Que projetos poderão ser apoiados pelo Banco Europeu de Investimento para combater o desemprego jovem?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(15 de julho de 2013)

1. Os critérios relativos à dotação para a Iniciativa para o Emprego dos Jovens (IEJ) são especificados no anexo III-B da proposta de alteração à proposta COM(2012) 496 final da Comissão. A Iniciativa para o Emprego dos Jovens estará disponível para todas as regiões NUTS 2 que tenham registado taxas de desemprego dos jovens com idades compreendidas entre 15 e 24 anos superiores a 25 % em 2012 («regiões elegíveis»). O cálculo da dotação será efetuado do seguinte modo:

— Os 3 mil milhões de euros da dotação adicional específica IEJ serão partilhados por todas as regiões elegíveis, com base no rácio entre o número de jovens desempregados na região elegível e o número total de jovens desempregados em todas as regiões elegíveis. Se o número de jovens desempregados de uma dada região elegível representar 1 % do número total dos jovens desempregados em todas as regiões elegíveis, essa região receberá 1 % da dotação específica IEJ (1 % de 3 mil milhões de euros = 30 milhões de euros). A dotação específica IEJ atribuída a cada Estado-Membro é a soma das dotações específicas IEJ destinadas a cada uma das suas regiões elegíveis.

— A dotação específica IEJ atribuída aos Estados-Membros tem de corresponder a, pelo menos, um montante equivalente de fundos do FSE, por conseguinte, no mínimo, a 3 mil milhões de euros do FSE a nível da UE.

Para mais informações, consultar o anexo III-B (página 4) da seguinte ligação:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0146:FIN:PT:PDF

2. Qualquer iniciativa que vise combater o desemprego dos jovens, nomeadamente apoiando a aplicação da Garantia Europeia da Juventude, é bem vinda. Mais especificamente, as iniciativas do BEI são descritas no relatório conjunto da Comissão e do BEI sobre o aumento da concessão de crédito à economia real elaborado na perspetiva do Conselho Europeu de junho.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005459/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Importance of the European Investment Bank in supporting youth employment

The European Council of 8 and 9 February 2013 adopted a new proposal entitled 'Conclusions' tabled by President Van Rompuy.

With the aim of tackling the serious social challenges caused by high levels of youth unemployment, President Van Rompuy proposed the creation of a Youth Employment Initiative, with a budget of EUR 6 billion.

The budget will be funded as follows:

Of this EUR 6 billion, EUR 3 billion will no longer be allocated to Member States but will be taken beforehand from a sum pre-allocated to the European Social Fund and which each Member State would already receive. Throughout the EU, this sum is calculated according to the total level of unemployment in each European region. The other EUR 3 billion will be assigned to a new budget line under sub-heading 1b on cohesion policy. This sum will be allocated to the Member States and added to the sum from the European Social Fund.

According to Eurostat, the youth unemployment rate in Portugal stands at 42.1%. Unemployment stands at 55.9% in Spain, 59.1% in Greece and 38.4% in Italy.

Germany and France plan to create a 'New deal for Europe' with the aim of setting up an EUR 6 billion fund as a guarantee for the European Investment Bank (EIB), enabling it to lend EUR 60 billion.

In the opinion of the President of the EIB and according to a German newspaper quoted by the Spanish newspaper *Expansión*, there is a conceivable link between the credit terms and conditions on offer and the creation of jobs and training opportunities.

1. On the basis of what criteria will this EUR 6 billion be distributed to the Member States?

2. What projects could be supported by the European Investment Bank to tackle youth unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

1. The criteria to allocate the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) are detailed in the Annex III ter of the proposal for an amendment to a Commission Proposal COM(2012) 496. The Youth Employment Initiative will be open to all NUTS 2 regions with a youth unemployment rate 15-24 above 25% in 2012 ('the eligible regions'). The calculation of the allocation will be carried out as follows:

— The 3 billion of the additional YEI specific allocation will be shared between every eligible region, on the basis of the ratio between the number of young unemployed persons in the eligible region and the total number of young unemployed persons in all eligible regions. If the number of unemployed young persons of a given eligible region represents 1% of the total number of unemployed young persons in all the eligible regions, then this region will get 1% of the YEI specific allocation (1% of EUR 3 billion = EUR 30 million). The YEI specific allocation for each Member State is the sum of the YEI specific allocations for each of its eligible regions.

— The MS YEI specific allocation has to be matched by at least an equivalent amount of ESF, therefore at least EUR 3 billion of ESF at EU level.

For more details you can consult Annex III ter (page 4) of the following link: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0146:FIN:EN:PDF

2. Any initiative aiming at tackling youth unemployment, especially by supporting the implementation of the Youth Guarantee is welcome. More specifically, EIB initiatives are described in the joint report from the Commission and the EIB on increase lending to the real economy prepared in view of the June European Council.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005460/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Iniciativa de apoio ao emprego jovem

Tendo em conta que:

— A 8 e 9 de fevereiro se realizou o Conselho Europeu, tendo sido aprovada uma nova proposta apresentada pelo Presidente Herman Van Rompuy, intitulada «Projeto de Conclusões»;

— No sentido de combater o grave flagelo social que decorre do elevado nível do desemprego jovem, o Presidente do Conselho, Herman Van Rompuy, propôs que fosse criada uma Iniciativa de Emprego Jovem com um orçamento de 6 mil milhões de euros;

— A origem do financiamento obedece aos seguintes pressupostos:

— uma primeira parcela de 3 mil milhões de euros deixa de ser dinheiro atribuído aos Estados-Membros e passa a ser uma pré-afetação do Fundo Social Europeu, que cada Estado-Membro já iria receber; no conjunto dos Estados-Membros da UE, a verba é calculada de acordo com o número global de desempregados nas diversas regiões europeias;

— uma segunda parcela de 3 mil milhões de euros constitui uma nova rubrica financeira, que ficará no âmbito do subcapítulo da Política de Coesão (1b); este valor será atribuído aos Estados-Membros e acrescentado ao valor do Fundo Social Europeu;

— Segundo o Eurostat, Portugal tem uma taxa de desemprego jovem de 42,1 %, a Espanha de 55,9 %, a Grécia de 59,1 % e a Itália de 38,4 %;

— A Alemanha e a França pretendem criar um «New Deal» para a Europa, cujo objetivo consiste em instituir um fundo de 6 mil milhões de euros, que servirá de garantia ao Banco Europeu de Investimento (BEI) e lhe permitirá conceder créditos no valor de 60 mil milhões de euros;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

A iniciativa dos governos alemão e francês é complementar em relação aos 6 mil milhões de euros destinados a combater o desemprego jovem, que irão fazer parte do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020? Ou o dinheiro deixará de ser atribuído aos Estados-Membros, conforme a proposta do Conselho, e passará a ser gerido diretamente pelo Banco Europeu de Investimento?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(3 de julho de 2013)

O Senhor Deputado tem razão ao referir as conclusões do Conselho Europeu, de 7 e 8 de fevereiro, que lançam a Iniciativa para o Emprego dos Jovens (IEJ), financiada ao abrigo do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (QFP) de 2014-2020.

A Comissão acelerou as propostas legislativas necessárias e apresentou-as ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho em março de 2013. Em 19 de junho, na sua Comunicação «Trabalhar juntos para os jovens europeus — apelo à ação contra o desemprego dos jovens», a Comissão propôs disponibilizar a totalidade do montante de 6 mil milhões de euros em dotações de autorização no decurso dos dois primeiros anos do próximo QFP. Tal foi subsequentemente confirmado pelas conclusões do Conselho Europeu de 27 e 28 de junho.

Quaisquer propostas separadas e adicionais que abordem a questão do desemprego juvenil posteriormente apresentadas por alguns governos dos Estados-Membros, como tentativa para obter outras soluções não substituem nem anulam as conclusões do Conselho Europeu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005460/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Initiative to support youth employment

The European Council of 8 and 9 February 2013 adopted a new proposal entitled 'Conclusions' tabled by President Van Rompuy.

With the aim of tackling the serious social challenges caused by high levels of youth unemployment, President Van Rompuy proposed the creation of a Youth Employment Initiative, with a budget of EUR 6 billion.

The budget will be funded as follows:

— a first tranche of EUR 3 billion will no longer be allocated to Member States but instead will be pre-allocated to the European Social Fund that each Member State would already receive. In all EU Member States, this sum is calculated according to the total level of unemployment in each European region;

— a second tranche of EUR 3 billion will be assigned to a new budget line under sub-heading 1b on cohesion policy. This sum will be allocated to the Member States and added to the sum from the European Social Fund.

According to Eurostat, the youth unemployment rate stands at 42.1% in Portugal, 55.9% in Spain, 59.1% in Greece and 38.4% in Italy.

Germany and France plan to create a 'New deal for Europe' with the aim of setting up an EUR 6 billion fund as a guarantee for the European Investment Bank (EIB), enabling it to lend EUR 60 billion.

Is the German and French Governments' initiative in addition to the EUR 6 billion for tackling youth unemployment, which will come under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, or will the money no longer be allocated to the Member States, as proposed by the Council, and be managed directly by the European Investment Bank?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

The Honourable Member is correct when referring to the European Council conclusions of 7-8 February which launch the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), to be funded under the MFF 2014-2020.

The Commission has fast-tracked the necessary legal proposals and presented them to the

European Parliament and Council in March 2013. On 19 June, in its communication *Working together for Europe's young people. A call to action on youth unemployment*. the Commission proposed to make available the entire amount of EUR 6 billion in commitments within the first two years of the next MFF. This has subsequently been confirmed by the 27-28 June European Council conclusions.

Any separate and additional proposals to address the issue of youth unemployment subsequently launched by some Member State governments as an attempt to provide additional solutions, do not replace or annul the European Council conclusions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005461/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Recursos hídricos del río Ebro

Los grupos sociales y otros agentes interesados en la cuenca baja del río Ebro han trabajado intensamente durante los últimos diez años en un intento de garantizar que la Directiva marco sobre el agua se aplique correctamente en lo que respecta al nuevo Plan de Cuenca del río, incluyendo el objetivo de «no deterioro y mantenimiento de un buen estado ecológico» para garantizar la calidad y la disponibilidad futura de los recursos hídricos.

Sin embargo, la Administración española no ha mostrado voluntad para dar cumplimiento a la Directiva, con graves retrasos en el calendario previsto, lo que hace sospechar a estos agentes sociales una «agenda oculta» del Gobierno en la que pretende continuar con la política actual de oferta de agua al mejor postor, haciendo caso omiso de la idea de la Directiva de establecer caudales mínimos de los ríos antes de «repartir» el agua. Entre estos grupos, la Plataforma en Defensa del Ebro y la Coordinadora Contra-transvasaments han presentado la petición 0938/2012 al Parlamento Europeo ([1]).

¿Qué opina la Comisión de esta situación? ¿Qué acciones piensa acometer? ¿Considera la Comisión que las políticas del Estado español en materia de recursos hídricos tienden a la sostenibilidad?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de junio de 2013)

Tras el recurso presentado por la Comisión, el Tribunal condenó a España por no haber aprobado ni notificado los planes hidrológicos de cuenca a que obliga la Directiva marco del agua (DMA, 2000/60/CE ([2])). La Comisión está siguiendo muy de cerca la ejecución de la sentencia por España y, si considera que no está siendo satisfactoria, estudiará la conveniencia de emprender acciones.

La Comisión ha manifestado repetidamente (veánse sus respuestas a las preguntas escritas 5592/2009, 4005/2010, 4006/2010 y 4007/2010) que considera importante que se establezca en los planes hidrológicos de cuenca el flujo ecológico adecuado en las cuencas cuyas aguas se utilicen intensivamente, al efecto de garantizar el cumplimiento de los objetivos de la Directiva marco del agua.

Según la información más reciente comunicada por las autoridades españolas, está ultimándose el plan hidrológico de cuenca del río Ebro sobre la base de las observaciones recibidas en la fas de consulta, que finalizó en noviembre de 2012. La Comisión evaluará los planes cuando estén ultimados y le sean comunicados. Será entonces cuando esté en condiciones de forjarse una opinión sobre su contenido y de decidir si conviene adoptar medidas. Si se producen más retrasos, la Comisión no dudará en tomar nuevas medidas para hacer que se cumpla la normativa.

([1]) http://dmadeltaebre.blogspot.com.es/
([2]) DO L 327 de 22.12.2000, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005461/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Water resources of the River Ebro

Social groups and other stakeholders in the lower Ebro basin have been working hard for the last 10 years to ensure that the Water Framework Directive is properly implemented with regard to the new river basin management plan, including the aim of 'non-deterioration and maintenance of good ecological status' in order to ensure the quality and future availability of its water resources.

The Spanish authorities, however, have shown no desire to comply with the directive, as its implementation is seriously behind schedule. This has led these social stakeholders to suspect that the Government has a hidden agenda of trying to carry on with the current policy of providing water to the highest bidder, disregarding the idea set out in the directive of establishing minimum flows in rivers before distributing the water. Two of these groups, the Plataforma en Defensa del Ebro (Ebro Defence Platform) and the Coordinadora Antitransvasaments (Anti-Transfer Coordinating Body), presented Petition 0938/2012 to Parliament ([1]).

What is the Commission's opinion on this situation? What action does it intend to take? Does the Commission believe that the Spanish Government's policies on water resources will lead to sustainability?

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

Following the referral by the Commission, the Court condemned Spain for the lack of adoption and reporting of River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) under the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC ([2])). The Commission is following very closely the execution of the judgment by Spain and will consider taking action in case the progress is not satisfactory.

The Commission has repeatedly insisted (see replies to written questions 5592/2009, 4005/2010, 4006/2010 and 4007/2010) that it considers it important that the appropriate ecological flow is set out in the RBMPs in those basins subject to intense use of water resources, in order to ensure the achievement of the WFD objectives.

According to the latest information provided by the Spanish authorities, the Ebro RBMP is being finalised based on the comments received during the consultation period which finished in November 2012. The Commission will assess the plans once they have been adopted and reported. It will then be in a position to have an opinion on their contents and decide appropriate measures. If further delays are incurred, the Commission will not hesitate to continue its enforcement action.

([1]) http://dmadeltaebre.blogspot.com.es/.
([2]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005462/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Participaciones preferentes

Tras la entrada en vigor de la Ley 13/1985 de coeficientes de inversión, recursos propios y obligaciones de información de los intermediarios financieros, se legalizaron en España las participaciones preferentes, relativas a la posibilidad de que el inversor recibiese un interés por su dinero invertido en sociedades filiales de los bancos. No se le dotaba de poder de decisión y, además, el banco podía dejar de pagar de manera ilimitada y sin acumular deuda, práctica que las entidades bancarias y de crédito ya llevaban tiempo realizando. Todo ello, junto con el hecho de que los fondos de la sociedad filial se integraban en el capital social de la sociedad principal, provocó que, con la llegada de la crisis, el dinero invertido no pudiese ser retornado ni produjese ningún rendimiento a los inversores. El Gobierno español lanzó una serie de normativas (Real Decreto Ley 20/2012 y 24/2012) en las que se reforzó la capacidad de cancelación del pago de intereses de las preferentes y se incrementó la dificultad para impugnar los contratos, igualando a los inversores en preferentes a los accionistas a la hora de soportar las pérdidas del banco. De la misma forma, la solución del arbitraje tan solo se plantea para las personas que cumplan los requisitos fijados por el FROB. ([1])

Estos contratos fijan cláusulas abusivas y desleales claramente contrarias a las Directivas 2005/20/CE y 93/13/CEE, ya que, lejos de presentar de forma clara, inteligible y oportuna la información, se esconden datos relevantes que impiden a los inversores tomar las decisiones con conocimiento de causa, lo que produce también un claro desequilibrio de las partes en detrimento del consumidor, al disponer la entidad bancaria de la facultad de no pagar los intereses. Ante la petición 0513/2012, la Comisión se pronunció en el sentido de entender que, según la Directiva 2004/39/CE, era necesario informar al ciudadano de manera imparcial, clara y no engañosa, asegurándose la idoneidad o aptitud del cliente con respecto a un determinado producto de inversión, evaluando la experiencia y los conocimientos necesarios para comprender los riesgos que conllevan el producto o el servicio de inversión ofrecidos y teniendo en especial consideración a los clientes minoristas. Sin embargo, pese a las claras pruebas expuestas, la Comisión se escuda, como ya indicó al contestar la pregunta E-000587/2012, en el argumento de solo poder intervenir en casos de transposición nacional incorrecta o de aplicación incorrecta del Derecho de la Unión.

¿Realmente piensa mantener la Comisión que no nos encontramos ante un caso de aplicación o transposición incorrecta? ¿Qué acciones pretende acometer? ¿Cree que los requisitos excluyentes que fija el FROB para el acceso al arbitraje suponen una solución ante la evidente falta de diligencia de España en la ejecución y control de las normas de la DMIF?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de julio de 2013)

La Directiva 2004/39/CE (MiFID) ([2]) regula la prestación de servicios de inversión por parte de las empresas de inversión y las entidades de crédito en relación con los instrumentos financieros, incluidas las participaciones preferentes y otros instrumentos de deuda subordinada. La Comisión mantiene que es competencia de las autoridades y órganos jurisdiccionales españoles garantizar que se haya respetado toda la legislación relevante sobre protección del consumidor cuando se realizó la venta de estos productos financieros. Por otra parte, los servicios de la Comisión han sido informados de diversas iniciativas de supervisión y regulación emprendidas por la CNMV en relación con la venta de participaciones preferentes.

En particular, España ha respetado su obligación específica en virtud del Memorando de Entendimiento, firmado por la Comisión, en nombre del MEDE, y España, el 23 de julio de 2012, es decir «proponer normas específicas para limitar la venta por parte de los bancos de instrumentos de deuda subordinada a clientes minoristas no cualificados y para mejorar sustancialmente el proceso de venta de instrumentos no cubiertos por el Fondo de Garantía de Depósitos a dichos clientes» en virtud del Real Decreto-ley 24/2012.

Corresponde a las autoridades españolas organizar y regular el acceso al arbitraje en caso de venta de participaciones preferentes.

([1]) http://www.frob.es/notas/20130417_PREFERENTES.pdf
([2]) DO L 145 de 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005462/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Preference shares

After Law No 13/1985 on investment rates, own resources and reporting obligations for financial intermediaries came into force, preference shares were legalised in Spain, enabling investors to earn interest on money they had invested in bank subsidiaries. It did not give them decision-making powers, and the bank could also stop paying indefinitely without running up a debt, which is something that banks and credit institutions had already been doing for some time. The result of all that and of the fact that the subsidiaries' funds were incorporated into the holding company's share capital was that, when the crisis came, the money invested could not be paid back or provide the investors with any return. The Spanish Government passed a series of regulations (Royal Decree-Laws Nos 20/2012 and 24/2012) strengthening the ability of banks to cancel interest payments on preference shares and making it more difficult to contest contracts, while making preference share investors equal to ordinary shareholders when it came to bearing a bank's losses. Similarly, the arbitration solution was only made available to people who met the requirements set by the FROB (Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring) ([1]).

These contracts establish abusive and unfair clauses that clearly run counter to Directives 2005/20/EC and 93/13/EEC since, far from presenting information clearly, intelligibly and appropriately, they conceal relevant details, thereby preventing investors from making informed decisions. This also results in a manifest imbalance between the parties, to the consumer's detriment, since the banking institution has the power not to pay any interest. In response to Petition 0513/2012, the Commission took the view that under Directive 2004/39/EC such institutions should provide the public with information that is fair, clear and not misleading, ensure that a particular investment product is suitable or appropriate for the customer, assess whether the customer has the necessary experience and knowledge to understand the risk involved in the product or investment service provided, and take retail customers into special consideration. Despite the clear evidence that has been presented, however, and as it indicated in its answer to Question E-000587/2012, the Commission hides behind the argument that it can only intervene in cases where Member States have incorrectly transposed or implemented EC law.

Is the Commission really going to maintain that this is not a case of incorrect implementation or transposition? What action does it intend to take? Does it believe that the exclusory requirements set by the FROB for access to arbitration will lead to a solution, given Spain's obvious lack of diligence in implementing and monitoring the rules laid down by the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

Directive 2004/39/EC (MiFID) ([2]) regulates the provision of investment services by investment firms and credit institutions in relation to financial instruments, including preference shares and other subordinated debt instruments. The Commission maintains that it is for the competent Spanish authorities and courts to ensure that all the relevant investor protection legislation was adhered to when the sale of these financial products was carried out. Moreover, the Commission services have been informed about several supervisory and regulatory initiatives in relation to the sale of preference shares undertaken by CNMV.

In particular, Spain has complied with its specific obligation under the memorandum of understanding, signed by the Commission, on behalf of the ESM, and Spain on 23 July 2012, i.e. to 'propose specific legislation to limit the sale by banks of subordinate debt instruments to non-qualified retail clients and to substantially improve the process for the sale of any instruments not covered by the deposit guarantee fund to retail clients.' by virtue of Royal-Decree Law 24/2012.

It is the competence of the Spanish authorities to organise and regulate access to arbitration in case of the sale of preferential shares.

([1]) http://www.frob.es/notas/20130417_PREFERENTES.pdf
([2]) OJ L 145, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005463/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Oficinas farmacéuticas de Catalunya

La situación de las Oficinas Farmacéuticas en Catalunya se ha vuelto insostenible en los últimos tiempos ante la falta de pago por parte de la Generalitat de Catalunya, llegando incluso a más de 100 días de retraso reiterado en varias facturas. Esta situación, combinada con una reducción importante de la aportación de la Generalitat al sector, volviendo a un gasto de niveles similares a los de 2009 y de una reducción del 22,17 % en inversión farmacéutica desde 2009, ha llevado a las Oficinas a la necesidad de acceder a líneas de crédito que han supuesto un sobrecoste de gastos financieros (a razón del 4,52 % del primer tercio de deuda y de intereses superiores para el resto) que en muchos casos no se han podido asumir, lo que ha llevado a algunas a la quiebra.

Esta situación ha supuesto un duro golpe para la ocupación del sector, de alrededor de 10 000 trabajadores, y el desarrollo de los diferentes proyectos de innovación llevados a cabo en los últimos años. Supone asimismo un riesgo importante al ser el acceso de la población a los tratamientos farmacológicos un objetivo social básico.

Las administraciones del Reino de España están incumpliendo el marco contractual que han firmado con las Oficinas de Farmacia catalanas, la Directiva europea sobre morosidad (2011/7/UE) y disposiciones legales del Reino de España, entre otros el Real Decreto Ley 4/2013.

— ¿Cree la Comisión que las medidas del Gobierno catalán son contrarias al Derecho comunitario? En caso afirmativo, ¿qué acciones piensa tomar?

— ¿Se plantea la Comisión la creación de algún tipo de crédito para permitir el correcto funcionamiento del sector estratégico que representa la atención farmacéutica? En caso contrario, ¿qué tipo de acciones piensa tomar la Comisión para ayudar a este sector?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a las respuestas dadas a las preguntas E-004062/13 de D. Santiago Fisas Ayxela y E-004001/13 de D. Ramon Tremosa i Balcells ([1]).

Si la evaluación jurídica de las medidas nacionales de incorporación de la Directiva al Derecho nacional pone de manifiesto el incumplimiento de los requisitos de dicha Directiva, la Comisión puede emprender las acciones pertinentes y, si procede, incoar un procedimiento de infracción.

Las autoridades nacionales españolas han adoptado un acto que ha puesto en marcha un mecanismo de financiación para que las autoridades locales y las comunidades autónomas cumplan sus obligaciones pendientes con respecto a sus proveedores. Por lo tanto, la Comisión aconseja a Su Señoría que se ponga directamente en contacto con el Gobierno español.

La UE no dispone de financiación específica para los productos farmacéuticos que se destinan directamente a las farmacias. No obstante, en el marco del PIC ([2]) 2007-2013, la Comisión apoya a las empresas de la UE mediante los instrumentos que ofrece el FEI y que vehicula a través de los intermediarios financieros ([3]). Concretamente, los sistemas de garantía financiados con cargo a dicho programa van dirigidos a ayudar a las empresas de todos los sectores, farmacias incluidas, a tener un mejor acceso al crédito bancario.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Programa de Competitividad e Innovación.
([3]) En su mayoría, bancos, fondos de garantía y fondos de capital riesgo.

Las competencias fundamentales del BEI consisten en proporcionar financiación y asesoramiento a proyectos de inversión sólidos y sostenibles que contribuyan a alcanzar los objetivos políticos de la UE; sin embargo, el BEI carece de competencias para intervenir en el caso de retrasos en los pagos. A través de los préstamos con intermediación a las PYME, el BEI garantiza la disponibilidad de financiación específica para este tipo de empresas, farmacias incluidas, lo que ayuda a la economía real incrementando el volumen de financiación disponible y reduciendo el coste del crédito a las PYME gracias a la bajada de los tipos de interés y a la concesión de préstamos a más largo plazo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005463/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Pharmacies in Catalonia

Pharmacies in Catalonia have recently been put in an unsustainable position by the Autonomous Government of Catalonia's failure to pay its bills, because payment has repeatedly been more than 100 days overdue on a number of invoices. This situation, together with a significant reduction in the Government's contribution to the sector — with spending back down to 2009 levels and a 22.17% reduction in pharmaceutical investment since 2009 — has forced pharmacies to resort to credit. This has resulted in the extra cost of finance (at 4.52% on the first third of the debt and higher interest rates on the rest), which many pharmacies have been unable to absorb, and consequently some have gone bankrupt.

This situation has had a severe impact both on jobs in the sector, which employs some 10 000 workers, and on the development of the various innovative projects carried out in recent years. It also poses a major threat, since public access to medicinal treatments is a basic social objective.

The Spanish authorities are failing to comply with the framework agreement that they signed with the Catalan pharmacies, Directive 2011/7/EU on late payments and the legal provisions of the Kingdom of Spain, including Royal Decree-Law No 4/2013.

— Does the Commission believe that the measures adopted by the Catalan Government run counter to EC law? If so, what action does it intend to take?

— Is the Commission considering setting up some kind of credit to enable the strategic pharmacy sector to operate smoothly? If not, what kind of action is the Commission thinking of taking to help this sector?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to E-004062/13 by Sr. Santiago Fisas Ayxela and E-4001/13 by Sr. Ramon Tremosa i Balcells ([1]).

If the legal assessment of the national measures transposing the directive into national law reveals non-compliance with the requirements of the directive, the Commission may take necessary action including, where appropriate, infringement procedures.

Spain's National Authorities have adopted a regulation that has put in place a funding mechanism for both the Local Authorities and the Autonomous Communities to meet outstanding obligations in respect of their providers. The Commission would therefore suggest that the Honourable Member contacts the Spanish Government directly.

The EU does not have specific funding for pharmaceuticals going directly to pharmacies. However, within the CIP ([2]) 2007-2013, the Commission supports EU companies with instruments provided by the EIF through financial intermediaries ([3]). In particular, guarantee schemes supported by this programme are available to help businesses across sectors, including pharmacies, to have better access to bank loans.

The EIB's core remit is to provide finance and expertise for sound and sustainable investment projects that contribute to EU policy objectives, but it is not to intervene in payment delays. Through its intermediated SME loans, the EIB ensures the availability of dedicated funding for SMEs, including pharmacies, that helps the real economy by increasing the amount of funding available, reducing the costs of borrowing by SMEs through lower interest rates and providing longer-term loans.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) The Competitiveness and Innovation Programme.
([3]) Mainly banks, guarantee funds and venture capital funds.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005465/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(16. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Ausgaben des Rates für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit

Am 12.5.2013 sagte der österreichische Außenminister Michael Spindelegger bei einer Diskussion in Wien: „Das größte Versäumnis der EU war es, keinen PR-Haushalt einzuplanen".

Welchen Betrag gab der Rat jeweils in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit und Werbung aus?

Antwort
(11. September 2013)

Das Generalsekretariat des Rates verwaltet einen Etat für öffentliche Aktivitäten und Veranstaltungen der beiden Organe — des Europäischen Rates und des Rates der Europäischen Union —, deren Sekretariatsgeschäfte es wahrnimmt. Dieser Etat dient der Finanzierung der Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, also beispielsweise von Besuchen der Öffentlichkeit, Messen und Ausstellungen oder des Tags der offenen Tür. Ein begrenzter Geldbetrag ist für die Veröffentlichung von Vergabeverfahren oder speziellen Einstellungsverfahren in Zeitungen vorgesehen.

Die Gesamtbeträge, die der Rat für diese Bereiche in den vergangenen drei Jahren ausgegeben hat, sind der nachstehenden Tabelle zu entnehmen.

2010	2011	2012
157 580 EUR	169 531 EUR	147 446 EUR

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005465/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Spending by the Council on public relations

On 12 May 2013, Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger stated during a meeting in Vienna: 'The EU's biggest mistake was not to set aside a budget for PR.'

How much did the Council spend on public relations work and advertising in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

The General Secretariat of the Council manages a budget for public activities and events for the two institutions it serves, the European Council and the Council of the European Union. This budget is used to finance public relations work such as visits for the public, fairs, exhibitions, and the Open Day. A limited amount of money is allocated to publishing tendering or specific recruitment procedures in newspapers.

The total amount spent by the Council in these areas in the past three years was as follows:

2010	2011	2012
EUR 157 580	EUR 169 531	EUR 147 446

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005466/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(16. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Ausgaben des Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienstes für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit

Am 12.5.2013 sagte der österreichische Außenminister Michael Spindelegger bei einer Diskussion in Wien: „Das größte Versäumnis der EU war es, kein Budget für PR einzuplanen".

Welche Summe gab der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 insgesamt für innereuropäische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit und Werbung aus?

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

Da der EAD am 1. Januar 2011 errichtet wurde, wurden 2010 keine Ausgaben getätigt.

Der EAD gab 2011 54 000 EUR und 2012 188 611 EUR für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit und Werbung innerhalb von Europa aus.

Darüber hinaus hat der innerhalb der Kommission für die Verwaltung des Presse- und Informationshaushalts der Delegationen der Europäischen Union zuständige Dienst für außenpolitische Instrumente, der der Hohen Vertreterin in ihrer Eigenschaft als Vizepräsidentin der Kommission untersteht, in Europa folgende Beträge für die Pflege der Websites der Delegationen der Europäischen Union ausgegeben:

— 2011: 132 712 EUR

— 2012: 92 494 EUR

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005466/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Spending by the European External Action Service on public relations

On 12 May 2013, Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger stated during a meeting in Vienna: 'The EU's biggest mistake was not to set aside a budget for PR'.

How much in total did the European External Action Service spend on public relations work and advertising within Europe in 2010, 2011 and 2012?

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

The EEAS was set up on 1 January 2011. It therefore incurred no expenditure in 2010.

The EEAS spent EUR 54 000 in 2011 and EUR 188 611 in 2012 on public relations work and advertising within Europe.

In addition, the Foreign Policy Instruments Service, which is the Commission service responsible for managing the Press and Information budget of European Union delegations and which is placed under the Authority of the High Representative in her capacity as Vice-President of the Commission, spent the following amounts in Europe on the maintenance of the European Union delegations websites:

— 2011: EUR 132 712;

— 2012: EUR 92 494.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005467/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(16. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Ausgaben der Agenturen der Europäischen Kommission für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit

Am 12.5.2013 sagte der österreichische Außenminister Michael Spindelegger bei einer Diskussion in Wien: „Das größte Versäumnis der EU war es, kein Budget für PR einzuplanen".

Welche Summe gaben die einzelnen Agenturen der Kommission in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 jeweils für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit aus?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juni 2013)

Die dezentralen Agenturen der Europäischen Union sind Körperschaften des europäischen öffentlichen Rechts. Obwohl die meisten von ihnen finanzielle Beiträge aus dem Unionshaushalt erhalten, genießen sie finanzielle und administrative Autonomie und sind bei der Wahrnehmung ihres Mandats und ihrer Aufgaben unabhängig. Sie unterliegen der jährlichen Entlastung durch das Europäische Parlament für die Ausführung des Haushaltsplans der Union; ihre Rechnungslegung ist öffentlich.

Die Kommission betreibt keine zentrale Erfassung der Informationen über die Ausgaben einzelner dezentraler Agenturen für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit. Der Herr Abgeordnete möge sich deshalb diesbezüglich an jede dezentrale Agentur wenden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005467/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Spending by the agencies of the European Commission on public relations

On 12 May 2013, Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger stated during a meeting in Vienna: 'The EU's biggest mistake was not to set aside a budget for PR.'

How much did the individual agencies of the Commission spend on public relations work in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

European Union decentralised agencies are bodies governed by European public law. Although most receive financial contributions from the Union budget, they have financial and administrative autonomy and are independent in the execution of their assigned missions and tasks. They are subject to an annual discharge by the European Parliament for the execution of the Union budget and their accounts are public.

The Commission does not centralise information on the amount spent by individual decentralised agencies in public relations and therefore invites the Honourable Member to address its request to each decentralised agency.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005468/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(16. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Ausgaben der Kommission für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit

Am 12.5.2013 sagte der österreichische Außenminister Michael Spindelegger bei einer Diskussion in Wien: „Das größte Versäumnis der EU war es, kein Budget für PR einzuplanen".

Welche Summe gab die Kommission in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 jeweils für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit aus?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juni 2013)

Die Europäische Kommission verfügt nicht über eine spezifische Haushaltslinie für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005468/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Commission spending on public relations

On 12 May 2013, Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger stated during a meeting in Vienna: 'The EU's biggest mistake was not to set aside a budget for PR.'

How much did the Commission spend on public relations work in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively?

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

The European Commission does not have a specific budget for public relations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005471/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Limiti alle carte di soggiorno emesse dalla Confederazione Svizzera per cittadini europei

In base al paragrafo 4 dell'articolo 10 dell'accordo tra l'UE e i suoi Stati membri, da una parte, e la Confederazione Svizzera, dall'altra, sulla libera circolazione delle persone, la Svizzera ha deciso unilateralmente di limitare il numero di carte di soggiorno di lungo periodo concesse ai cittadini degli Stati membri di recente adesione all'UE, prevedendo di estendere tale provvedimento anche ad altri Stati.

Una comunicazione inviata per posta elettronica dall'ambasciatore Roberto Balzaretti, capo della missione della Svizzera presso l'Unione europea in data 24.4.2013, informa in merito all'applicazione di quote di 2.180 permessi di breve periodo da emettere nei prossimi 12 mesi, laddove il citato articolo 10 parla di un minimo di 15.000, e della probabile applicazione di un limite di 53.700 permessi per un tempo superiore all'anno, laddove lo stesso articolo fa riferimento ad un minimo di 115.500.

Tralasciando le considerazioni sulla solidarietà di un partner commerciale in tempo di crisi, possono le autorità competenti della Commissione far sapere:

1. se è possibile conoscere i dati completi ed ufficiali, come previsto dal paragrafo 6 del citato articolo 10;

2. quale obiettivo perseguivano i negoziatori dell'UE quando hanno accettato tale clausola, lasciando alla Svizzera un potere arbitrario completamente scollegato dalla situazione del mercato del lavoro dei paesi contraenti e quale articolo del citato accordo è inteso come contrappeso della suddetta clausola;

3. se il secondo capoverso del paragrafo 1 del predetto articolo 10 sia da ritenersi in contrasto con le tempistiche previste dal paragrafo 4 dello stesso articolo?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2013)

La Commissione desidera informare l'onorevole deputata che l'insieme completo di cifre ufficiali sarà pubblicato fra poco sul sito web dell'Ufficio federale della migrazione ([1]).

L'accordo sulla libera circolazione delle persone appartiene a un pacchetto di sette accordi interrelati noto quale «Bilaterali I», che è stato adottato dal Consiglio. I negoziati che hanno esteso una delle quattro libertà a uno Stato non membro dell'UE non avrebbero potuto essere conclusi senza la clausola di salvaguardia considerata l'importanza attribuita dalla Svizzera all'inclusione nell'accordo di un meccanismo per regolare gli ingressi di lavoratori unionali.

Il secondo comma dell'articolo 10, paragrafo 1, fa riferimento alle quote per i permessi di residenza, mentre l'articolo 10, paragrafo 4, si riferisce a una clausola di salvaguardia. Le quote dovevano applicarsi per un periodo massimo di cinque anni dopo l'entrata in vigore dell'accordo. L'articolo 10, paragrafo 4, stipula una misura addizionale, una clausola di salvaguardia, al fine di prevenire afflussi eccezionalmente elevati di popolazione una volta scaduto l'articolo 10, paragrafo 1. Non vi è pertanto incongruenza tra le delimitazioni temporali dei due articoli.

([1]) http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/de/home/dokumentation/zahlen_und_fakten/auslaenderstatistik/monitor.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005471/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Limits on residence cards issued by the Swiss Confederation to EU citizens

Pursuant to Article 10(4) of the Agreement between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the Swiss Confederation, of the other, on the free movement of persons, Switzerland has taken the unilateral decision to limit the number of long-term residence cards issued to citizens of Member States that have recently joined the EU, and plans to extend this measure to other States, too.

According to an electronic communication sent by Ambassador Roberto Balzaretti, Head of the Swiss Mission to the European Union, on 24 April 2013, Switzerland has applied a quota of 2 180 short-term permits to be issued over the next 12 months, whereas the aforementioned Article 10 stipulates a minimum of 15 000, and will most likely apply a quota of 53 700 permits for a period exceeding one year, whereas Article 10 refers to a minimum of 115 500.

Leaving aside any thoughts on the solidarity shown by a trading partner during a period of crisis, can the competent authorities of the Commission say:

1. whether it is possible, pursuant to Article 10(6), to see the complete set of official figures;

2. what the EU negotiators' objective was when they agreed to such a clause, giving Switzerland an arbitrary power that has no regard whatsoever for the labour market situation in the countries which are Contracting Parties to the Agreement, and which article of that Agreement is meant to compensate for the aforementioned clause;

3. whether the second subparagraph of Article 10(1) should be considered to conflict with the time frames provided for in paragraph 4 of that article?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the complete set of official figures will be published soon on the website of the Swiss Migration Office ([1]).

The Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons belongs to a package of seven interlinked agreements known as 'Bilaterals I', that were adopted by the Council. The negotiations which extended one of the four freedoms to a non-EU Member State could not have been concluded without the safeguard clause in view of the importance attached by the Swiss side to include in the agreement a mechanism to regulate the inflow of EU workers

The second subparagraph of Article 10(1) refers to quotas for residence permits, whereas Article 10(4) refers to a safeguard clause. Quotas were to apply for a maximum period of five years after the agreement came into force. Article 10(4) stipulates an additional measure, a safeguard clause, in order to prevent sudden exceptionally high influx of population, once Article 10(1) expires. There is therefore no conflict between the time frames of the two articles.

([1]) http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/de/home/dokumentation/zahlen_und_fakten/auslaenderstatistik/monitor.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005472/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Allergie in aumento: nuove cause ma scarsa sensibilizzazione e conoscenza in materia

Negli ultimi anni è in continuo aumento il numero di pazienti che soffrono di allergie. Le principali cause sono legate alla scarsa informazione e a una diagnosi a volte superficiale da parte del personale sanitario, poco sensibilizzato e formato in materia. Il rischio maggiore è che alcuni sintomi, ritenuti «normali» e quindi sottovalutati, sfocino in una complicazione clinica, richiedendo maggiori cure e spese mediche. L'impatto delle allergie sulle attività quotidiane e sulle famiglie è, infatti, considerevole: i costi indiretti rappresentano il 60 % dei costi complessivi, cui vanno aggiunti i costi «intangibili», in termini di disagio e qualità della vita del paziente. In particolare, si rileva come la frequenza di disturbi allergici sia aumentata specialmente nelle aree metropolitane e sia più diffuse nell'infanzia, diventando perciò una causa importante di ospedalizzazione. Ad esempio, i sintomi di asma e rinite allergica derivano anche da allergie alimentari e non solo dalle cause più comunemente conosciute, come pollini e acari. Uno studio condotto dalle università di Nottingham e Auckland evidenzia inoltre che una cattiva alimentazione può, nei casi in cui il paziente già soffra di asma o rinite allergica, peggiorarne i sintomi (su un campione di 500.000 bambini fra i 6 e 14 anni provenienti da 50 paesi, che soffrivano di tali allergie, per avere mangiato il cosiddetto cibo spazzatura, il 39 % vedeva aumentare i sintomi asmatici e il 27 % quelli di rinite rispetto a chi seguiva una alimentazione corretta ove i sintomi addirittura diminuivano dall'11-14 % circa).

Considerato che il numero dei casi di allergie è in aumento e di conseguenza aumenta il relativo costo dei farmaci; le cause ed i fattori di rischio di tali allergie sono molteplici e diverse rispetto a quelle già normalmente conosciute, legate ad acari e pollini; il personale sanitario è a volte poco formato sulle cause e sui rischi delle allergie; manca una sensibilizzazione ed informazione sulle cause e i sintomi delle allergie e molte allergie sono legate alla alimentazione, per cui bisogna fare attenzione ai cibi che si assumono se già sussistono delle allergie alimentari, può la Commissione precisare:

1. come intende intervenire per sensibilizzare sia i bambini che gli adulti sul problema delle allergie;

2. come intende formare ed aggiornare il personale sanitario nello specifico;

3. come intende sensibilizzare le persone circa una corretta alimentazione;

4. se intende sviluppare un modello standard per la formazione di allergologi nelle facoltà di medicina?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole del crescente problema delle allergie in Europa, in particolare per quanto riguarda i bambini. Benché non esistano campagne di sensibilizzazione specifiche, la Commissione ha sostenuto progetti in materia di ambiente e salute mediante il programma per la salute ([1]), ([2]).

La formazione del personale sanitario è una questione che rientra nella gestione dei sistemi sanitari e, come tale, è di competenza degli Stati membri. Lo stesso vale per quanto riguarda lo sviluppo di modelli standard per la formazione di allergologi nelle facoltà di medicina, una materia in cui la Commissione non ha competenze per intervenire.

La Commissione promuove le iniziative dell'UE che intendono aiutare i cittadini a scegliere abitudini alimentari e stili di vita più sani, come indicato nella strategia europea sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([3]). La strategia è incentrata sulle informazioni da fornire ai consumatori in materia di alimenti e nutrizione, tenuto conto delle patologie collegate all'alimentazione, comprese le allergie e le intolleranze alimentari.

La legislazione dell'UE in materia di etichettatura dei prodotti alimentari per quanto riguarda gli allergeni stabilisce che tutti gli ingredienti (con poche eccezioni) devono ora essere elencati sui prodotti alimentari preconfezionati e che la presenza di allergeni riconosciuti deve essere indicata chiaramente sull'etichetta ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2003310.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20091206.
([3]) COM(2007)279 definitivo.
([4]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE concernente l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità, modificata dalla direttiva 2003/89/CE per quanto riguarda l'indicazione degli ingredienti contenuti nei prodotti alimentari, in base alla quale determinati ingredienti allergenici e prodotti derivati devono essere indicati sull'etichetta dei prodotti alimentari. Quest'ultima direttiva ha modificato la

Anche il sito web dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) fornisce informazioni sull'etichettatura degli allergeni alimentari in Europa ([5]). Il gruppo scientifico responsabile per le allergie alimentari, ad esempio, ha formulato una serie di pareri che sono serviti da base scientifica per la legislazione in materia di etichettatura e le esenzioni da tale legislazione.

direttiva 2000/13/CE con l'aggiunta dell'allegato IIIbis che elenca tali allergeni. Questo allegato è stato modificato dalla direttiva 2006/142/CE (che ha aggiunto il lupino e i molluschi all'elenco di allergeni) e dalla direttiva 2007/68/CE (che elenca tutti gli ingredienti allergenici soggetti all'obbligo di etichettatura nonché alcuni prodotti derivati che possono essere esclusi da tale obbligo).

([5]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005472/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Increase in allergies: new causes, but a lack of awareness and knowledge of the issue

The number of allergy sufferers has been steadily increasing over the last few years. The main reasons for this increase are a lack of information and sometimes superficial diagnoses by healthcare workers, who need more education and training in this field. The major risk is that some symptoms, classed as 'normal' and hence underestimated, will lead to clinical complications requiring extensive and costly medical treatment. The impact allergies have on everyday activities and families is, in fact, considerable: sixty per cent of the total cost is made up of indirect costs, to which must be added the 'intangible' costs in terms of patients' discomfort and quality of life. In particular, there has been an increase in the incidence of allergic disorders, primarily in metropolitan areas, and they are also more common in children, making them a major cause of hospital admissions. For example, the symptoms of asthma and allergic rhinitis are produced not only by the more widely known causes, such as pollen and dust mites, but also by food allergies. According to a study carried out by the universities of Nottingham and Auckland, where a patient already suffers from asthma or allergic rhinitis, following a poor diet can make the symptoms worse (in a sample of 500 000 six to fourteen year-olds from 50 different countries who suffered from such allergies, 39% saw an increase in their asthma symptoms and 27% in their rhinitis symptoms when they ate junk food. By way of contrast, the symptoms of children who followed a healthy diet actually decreased by approximately 11-14%).

Given that the number of allergy cases is rising and, hence, so too is the cost of medicines for treating them; that the causes of and risk factors for such allergies are many and varied compared with those that are already widely known, linked to dust mites and pollen; that healthcare workers sometimes lack training in the causes of allergies and allergy risks; that there is a lack of awareness of, and information on, the causes and symptoms of allergies; and that many allergies are diet-related, meaning that people should be careful about which foods they eat if they already suffer from food allergies, can the Commission say:

1. how it intends to make both children and adults aware of the problem of allergies;

2. how it intends to train and update healthcare workers in particular;

3. how it intends to educate people about healthy diets;

4. whether it intends to develop a standard model for training allergists in medical faculties?

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

The Commission is aware of the rising burden of allergies in Europe, in particular in children. While there are no specific awareness raising campaigns in place, the Commission has supported projects on environment and health through the Health programme ([1])([2]).

Training of healthcare workers is a health system management issue which falls under the responsibility of Member States. The same is true for developing standard models for training allergists in medical faculties, where the Commission does not have any competence to act.

The Commission is promoting EU action to help people choose healthier diets and lifestyles as set out in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related Health issues ([3]). The strategy focuses on information to consumers about food and nutrition, taking into account diet related conditions, food allergies and intolerances included.

EU legislation concerning the labelling of allergens on foodstuffs requires that all ingredients (with few exceptions) must now be listed on pre-packaged foodstuffs and that the presence of recognised allergens must be clearly labelled ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2003310
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20091206
([3]) COM(2007) 279.
([4]) Directive 2000/13/EC on labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, amended by Directive 2003/89/EC as regards the indication of ingredients present in foodstuffs, which required that certain allergenic ingredients and products thereof must be indicated on the label of a foodstuff. This directive amended Directive 2000/13/EC through the addition of Annex IIIa which lists these allergens. Updated by

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) website also provides information on food allergen labelling in Europe ([5]). The scientific panel responsible for food allergies has for example provided a number of opinions as the scientific basis for the labelling legislation and exemptions from it.

Directive 2006/142/EC (addition of lupin and molluscs to the list of allergens) and Directive 2007/68/EC (which lists all the allergenic foods that must be labelled as well as a few products derived from these foods for which allergen labelling is not required).

([5]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005473/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Fondi di assistenza territoriali: realtà sociale, sanitaria ed economica presente negli Stati membri

Per l'anno 2012 i fondi della Toscana destinati ad iniziative assistenziali sono stati interamente coperti dalle entrate della Regione, senza alcuna contribuzione da parte dello Stato, considerato che l'importo previsto era di 80 milioni di euro. Il programma ha dato buoni risultati anche dal punto di vista organizzativo: la ripartizione dei fondi è avvenuta per zone territoriali seguendo criteri prettamente statistici (densità demografica, tasso di popolazione in condizioni di disabilità o di non autosufficienza e dati relativi alle presenze nelle residenze sanitarie assistenziali). Inoltre sono state 86.023 pari al 9,9 % del totale della popolazione con più di 65 anni di età le segnalazioni di assistenza ricevute dagli organi assistenziali ed espletate in tempi molto rapidi. Tra tutte le richieste effettuate 66.634 (7,7 %) sono state prese in carico poiché soddisfacevano i requisiti previsti, mentre in 17.643 casi (pari al 26 % delle pratiche trattate) la motivazione della richiesta di assistenza derivava da un bisogno socio-sanitario complesso che, infatti, richiedeva la predisposizione di un piano di assistenza personalizzato e incentrato sul paziente e la sua famiglia. Nei restanti casi, le necessità dei richiedenti erano meno critiche.

Poiché in Italia, così come nel resto d'Europa, si sta assistendo ad un allungamento dell'aspettativa di vita che, insieme con la riduzione del tasso di natalità, farà aumentare, nel corso dei prossimi anni, la percentuale di popolazione totale che ricade nella fascia con più di 65 anni e che, dunque, è lecito attendersi che il numero delle richieste aumenti, può la Commissione riferire:

1. quali misure intende porre in essere al fine di incentivare gli Stati membri ad attuare iniziative assistenziali a livello locale, valutate in base alle necessità specifiche dei diversi territori;

2. quali sono le linee guida socio-sanitarie-economiche che le istituzioni locali dovrebbero seguire al fine di fornire un adeguato servizio bilanciato tra costi e benefici per il bilancio sanitario e il cittadino-paziente;

3. se ritiene opportuno sviluppare ricerche di settore che possano fornire un quadro esaustivo della realtà europea assistenziale e dei costi servizi forniti?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2013)

È responsabilità degli Stati membri fornire assistenza sanitaria e di lunga durata. Spetta quindi alle autorità nazionali, regionali o locali decidere come organizzare tali servizi.

Collaborando in seno al comitato per la protezione sociale ([1]) gli Stati membri hanno tuttavia concordato obiettivi comuni in tema di accessibilità, qualità e sostenibilità finanziaria dell'assistenza sanitaria e di lunga durata. La Commissione sostiene le iniziative degli Stati membri e ha recentemente cofinanziato con l'OCSE due progetti che riguardano il finanziamento e la qualità dell'assistenza di lunga durata nonché la situazione degli assistenti domiciliari.

Nell'ambito della strategia Europa 2020 la Commissione ha suggerito agli Stati membri di attuare una riforma dei sistemi di assistenza sanitaria «per renderli sostenibili ed efficaci in termini di costi, valutandone i risultati in funzione del duplice obiettivo di utilizzare meglio le risorse pubbliche e di assicurare un'assistenza sanitaria di qualità» ([2]). Nel maggio 2013 la Commissione ha rispettivamente rivolto a sedici Stati membri raccomandazioni specifiche attinenti all'assistenza sanitaria e di lunga durata ([3]). I Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei forniscono un contributo alla strategia Europa 2020 e favoriscono il conseguimento degli obiettivi principali di quest'ultima. Durante il periodo di programmazione 2014-2020 i fondi sopra menzionati e il Fondo sociale europeo (FSE), sostenendo in particolare la lotta contro l'esclusione sociale e la povertà, potranno occuparsi di provvedimenti volti a migliorare l'accesso a vari servizi, ivi compresa l'assistenza sanitaria.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1063&langId=en
([2]) Annual Growth Survey 2013 http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005473/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Regional assistance funds: social, health and financial situation in the Member States

In 2012, the funding for social welfare initiatives in Tuscany came entirely from the region, without any contribution from the State, considering that the expected amount was EUR 80 million. The programme yielded positive results, including from an organisational point of view: the funds were distributed by geographical area on the basis of purely statistical criteria (population density, number of disabled or dependent people, and data on the number of care home residents). Furthermore, 86 023 requests for assistance, a figure equivalent to 9.9% of the total number of people aged 65 or over, were received by the social welfare authorities and processed in a very short period of time. Of the requests made, 66 634 (equivalent to 7.7% of the total number of people aged 65 or over) were accepted because they met the requirements laid down, while in 17 643 cases (equivalent to 26% of the applications processed), the request for assistance resulted from a complex health and social need that actually required a personalised care plan focused on the patient and his or her family to be drawn up. In the remaining cases, the needs of the individuals requesting assistance were less critical.

In Italy, as in the rest of Europe, life expectancy is increasing. This, together with the declining birth rate, will lead to a rise in the number of over-65s in the next few years. It is therefore fair to assume that the number of requests will also increase.

1. What steps will the Commission take to encourage the Member States to implement local social welfare initiatives that are assessed according to the specific needs of the various regions?

2. What social, health and financial guidelines should local institutions follow in order to provide an adequate service that strikes a balance between costs and benefits for the healthcare budget and patients?

3. Does the Commission believe that research should be carried out in the sector in order to provide a complete picture of Europe's social welfare situation and of the costs of the services provided?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

The provision of health and long-term care provision is a responsibility of Member States. It is therefore up to national, regional or local authorities to decide on how to organise health and long-term care services.

Member States have, however, agreed common objectives on the accessibility, quality and financial sustainability of health and long-term care in the context of their cooperation in the Social Protection Committee ([1]). The Commission supports Member States in their efforts and 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.

In the context of the Europe 2020 strategy the Commission has advised Member States to undertake reforms of healthcare systems 'to ensure cost-effectiveness and sustainability, assessing the performance of these systems against the twin aims of a more efficient use of public resources and access to high-quality healthcare' ([2]). In May 2013 the Commission proposed in the areas of health and long-term care country specific recommendations to 16 Member States ([3]). The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy and its priorities. In the 2014-2020 programming period, ESIF and the ESF in particular by supporting the fight against social exclusion and poverty can cover measures ensuring enhanced access to services, including healthcare.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1063&langId=en
([2]) Annual Growth Survey 2013 http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005474/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Investire nell'Europa del 2020 con lo spazio alpino: nuovi criteri e dotazione finanziaria per il futuro

L'Italia ha di recente ratificato gli otto Protocolli di attuazione della Convenzione internazionale per la protezione delle Alpi del 7 novembre 1991. Con legge 5 aprile 2012 n. 50 trovano attuazione il Protocollo sulle foreste montane, quello sulla pianificazione territoriale e lo sviluppo sostenibile, quello per la difesa del suolo, quello sull'energia, sulla protezione della natura e la tutela del paesaggio, quello dell'agricoltura di montagna, come pure il Protocollo sul turismo e quello relativo alla composizione delle controversie.

Lo stesso Trattato sul funzionamento dell'UE, con le disposizioni di cui all'art. 174, garantisce un'attenzione particolare alle zone rurali e alle regioni di montagna, evidenziando la necessità di promuovere uno sviluppo armonioso delle diverse regioni dell'UE, ivi comprese quelle dello spazio alpino. Di fatto, tali regioni si stanno impegnando a promuovere al tempo stesso i numerosi progetti che interessano l'intero arco alpino, cercando di valorizzarne tutto il potenziale delle specificità geografiche.

1. Sta la Commissione valutando come identificare le principali priorità che il Programma spazio alpino potrà affrontare nel quadro finanziario pluriennale 2014-2020?

2. Quali indicatori e modelli contribuiscono a definire gli assi di sviluppo della programmazione alpina per il futuro?

3. Ritiene di poter incrementare la dotazione finanziaria per tale programma oltre il 2013?

4. Qual è la sua posizione sull'attuabilità della strategia europea per il Mar Baltico, come prototipo e modello per lo sviluppo del territorio europeo?

5. In Italia esistono a suo giudizio modelli di governance, buone prassi o progetti innovativi a tutela dell'ambiente che potrebbero essere d'aiuto per investire nella nuova strategia europea?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 luglio 2013)

1. Spetta a ciascun programma di cooperazione territoriale identificare le proprie priorità in linea con gli obiettivi della strategia Europa 2020 e definire il contenuto del programma per il periodo successivo. Il programma Spazio alpino ha già avviato questa procedura. La Commissione si adopererà con gli stakeholder per assicurare che le priorità selezionate corrispondano alle opzioni di cui al regolamento.

2. Ciascun programma stabilisce la propria logica di intervento in base alla propria valutazione strategica ex-ante. Esso seleziona quindi un proprio gruppo di indicatori di output e di risultato nonché misure di monitoraggio per seguire i progressi realizzati. La Commissione sta preparando una serie di documenti orientativi per far sì che il sistema di monitoraggio deciso nell'ambito dei diversi programmi sia in grado, in tutti i casi, di produrre un insieme tangibile e misurabile di risultati. Si dovrebbe inoltre procedere a una valutazione per determinare l'impatto del programma.

3. Il Quadro finanziario pluriennale è ancora in via di discussione in seno al Consiglio e al Parlamento e pertanto non è ancora possibile definire le cifre definitive per ciascun programma.

4. Spetta agli Stati membri interessati determinare le forme della Cooperazione alpina. Non è necessario seguire altri modelli, come il modello danubiano o baltico. Queste iniziative potrebbero essere comunque utili per impostare eventuali altre iniziative in altri ambiti, a patto che si registri un valore aggiunto specifico a livello unionale.

5. Se si portano avanti ulteriormente gli approcci macro-regionali è opportuno che questi facciano tesoro delle esperienze fatte altrove.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005474/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Investing in the Europe of 2020 via the Alpine space: new criteria and budget for the future

Italy recently ratified the eight Protocols implementing the International Convention on the Protection of the Alps of 7 November 1991. The Protocols on mountain forests, regional planning and sustainable development, soil protection, energy, the conservation of nature and the countryside, mountain farming, tourism and dispute resolution were implemented by Italian Law No 50 of 5 April 2012.

Under Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, particular attention shall be paid to rural areas and mountain regions, highlighting the need to promote the harmonious development of the various EU regions, including those of the Alpine space. Indeed, those regions are striving to promote, at the same time, the numerous projects relating to the entire Alpine arc, and are seeking to make the most of their particular geographical features.

1. Is the Commission considering how to identify the main priorities that the Alpine Space Programme will be able to address in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020?

2. What indicators and models are used to set the development priorities for future Alpine planning?

3. Does the Commission believe it can increase the budget for this programme after 2013?

4. What is its position on the feasibility of using the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region as a prototype and model for European territorial development?

5. Does it believe that in Italy there are governance models, good practices or innovative projects for protecting the environment that could be of use when it comes to investing in the new EU strategy?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2013)

1. It is up to each Territorial Cooperation programme to identify its priorities in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and to define the programme content for the next period. The Alpine Space programme has already initiated this process. The Commission will work with the stakeholders concerned to ensure that priorities selected correspond to the options set out in the regulation.

2. Each programme establishes its own intervention logic, based on its strategic *ex-ante* evaluation. It then selects its own set of output and result indicators and monitoring measures to oversee progress. The Commission is preparing a series of guidance documents to guarantee that monitoring systems decided by different programmes are able, in all cases, to establish coherent sets of tangible and measurable results. An evaluation should be used to assess the impact of the programme.

3. The Multiannual Financial Framework is still being discussed by the Council and the Parliament, and therefore final figures for each programme cannot yet be defined.

4. It is for the Member States concerned to determine the form of Alpine cooperation. It is not necessary to follow other models, such as the Danube or the Baltic model. These initiatives, nevertheless, could be helpful for any other potential initiative in other areas, provided that there is particular added value at EU level.

5. If macro-regional approaches are indeed further utilised, they should draw on experience gained elsewhere.,.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005475/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Strategia dell'Unione europea per la protezione e il benessere degli animali 2012-2015: quali nuovi sviluppi per i levrieri Greyhound e Galgos vittime di torture atroci

Sulla base della risposta all'interrogazione E-010202/2012 (17.12.2012) fornita dal Commissario e in riferimento alle interrogazioni ritenute simili (E-010625/2010 e E-009212/2011), si ritiene che essa non sia sufficiente, specialmente alla luce dei nuovi sviluppi che ci sono stati in materia, nonché dell'approvazione da parte del Parlamento europeo in data 4 luglio 2012 della strategia dell'Unione europea per la protezione e il benessere degli animali 2012-2015 (2012/2043(INI)), in particolare laddove si sottolinea l'importanza di attuare l'intero corpus legislativo da parte di tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE.

Stanti la mancanza di una relazione stretta tra la tutela della salute degli animali e la sanità pubblica di ogni singolo Stato membro; la mancata attuazione di linee guida e strategie da parte degli Stati membri; la scarsa trasparenza e la mancata informazione che suscitano un interesse europeo per due ordini di motivi: l'incremento del commercio illecito degli animali specialmente verso i paesi terzi e la destinazione dei medesimi alla ricerca scientifica; la mancanza di standard che regolano il benessere degli animali nei rapporti con i paesi terzi; la necessità di una maggiore ambizione e di standard con priorità elevata che regolino il benessere degli animali in particolare nei negoziati anche di natura extracommerciale come pure la necessità di risorse per incrementare il numero delle ispezioni e formare adeguatamente gli ispettori veterinari per il benessere degli animali, può la Commissione riferire:

1. quali controlli ha predisposto circa la mancata attuazione delle linee guida da parte degli Stati membri;

2. quali controlli compie sul commercio illecito fra Stati membri e paesi terzi;

3. quali verifiche effettua circa la destinazione dei cani per studi scientifici e di ricerca;

4. come l'EFSA intende migliorare i controlli e incrementare le ispezioni a livello veterinario?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(2 luglio 2013)

La Commissione ha la responsabilità di assicurare che la normativa dell'UE sia applicata correttamente e a tal fine l'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario (UAV) facente capo alla Direzione generale «Salute e consumatori» della Commissione conduce audit negli Stati membri per verificare il rispetto della legislazione UE. Nell'esecuzione dei suoi audit l'UAV tiene anche conto degli eventuali orientamenti emanati dalla Commissione per assicurare un'attuazione morbida della legislazione. Tali orientamenti non hanno però un valore legalmente vincolante.

Se uno Stato membro viene meno all'obbligo di ottemperare alla normativa dell'UE la Commissione può avviare procedimenti di infrazione contro detto Stato membro e, se del caso, citarlo innanzi alla Corte di giustizia europea.

Ogni Stato membro è responsabile dell'efficace attuazione della legislazione dell'UE che disciplina il commercio e l'importazione di cani e gatti nell'Unione da paesi terzi e gli spostamenti non commerciali degli animali da compagnia negli Stati membri.

L'uso di animali a fini scientifici è disciplinato dalla direttiva 2010/63/UE. Gli Stati membri dovevano recepire tale direttiva nel loro ordinamento nazionale entro il 10 novembre 2012 e applicarla a decorrere dal 1º gennaio 2013. La direttiva statuisce che ogni progetto che faccia uso a fini scientifici di animali, compresi i cani, debba essere valutato e autorizzato. I cani devono essere allevati a scopo sperimentale e il loro ricovero e la loro cura devono soddisfare gli standard definiti nella direttiva. Vi sono disposizioni specifiche in merito alle ispezioni basate sul rischio negli stabilimenti utilizzatori, comprese ispezioni senza preaviso. Qualora vi fossero validi motivi di preoccupazione, la Commissione può sottoporre a audit i sistemi nazionali d'ispezione.

Tra i compiti dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) ([1]) non vi è l'esecuzione di controlli e ispezioni.

([1]) GU L 31 dell'1.2.2002, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005475/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: European Union strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015: new developments in relation to English greyhounds and Spanish greyhounds (Galgos) subjected to horrific acts of torture

The Commissioner's answer to Question E-010202/2012 (17 December 2012), in which he refers to other, supposedly similar questions (E-010625/2010 and E-009212/2011), is considered to be insufficient, especially in light of the new developments in this regard and of Parliament's adoption, on 4 July 2012, of the European Union strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 (2012/2043(INI)), in particular, where it stresses the importance of implementing the full body of existing animal welfare legislation in all the EU Member States.

In view of the failure to establish a close link between animal health protection and public health in every Member State; of the failure, on the part of the Member States, to implement guidelines and strategies; of the lack of transparency and information that arouses interest in Europe for two reasons: the increase in the illegal trade in animals, especially those bound for third countries, and the use of those animals in scientific research; of the lack of animal welfare standards in relations with third countries; of the need for greater ambition and for high-priority standards to regulate animal welfare, particularly in negotiations, including on non-trade matters; and of the need for resources to increase the number of inspections and to adequately train animal welfare inspectors, can the Commission say:

1. what controls it has introduced with regard to the Member States' failure to implement guidelines;

2. what controls it is carrying out on the illegal trade between Member States and third countries;

3. what checks it is carrying out on the use of dogs for scientific and research studies;

4. how the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) intends to improve controls and increase the number of inspections in the veterinary field?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

The Commission is responsible for ensuring that EC law is correctly applied, and for this purpose the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) carries out audits in the Member States to verify compliance with EU legislation. When carrying out its audits, the FVO also considers possible guidelines issued by the Commission itself to support smooth implementation of legislation. However, those guidelines do not have a legally binding value.

Where a Member State fails to comply with EC law, the Commission may start infringement proceedings against that Member State and, where necessary, refer the case to the European Court of Justice.

Each Member State is responsible for the effective implementation of EU legislation regulating Union trade in and imports of dogs and cats from third countries and non-commercial movements of pet animals into Member States.

The use of animals for scientific purposes is covered by Directive 2010/63/EU. Member States were to transpose the directive in their national legislation by 10 November 2012 and apply it from 1 January 2013. The directive requires that each project using animals, including dogs, for scientific purposes has to be evaluated and authorised. Dogs need to be purpose bred and their housing and care has to comply with the standards set out in the directive. There are specific provisions on risk based inspections of user establishment, including unannounced visits. In case of due reason for concern, the Commission may audit the national inspection system.

The duties of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) ([1]) do not include the implementation of controls and inspections.

([1]) OJ L31/1, 1.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005476/13
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Legislative proposals on invasive alien species

The Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina*) is an invasive non-native species from Asia that has recently arrived in France where it is spreading rapidly. As a highly effective predator of insects, including honey bees and other beneficial species, it can cause significant losses to bee colonies and other native species and, potentially, to ecosystems. In France a man was killed after being attacked by a swarm of hornets from a nest he disrupted while trimming hedges in his garden.

It is likely to arrive in my constituency in South East England very soon, but at present there is no EU-wide early warning system to alert EU citizens to the potential danger posed by invasive alien species such as the Asian hornet.

Can the Commission confirm that its legislative proposals on invasive alien species will establish some form of EU-wide early warning system, and can it advise when these proposals will be published?

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

As outlined in the communication on an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ([1]), the Commission is developing a dedicated legislative instrument for the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. Issues considered in the preparation include, among others, early warning and rapid response, as well as exchange of information between Member States to ensure swift and coordinated action. A legislative proposal is planned in the coming months.

([1]) COM(2011) 244 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005477/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Avenir des pièces de 1 et 2 centimes

Le prix de fabrication des pièces de 1 et 2 centimes est plus élevé que leur valeur faciale. De plus, elles coûtent cher à transporter et elles disparaissent à une vitesse telle qu'il faut sans cesse en fabriquer. La facture depuis 2002 se monte à 1,4 milliard d'euros.

1. Que préconise la Commission?

2. Pourquoi ne pas modifier la composition de ces pièces, voire le mode de fabrication afin d'en réduire le coût?

3. La Commission envisage-t-elle leur suppression? Dans l'affirmative, a-t-elle mesuré l'impact éventuel en termes de risque de hausse des prix par arrondi aux 5 cents supérieurs, et donc d'inflation?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(25 juin 2013)

La Commission a répondu aux questions du député européen à propos de l'avenir des pièces de 1 et 2 cents et du coût de la poursuite de leur émission, ainsi que des économies potentielles à réaliser et du problème de l'inflation ressentie si l'on cessait d'émettre ces pièces, dans la communication et dans le document de travail des services de la Commission y afférent.
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0281:FIN:FR:PDF
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/cash/coins/pdf/swd(2013)_175_final_en.pdf (en anglais)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005477/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Future of 1 and 2 cent coins

The price of manufacturing 1 and 2 cent coins is higher than their face value. Moreover, they are expensive to transport and they disappear at such a rate that they constantly have to be manufactured. The cost since 2002 amounts to EUR 1.4 billion.

1. What does the Commission recommend?

2. Why not change the composition of these coins, or even the manufacturing method, in order to reduce the cost?

3. Does the Commission plan to get rid of them? If so, has it measured the possible impact of the risk of an increase in prices rounded up to 5 cents, and therefore the risk of inflation?

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

The Commission has addressed the MEP's questions on the future of the 1 and 2 euro cent coins, the costs of continued issuance, potential for savings and, should the issuance cease the problem of perceived inflation in its communication and the Commission Staff Working Paper related thereto.
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/cash/coins/pdf/1_2_eurocoins_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/cash/coins/pdf/swd(2013)_175_final_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005478/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Explosion du nombre de fraudes sur le web

Le nombre de fraudes à la banque via internet connaît depuis janvier 2013 une hausse spectaculaire, de l'ordre de deux tiers par rapport aux chiffres de l'an passé. Cette progression serait surtout imputable à l'augmentation des fraudes par hameçonnage («phishing»).

En Belgique, l'augmentation de ce type de méfaits a été de 64,7 % entre le 1er janvier et le 31 mars 2013. Si ce rythme est maintenu au niveau national, c'est plus de 5 millions d'euros qui auront été détournés.

1. La Commission peut-elle confirmer que cette augmentation est d'ampleur européenne?

2. La Commission peut-elle confirmer que cette augmentation est supérieure à l'augmentation enregistrée en 2012? Possède-t-elle des détails précis pays par pays?

3. Faut-il en conclure que la lutte contre le «phishing» est un échec, que les moyens déployés pour lutter contre ce phénomène sont insuffisants et que le citoyen est sous-informé?

4. Quelles sont les actions que la Commission compte entreprendre pour enrayer la croissance vertigineuse de ce type de délits?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(17 juillet 2013)

1.-2. La Commission ne dispose pas des informations détaillées lui permettant de confirmer ou d'infirmer les déclarations de l'Honorable Parlementaire. Elle peut confirmer que l'augmentation rapide du nombre d'opérations de paiement sur internet s'accompagne d'une hausse des tentatives de fraude en ligne, y compris par hameçonnage. Mais cela ne signifie pas nécessairement que la proportion d'opérations frauduleuses par rapport à l'ensemble des paiements est en augmentation. Si les chiffres relatifs aux paiements par carte pouvaient être utilisés comme indicateur des fraudes sur les paiements en général, le niveau de ces dernières dans l'Union européenne resterait vraisemblablement stable, étant donné que le basculement des délits classiques vers les délits en ligne se poursuit.

3. Afin de sensibiliser davantage les utilisateurs finaux aux risques que présente internet, l'Agence européenne chargée de la sécurité des réseaux et de l'information (ENISA) organise, avec les États membres, le mois européen de la cybersécurité en octobre 2013.

4. Les actions de la Commission visent surtout à garantir un haut degré de sécurité des paiements et à assurer la protection juridique nécessaire des utilisateurs de services de paiement, et en particulier des consommateurs. Dans le courant de cette année, de nouvelles mesures seront proposées à cet égard avec l'adoption de la directive révisée sur les services de paiement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005478/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Dramatic increase in online fraud

Cases of online banking fraud have increased spectacularly since January 2013, by as much as two thirds compared to figures from the previous year. This growth can be attributed to the increase in phishing in particular.

In Belgium, there was an increase of 64.7% in this kind of activity between 1 January and 31 March 2013. If this rate is maintained at national level, more than EUR 5 million will have been misappropriated.

1. Can the Commission confirm that this increase is taking place on a European scale?

2. Can the Commission confirm that this increase is greater than the increase recorded in 2012? Does it have precise details, country by country?

3. Should it be concluded that the fight against phishing has failed, that the measures used to combat this phenomenon are insufficient and that citizens are under-informed?

4. What steps does the Commission intend to take to curb the staggering growth in these kinds of crimes?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

1-2. The Commission does not possess the required, detailed information to confirm or deny the statements of the Honourable Member. The Commission may confirm that the rapid increase of payment transactions on the Internet is accompanied by an increase in the number of online fraud attempts, including phishing. This does not necessarily mean that the share of fraud transactions among all payments is rising. If figures for card payments could be treated as a proxy for payment fraud in general, the fraud levels in the EU would appear to remain stable as the shift from brick-and-mortar towards online fraud continues.

3. To increase the awareness of end-users to risks online the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) is organising the European Cybersecurity Month in October 2013 together with Member States.

4. The actions of the Commission concentrate on ensuring high levels of payment security in general and on providing the necessary legal protection to the payment service users, in particular to the consumers. New measures in this respect will be proposed later this year, with the adoption of the revised Payment Services Directive.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005479/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Surdose de riz mauvais pour la santé

Les autorités de sécurité alimentaire au Danemark ont déconseillé mercredi aux parents les gâteaux au riz et le lait de riz pour les enfants, en raison de la concentration en arsenic.

Le riz contient naturellement de l'arsenic inorganique, et «les personnes consommant quotidiennement des aliments avec de l'arsenic inorganique courent un risque accru de cancer», ont-elles expliqué sur leur site internet.

Elles ont appelé les parents à être «particulièrement attentifs» à la consommation des enfants, en raison de leur poids, et à éviter les boissons au riz et le lait de riz, ainsi que de donner des céréales au riz soufflé chaque jour.

Le Danemark a lancé de nouveaux tests portant sur d'autres produits à base de riz pour déterminer leur concentration en arsenic inorganique, comme les nouilles de riz. Les résultats de ces analyses doivent être publiés en juillet.

La présence d'arsenic dans le riz attire de plus en plus l'attention. En septembre, les autorités américaines de sécurité alimentaire (FDA) ont annoncé qu'elles allaient mener des analyses pour déterminer la dangerosité du riz et d'aliments en contenant.

1. Qu'en est-il de la position européenne?

2. La Commission a-t-elle mené des enquêtes? Dispose-t-elle de chiffres?

3. À partir de quelle quantité le riz serait-il dangereux?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(21 juin 2013)

Dans le prolongement de la publication, en 2009, de l'avis scientifique de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) sur l'arsenic dans les aliments ([1]), les travaux consacrés à cette substance ont commencé par la résolution des problèmes analytiques liés à la détermination de la part de l'arsenic inorganique dans la teneur en arsenic totale de différentes catégories d'aliments.

Les données ainsi recueillies par les États membres pour diverses denrées alimentaires ont permis, en 2011, la rédaction d'une compilation des principales denrées alimentaires ne posant pas de problèmes analytiques. Le riz est apparu comme un facteur considérable d'exposition du consommateur.

En 2012, les travaux sur l'arsenic dans le riz ont été suspendus à l'échelon du CODEX et ne reprendront qu'en 2014, faute de données suffisantes sur le niveau d'arsenic inorganique dans le riz. L'Union européenne a décidé de contribuer à une nouvelle collecte de données. Les deux collectes ont permis de recueillir au total 99 000 résultats analytiques provenant de l'Union.

Les principales sources d'ingestion d'arsenic inorganique sont les céréales en grains et les produits à base de céréales, les aliments diététiques destinés à des usages particuliers (par exemple, les algues), l'eau en bouteille, le café et la bière, le riz et les produits à base de riz, le poisson et les légumes.

La recommandation la plus récente de l'EFSA porte sur la nécessité de préciser l'évaluation des risques de l'arsenic inorganique détecté et d'élaborer, d'une part, des données spécifiques pour les différents types d'aliments, l'objectif étant de contribuer à une évaluation de l'exposition diététique, et d'autre part, des données relatives au rapport dose-effet, pour mesurer les conséquences sanitaires éventuelles.

([1]) Groupe de l'EFSA sur les contaminants de la chaîne alimentaire (CONTAM); avis scientifique sur l'arsenic dans les aliments. Journal de l'EFSA 2009; 7(10):1351. [199 pp.].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005479/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: The risk to health of too much rice

On Wednesday, Danish food safety authorities warned parents against giving children rice puddings and rice milk because of the concentration of arsenic.

Rice naturally contains inorganic arsenic and, as they explained on their website, 'people who eat food with inorganic arsenic every day have an increased risk of cancer'.

They called on parents to be 'particularly attentive' to children's consumption because of their weight, and to avoid rice drinks and rice milk and giving children puffed rice cereals every day.

Denmark has launched new tests on other rice-based products to determine their concentration of inorganic arsenic, such as rice noodles. The results of these analyses should be published in July.

The presence of arsenic in rice is attracting more and more attention. In September, the US food safety authorities (FDA) announced that they were going to carry out analyses to determine the risk involved in eating rice or rice-based foods.

1. What is the European position on this matter?

2. Has the Commission carried out any studies? Does it have any figures?

3. What quantity of rice would be considered dangerous?

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

Following the publication of the scientific Opinion on arsenic in food by the European Food Safety Authority in 2009 ([1]), work on arsenic started with solving the analytical problems related to the determination of inorganic arsenic fraction in the total arsenic content for different food groups.

Data on levels of arsenic in different food commodities, collected by the Member States, resulted in 2011 in a compilation showing food commodities of prior concern without analytical problems. Rice came out as a major contributor for consumer exposure.

In 2012, work on arsenic in rice was suspended at CODEX level until 2014 due to insufficient data on levels of inorganic arsenic in rice. The EU decided to contribute to an additional effort on data collection. Both exercises resulted in a total of 99 000 analytical results from the EU.

The main sources of inorganic arsenic intake are cereal grains and cereal based products, food for special dietary uses (e.g. algae), bottled water, coffee and beer, rice and rice-based products, fish and vegetables

The latest EFSA recommendation is directed toward the need to refine the risk assessment of inorganic arsenic identified and a need to produce special data for different food commodities to support dietary exposure assessment and dose-response data for possible health effects.

([1]) EFSA Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM); Scientific Opinion on Arsenic in Food. EFSA Journal 2009; 7(10):1351. [199 pp.].

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005480/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 mai 2013)

Objet: Cote de l'Union européenne en chute libre

La dernière livraison de l'enquête annuelle menée en Europe par l'institut indépendant Pew dresse un sombre tableau du sentiment européen dans l'Union.

Le soutien à l'idée européenne, en baisse depuis plusieurs années, a brutalement chuté de 2012 à 2013 dans des proportions dramatiques.

1. Peut-on parler d'échec de la stratégie européenne de la Commission pour une meilleure intégration des institutions dans le sentiment citoyen?

2. La Commission possède-t-elle un tel baromètre?

3. À quoi la Commission attribue-t-elle les chiffres catastrophiques de cette étude (ainsi que d'autres) entre 2012 et 2013?

4. Que la Commission compte-t-elle mettre en place pour lutter contre cela?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(28 juin 2013)

1. La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à la réponse qu'elle a donnée à la question écrite E-1416/2013 ([1]).

La Commission s'efforce également de rapprocher les citoyens des institutions de l'UE par l'intermédiaire du programme «L'Europe pour les citoyens» ([2]). Plusieurs enquêtes ont fait apparaître une évolution positive constante vis-à-vis de l'UE, qui découle de la participation aux activités financées par le programme.

Les participants ont déclaré qu'ils se sentaient davantage européens ([3]), plus concernés par l'UE ([4]) et plus solidaires des autres Européens ([5]).

2. La Commission réalise des sondages Eurobaromètre (EB) ([6]) dans tous les États membres depuis 1973 pour obtenir une analyse fiable, sur le plan méthodologique, de l'état de l'opinion publique dans l'UE. Ces sondages sont également utilisés par le Parlement européen. L'enquête effectuée au printemps 2013 par l'institut Pew est d'une portée limitée étant donné qu'elle ne concerne que huit pays.

3. Traditionnellement, les sondages Eurobaromètre publiés depuis 40 ans donnent une image de l'état de l'opinion publique européenne. Ils ont montré les difficultés que l'UE et les gouvernements nationaux rencontrent depuis le début de la crise. Ils ont aussi révélé certains aspects plus positifs comme le soutien à l'euro ou à la stratégie Europe 2020 et le fait que l'UE est considérée comme étant la mieux à même de trouver des solutions pour sortir de la crise.

([1]) hhttp://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-001416 %2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0 %2f%2fEN&language=FR
([2]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_fr.php
([3]) 77,5 % des personnes interrogées.
([4]) 76,5 % des personnes interrogées.
([5]) 88,2 % des personnes interrogées.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_fr.htm

4. À la lumière des résultats positifs du programme «L'Europe pour les citoyens», la Commission a proposé qu'il soit reconduit pour la période 2014-2020 et a engagé une série de débats entre citoyens européens et membres de la Commission ([7]) sur les défis qui se posent à l'UE. Le rapport 2013 sur la citoyenneté de l'Union ([8]) insiste sur l'intérêt d'encourager la participation des citoyens au processus décisionnel de l'UE et propose des mesures concrètes à cet effet.

([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/index_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/2013_ucitizenshipreport_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005480/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Popularity of the European Union in freefall

The latest edition of the annual survey carried out in Europe by the independent institute Pew paints a grim picture of European sentiment within the EU.

Support for the European ideal, which has been in decline for several years, has fallen dramatically from 2012 to 2013.

1. Can the Commission's European strategy to better integrate the institutions in citizenship be considered a failure?

2. Does the Commission have such an indicator?

3. To what does the Commission attribute the catastrophic figures in this study (and others) between 2012 and 2013?

4. What does the Commission intend to implement in order to tackle this?

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

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-1416/2013 ([1]).

The Commission also contributes to bringing citizens closer to the EU institutions by the Europe for Citizens programme ([2]). Several surveys have shown a consistent positive trend towards the EU, developed as a result of participation in the activities financed by the programme.

Participants declared themselves to feel more European ([3]), more involved with the EU ([4]) and greater solidarity with other Europeans ([5]).

2. Since 1973, the Commission has conducted Eurobarometer (EB) surveys ([6]) in all Member States to get a methodologically sound analysis of the state of public opinion in the EU. EB is also used by the European Parliament. The Pew survey of spring 2013 is of limited extent since it was carried out in eight countries only.

3. Standard EB surveys, which are made publicly available, have depicted the state of public opinion in Europe for four decades. Results have shown the difficulties faced by the EU — and the national governments — since the emergence of the crisis. They have also shown more positive aspects such as the support for the Euro or for the Europe 2020 strategy and the fact that the EU is seen as the best actor to tackle the crisis.

4. Given the positive results of the Europe for Citizens programme, the Commission proposed its continuation for the period 2014-2020 and has initiated a series of debates on challenges facing the EU which bring together European citizens and members of the Commission ([7]). Fostering citizens' participation in the EU's decision-making process is a key element in the 2013 EU Citizenship Report ([8]) which presents concrete actions to this effect.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-001416%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN
([2]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/
([3]) 77.5% of respondents.
([4]) 76.5% of respondents.
([5]) 88.2% of respondents.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/index_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/2013eucitizenshipreport_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005481/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(16 mei 2013)

Betreft: Onderdak voor christelijke vluchtelingen in Syrië

Op de website van de Nederlandse krant „De Volkskrant" van 16 mei 2013 („Na Assad zal Syrië een hel zijn voor christenen") wordt door Nurcan Yilmaz, de voorzitter van de Suryoye Aramese federatie van Nederland, gemeld dat de humanitaire hulp die door Nederland wordt gestuurd naar Syrië, terechtkomt bij de regionale vluchtelingenkampen van de Verenigde Naties. Christelijke vluchtelingen mijden deze kampen echter, uit schrik voor sektarisch geweld. Yilmaz stelt voor dat er ook geld zou gestuurd worden naar kerkelijke organisaties, die christelijke vluchtelingen opvangen.

Is de Commissie zich bewust van het probleem dat christelijke vluchtelingen in Syrië de „gewone" vluchtelingenkampen van de VN mijden en dus problemen hebben om een onderdak te vinden?

Verleent de Europese Unie steun aan christelijke organisaties in Syrië die vluchtelingen opvangen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Georgieva namens de Commissie
(17 juli 2013)

De Commissie is er niet van op de hoogte dat christelijke vluchtelingen de „gewone" VN-vluchtelingenkampen mijden.

Overeenkomstig de EU-consensus betreffende humanitaire hulp is de door de Commissie ondersteunde humanitaire bijstand gebaseerd op de beginselen van neutraliteit, onpartijdigheid, onafhankelijkheid en menselijkheid. De bijstand wordt louter op basis van behoefte verleend, zonder te discrimineren tussen of binnen de getroffen bevolkingsgroepen. De Commissie maakt geen onderscheid op grond van godsdienst, politieke overtuiging, geslacht of ras.

Tot hiertoe heeft de EU reeds 265 miljoen euro aan humanitaire bijstand vrijgemaakt voor de mensen die door het conflict zijn getroffen, zowel in Syrië zelf (46 % van de steun) als in de buurlanden (Libanon, Jordanië, Turkije en Irak). De humanitaire financiering van de EU wordt uitsluitend verstrekt via erkende humanitaire partners, zoals onder meer het Rode Kruis en de Rode Halve Maan, diverse internationale niet-gouvernementele organisaties en humanitaire organisaties van de VN. Om erkend te worden, moeten partners humanitaire bijstand verlenen op een neutrale en onafhankelijke wijze, d.w.z. iedereen in nood helpen. In Syrië worden met EU-financiering medische noodhulp, bescherming, voedselhulp, watervoorziening, sanitaire en hygiënische faciliteiten, onderdak en logistieke steun geboden. Buiten Syrië wordt met EU-financiering levensreddende bijstand geboden aan vluchtelingen, zoals gezondheidszorg, voedsel, onderdak, hygiënekits, watervoorziening en sanitaire faciliteiten en bescherming.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005481/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: Shelter for Christian refugees in Syria

The website of the Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* ('After Assad, Syria will be hell for Christians', 16 May 2013) quotes Nurcan Yilmaz, the president of the Suryoye Aramese Federatie Nederland, as saying that the humanitarian aid sent by the Netherlands to Syria ends up in the United Nations regional refugee camps. Christian refugees shun these camps, however, for fear of sectarian violence. Yilmaz suggests that money should be sent to church organisations which provide shelter to Christian refugees.

Is the Commission aware that Christian refugees in Syria avoid 'normal' UN refugee camps and thus have problems with finding shelter?

Does the European Union provide support to Christian organisations in Syria which give shelter to refugees?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

The Commission is not aware that Christian refugees avoid 'normal' UN refugee camps.

The humanitarian assistance supported by the Commission is based on the principles of neutrality, impartiality, independence and humanity, as confirmed in the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. It is provided solely on the basis of need, without discrimination between or within affected populations. It makes no distinction according to religion, political affiliation, gender or race.

To date, the EU has mobilised EUR 265 million for humanitarian assistance to persons affected by the conflict, both inside Syria (46% of the funding) and in the neighbouring countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq). EU humanitarian funding is channelled exclusively through accredited humanitarian partners, including the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, various International Non-Governmental Organisations and UN humanitarian agencies. Accreditation requires that partners are neutral and independent in the provision of humanitarian assistance, i.e. they must serve all in need. In Syria, EU humanitarian funding supports medical emergency relief, protection, food-nutritional assistance, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and logistics services. Beyond the Syrian border, the funding ensures that people fleeing the country will receive life-saving assistance such as health, food, shelter, hygiene kits, water and sanitation services, and protection.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-005483/13
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(17. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Ausschuss Hoher Arbeitsaufsichtsbeamter (SLIC)

Der Ausschuss Hoher Arbeitsaufsichtsbeamter (SLIC) wurde gegründet, um der Europäischen Kommission bei der Überwachung der Durchsetzung der EU-Gesetzgebung auf lokaler Ebene zu helfen.

Der Ausschuss besteht aus der Kommission und einem Vertreter der Arbeitsaufsicht jedes EU-Mitgliedstaates. Er tritt alle sechs Monate zu einer Sitzung zusammen, die in dem EU-Mitgliedstaat stattfindet, der den EU-Vorsitz innehat.

Laut Kommissionsbeschluss 95/319/EG hat der Ausschuss den Auftrag, der Kommission entweder auf Anforderung oder aus eigenem Antrieb Stellungnahmen zu allen Problemen vorzulegen, die mit der Durchsetzung des Gemeinschaftsrechts zu Sicherheit und Gesundheitsschutz am Arbeitsplatz durch die Mitgliedstaaten zu tun haben. Weitere Aktivitäten sind die Entwicklung eines Systems zum Informationsaustausch, die aktive Zusammenarbeit mit Arbeitsaufsichtsbehörden in Drittländern, die Entwicklung eines Austauschprogramms der nationalen Verwaltungen für Arbeitsaufsichtsbeamte und die Festlegung gemeinsamer Prinzipien zur Arbeitsaufsicht.

— Welche Fortschritte hat der Ausschuss seit seiner Gründung erreicht?

— Welche Inhalte wurden in den halbjährigen Sitzungen besprochen?

— Welche Probleme wurden in den Stellungnahmen genannt?

— Sind die Stellungnahmen des Ausschusses für das Europäische Parlament und die Öffentlichkeit verfügbar?

— Liegen vonseiten des Ausschusses Verbesserungsvorschläge für eine wirksamere Arbeitsaufsicht vor?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(17. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission möchte die Frau Abgeordnete auf den Jahresbericht über die Tätigkeit des Ausschusses hoher Aufsichtsbeamter (SLIC), der unter anderem an das Parlament weitergeleitet wird, sowie auf die entsprechenden Informationen auf der Europa-Website ([1]) verweisen.

Darüber hinaus übermittelt die Kommission der Frau Abgeordneten und dem Sekretariat des Parlaments eine Liste der Themen von SLIC-Kampagnen sowie der letzten Thematischen Tage. Letztere finden immer am Vorabend der Vollsitzungen statt.

Zur Erörterung von Fragen im Zusammenhang mit der Durchsetzung wurde eine Plattform eingerichtet, die den Arbeitsaufsichtsbehörden der Mitgliedstaaten einen raschen Austausch von Informationen, die für die Durchsetzung der EU-Rechtsvorschriften zum Arbeitsschutz bedeutsam sind, ermöglichen soll. Die jüngsten Stellungnahmen des SLIC betreffen Fragen der grenzüberschreitenden Durchsetzung eben dieser Rechtsvorschriften, eine Initiative für die Einrichtung einer EU-Plattform zur Bekämpfung nicht angemeldeter Erwerbstätigkeit und unverbindliche Leitlinien zu den Zuständigkeiten der Kontrolleure für das Bedienpersonal von Turmdrehkränen.

Alle Maßnahmen des SLIC zielen darauf ab, die Tätigkeit der Arbeitsaufsichtsbehörden effizienter zu gestalten. Darüber hinaus übermittelt die Kommission der Frau Abgeordneten und dem Sekretariat des Parlaments einen Auszug aus dem SLIC-Arbeitsplan für die Jahre 2013-2015, der über die Aufgaben, die der Ausschuss sich selbst gestellt hat, Auskunft gibt.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=148&langId=de&intPageId=685

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005483/13
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Senior Labour Inspectors Committee

The Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC) was set up in order to help the Commission monitor the enforcement of EC law at local level.

The SLIC consists of a representative of the Commission and a representative of the labour inspectorate of each EU Member State. It meets every six months in the Member State which currently holds the EU Presidency.

Under Commission Decision 95/319/EC, the SLIC has the task of giving its opinion to the Commission, either at the latter's request or on its own initiative, on all problems relating to the enforcement by the Member States of Community law on health and safety at work. Its activities also include developing an information exchange system, active cooperation with labour inspectorates in third countries, promoting exchanges for labour inspectors between national administrations and defining common labour inspection principles.

— What progress has the SLIC made since it was set up?

— What matters have been discussed at the six-monthly meetings?

— What problems have been highlighted in the SLIC's opinions?

— Can the SLIC's opinions be consulted by the European Parliament and the public?

— Has the SLIC proposed ways of making labour inspection more effective?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Annual Report on the activities of the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC), which are forwarded *inter alia* to Parliament, and to the information on SLIC activities published on the Europa website ([1]).

In addition, the Commission is sending the Honourable Member and Parliament's Secretariat a list of topics of SLIC campaigns and of the latest Thematic Days, which are held on the eve of each plenary meeting.

With a view to discussing enforcement issues, a platform has been set up for swift exchange among national labour inspectorates of information relevant to enforcement of EU occupational safety and health legislation. The most recent SLIC opinions concern issues relating to the cross-border enforcement of that legislation, an initiative for setting up an EU platform to fight against undeclared work and non-binding guidance on the competencies of examiners of tower-crane operators.

All SLIC actions aim to make labour inspectorates' performance more effective. The Commission is also sending the Honourable Member and Parliament's Secretariat an extract of the SLIC work plan for 2013-15 with the tasks that the Committee has set itself.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=148&langId=en&intPageId=685

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-005484/13
à la Commission
Patrice Tirolien (S&D)
(17 mai 2013)

Objet: Incidences sur la sécurité alimentaire en Afrique du virus de la striure brune du manioc

Le virus de la striure brune qui attaque le manioc se propage très rapidement en Afrique depuis une quinzaine d'années. Or, la culture du manioc est une source très importante de nourriture et de revenus pour près de 300 millions d'Africains. Selon certains experts, les pertes provoquées chez les petits producteurs africains par ce virus s'élèveraient à plus de 75 millions d'euros par an. Dans un contexte de multiplication des sécheresses, le manioc est par ailleurs une plante d'avenir, puisqu'elle est unanimement considérée comme l'une des mieux armées pour s'adapter au changement climatique.

Or, le manioc est une plante négligée: il n'existe aucun centre international de recherches qui lui soit dédié comme il en existe pour le blé, le riz, le maïs ou la pomme de terre. La plante fait par ailleurs l'objet d'une quasi-absence d'intérêt du secteur privé.

Face à cette menace pour la sécurité alimentaire de l'Afrique subsaharienne, une conférence internationale réunissant experts et donateurs s'est tenue le 8 mai dernier en Italie. Alors que l'USAID participait aux discussions, il semble que la Commission européenne n'y ait pas été représentée, ce qui est tout à fait regrettable.

Plusieurs pistes sont évoquées pour éradiquer ce virus: création d'un centre de recherche international dédié au manioc, rédaction d'un plan d'action, mise au point d'un système de collecte et de transmission des informations afin d'éradiquer le virus, ainsi qu'un réseau de distribution de boutures certifiées de haute qualité tout en travaillant sur des variétés plus résistantes aux maladies virales.

1. Comment la Commission entend-elle agir concrètement pour juguler la propagation de ce virus?

2. Compte-t-elle proposer la création d'un centre de recherche international dédié au manioc?

3. Prévoit-elle de mobiliser les États membres sur la question et, si oui, quand et comment?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(17 juin 2013)

La Commission a connaissance de l'importance de la culture du manioc pour la sécurité alimentaire et la subsistance d'un grand nombre de petits producteurs africains et elle sait que cette plante est menacée par des maladies virales comme le virus de la striure brune.

Par conséquent, la Commission accorde une place de premier plan au manioc dans son soutien à la recherche agricole pour la sécurité alimentaire et considère le GCRAI ([1]) comme la première organisation internationale du secteur public responsable des recherches sur les maladies virales du manioc, en collaboration avec les systèmes nationaux de recherche agricole.

Dans le cadre du programme thématique pour la sécurité alimentaire, la Commission finance actuellement trois programmes de recherche du GCRAI concernant le manioc — dont deux incluent des travaux sur les maladies virales relatifs à cette plante — et également deux autres projets, menés de concert par la FAO et par une université du Royaume-Uni. Le budget total octroyé par la Commission au titre de ces cinq rubriques est de 21 millions d'euros.

Deux centres du GCRAI, l'Institut international d'agriculture tropicale et le Centre international d'agriculture tropicale, mènent actuellement des activités de recherche sur le manioc. Le manioc fait aussi l'objet d'un nouveau programme de recherche du GCRAI sur les racines, les tubercules et les bananes, qui comprend un volet consacré à l'étude des parasites et des maladies prioritaires. La Commission estime qu'il y a lieu d'évaluer attentivement la coordination de la recherche à travers les structures et les mécanismes existants, avant que ne soit envisagée la création d'un nouveau centre de recherche consacré à l'étude du manioc.

([1]) Groupe consultatif pour la recherche agricole internationale.

La Commission transmet régulièrement des informations sur les problèmes prioritaires en matière de recherche agricole à des fins de développement via l'initiative européenne sur la recherche agricole pour le développement, dont le groupe de travail actif se réunit plusieurs fois par an.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005484/13
to the Commission
Patrice Tirolien (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Impact of the cassava brown streak virus on food security in Africa

The cassava brown streak virus has been spreading rapidly in Africa over the last fifteen years. Cassava is a major source of food and revenue for almost 300 million Africans and, according to some experts, the virus could occasion losses of over EUR 75 million to small farmers in Africa every year. Moreover, in these times of increasingly frequent drought, cassava is a plant for the future, in that it is unanimously considered to be one of the best equipped to cope with climate change.

It is, however, a neglected plant: there is no specific international research centre for cassava as there is for wheat, rice, maize and potato, and there is virtually no private-sector interest in the plant.

In response to this threat to food security in Sub-Saharan Africa, an international conference of experts and donors was held on 8 May in Italy. While USAID took part in the discussions, it seems that the Commission was not represented, which is highly regrettable.

Several means of eradicating the virus were mentioned: establishing of an international cassava research centre, devising of an action plan and development of an information gathering and transmission system for eradicating the virus, of a network for the distribution of certified high-quality cuttings and of research into varieties with greater viral resistance.

1. What action will the Commission take to stop this virus from spreading?

2. Will it propose that an international cassava research centre be established?

3. Does it intend to mobilise the Member States on this matter and, if so, when and how?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2013)

The Commission is aware that cassava is a very important crop supporting the food security and livelihoods of many smallholder farmers in Africa, and that it is under threat from virus diseases such as brown streak.

The Commission therefore gives considerable emphasis to cassava in supporting agricultural research for food security and regards the CGIAR ([1]) as the international public sector research organisation leading research on cassava virus diseases, in collaboration with national agricultural research systems. Through the Food Security Thematic Programme, the Commission is currently supporting three of the CGIAR's programmes that focus on cassava, two of which include work on virus diseases. Two additional cassava projects, led by FAO and a UK University, are also funded under this programme. The total budget provided by the Commission under these five headings is EUR 21 million.

Two CGIAR centres — IITA (International Institute for Tropical Agriculture) and CIAT (Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical) — are currently leading cassava research. Cassava is included in a new CGIAR research programme on roots, tubers and bananas which includes a theme on priority pests and diseases. The Commission believes that coordination through existing structures and mechanisms should be carefully assessed, before any new research centre, dedicated to cassava, could be considered.

The Commission communicates regularly on priority issues on agricultural research for development through the European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development (EIARD), which has an active working group, meeting several times per year.

([1]) Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005485/13
to the Commission
Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Right to work for EU citizens

In the light of the concerns raised by a number of my constituents in relation to their rights as EU nationals, I am seeking clarity as to how EU citizens' right to work is being upheld and protected.

Given the right of EU citizens to reside, move and work across the EU (2013 being the EU Year of Citizens), is the Commission concerned that administrative obstacles may exist in some Member States which could deny EU citizens those rights?

Regarding the right to work, would the Commission take action if a Member State's administrative systems led to EU citizens experiencing difficulties in exercising their right to work in that Member State?

Is the Commission monitoring Member State practices in this area, including the application of income tax and insurance payments systems for EU nationals, such as the practice of issuing national insurance numbers in the UK? Would a Member State be required to amend its practices if they caused de facto barriers to be placed in the way of EU citizens' exercise of their right to work?

Does the Commission agree that fair and equally applied rules need to be guaranteed in order for EU citizens of all Member States to have their rights protected? What steps can the Commission take against individual Member States to ensure that these rights are protected?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The use of social security and tax identification numbers has not been harmonised at EU level and Member States are free to issue such numbers as long as the practice is not discriminatory. However, administrative action or administrative practices of a Member State which 'keep nationals of other Member States away from the employment offered' are contrary to Article 3(1) of Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 ([1]) on freedom of movement for workers. Moreover, a worker who is a national of one Member State working in another should enjoy the same social and tax advantages as national workers. Despite the clarity of the legislation and the abundant case-law of the Court of Justice in this area, barriers to taking up employment in other Member States persist. Therefore the Commission has adopted a proposal ([2]) which aims to make EU migrant workers' rights more effective through the provision of better information, adequate remedies and formal structures for providing assistance. In its 2013 EU Citizenship Report the Commission also put forward twelve concrete actions to remove obstacles citizens encounter when seeking to enjoy their EU rights ([3]). These include steps to make it easier for citizens to look for work in other Member States, to find solutions to simplify formalities and to promote the efficient handling of free movement cases by administrations at local level. As regards taxation, the Commission is continuing to tackle cross-border tax obstacles facing EU citizens as outlined in its 2010 Communication and has launched initiatives to monitor compliance in the taxation of cross-border inheritances, cross-border workers and mobile persons ([4]).

The Commission will continue to require Member States to change practices that are not compliant with the EU *acquis*.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union, OJ L 141, 27.5.2011, p. 1.
([2]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers (COM(2013) 236 final of 26 April 2013).
([3]) EU Citizenship Report 2013 (COM(2013) 269 final of 8 May 2013).
([4]) COM(2010)769.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. P-005486/13
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2013 m. gegužės 17 d.)

Tema: Europos Komisijos vaidmuo Baltijos regione įgyvendinant ilgalaikę ES energetikos strategiją ir užtikrinant energetinį saugumą

Energetinis saugumas ir nenutrūkstamo energijos tiekimo užtikrinimas vartotojams ir pramonei yra vienas didžiausių ES laukiančių iššūkių per ateinantį dešimtmetį. Tai pareikalaus ne tik didelių investicijų, bet ir bendro sutarimo tarp valstybių narių, ir, žinoma, aktyvaus Komisijos vaidmens įgyvendinant ilgalaikę ES energetikos strategiją ir užtikrinant visų ES valstybių narių tinkamą energetinį saugumą.

Viena iš didžiausių kliūčių sėkmingai užbaigti ES vidaus energijos rinkos kūrimą yra ne tik trūkstamų tarpvalstybinių elektros ir dujų jungčių statyba, bet ir vienintelio energetiškai nuo ES energetinės sistemos izoliuoto Baltijos regiono integracija į bendrąją ES energetinę erdvę.

Baltijos regionas savo geografine padėtimi bei istorine praeitimi yra išskirtinis ir skirtingai nuo kitų ES valstybių narių dujų tiekimo klausimu iki šiol visiškai priklausomas nuo monopolinio išorės tiekėjo. Pastaruoju metu iškilusi reali grėsmė gali dar labiau padidinti šio regiono energetinę izoliaciją ir elektros tiekimo atveju. Elektros energijos gamyba Baltijos regione tampa ne ekonominiu, o politiniu klausimu, nulemsiančiu ilgalaikę ne tik šio regiono energetinę ir ekonominę perspektyvą, bet ir galimybes sukurti bendrą ir integruotą ES energijos rinką. Dėl trečiųjų šalių ekonominių ir galbūt politinių interesų bei kai kurių ES valstybių narių nepakankamo solidarumo palaikant Baltijos regiono energetinę integraciją į ES vien tik šio regiono valstybių narių sprendimų energetikos srityje gali nepakakti mažinant šio regiono priklausomybę nuo vienintelio išorės tiekėjo ir užtikrinant veiksmingą jo integraciją į ES elektros ir dujų tinklus.

Ar Komisija nemano, kad jos vaidmuo šiame regione privalo būti aktyvesnis nei kitose ES dalyse, ypač formuojant ir įgyvendinant šio regiono ilgalaikę energetikos strategiją, o prireikus ji turėtų priimti ir politinius sprendimus siekiant užtikrinti šio regiono ilgalaikę ir stabilią integraciją į ES vidaus energijos rinką ir visos ES energetinį saugumą?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. birželio 26 d.)

Komisija aktyviai veikia ir rodo iniciatyvą siekdama palengvinti Baltijos jūros regiono valstybių narių bendradarbiavimą jau nuo 2008 m., tam parengtas Baltijos energijos rinkos jungčių planas (BEMIP). Esminis BEMIP principas – solidarumas siekiant skatinti energijos sistemų integraciją. Projektams Baltijos jūros regione skirta 25 % pagal Europos energetikos programą ekonomikai gaivinti numatytos finansinės paramos. Be to, su Baltijos jūros regionu susiję penki iš dvylikos 2013 m. balandžio 17 d. Reglamento Nr. 347/2013 ([1]) strateginių prioritetinių koridorių ir sričių. 2013 m. rudenį Komisija priims pirmą ES masto bendros svarbos projektų sąrašą. Šiais projektais bus įgyvendinami minėti koridoriai ir sritys pagal pirmiau minėtame reglamente išdėstytus kriterijus.

([1]) 2013 m. balandžio 17 d. Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos Reglamentas (ES) Nr. 347/2013 dėl transeuropinės energetikos infrastruktūros gairių.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005486/13
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: The European Commission's role in the Baltic region in implementing a long-term EU energy strategy and guaranteeing energy security

Energy security and guaranteeing the uninterrupted supply of energy for consumers and industry is one of the greatest challenges facing the EU in the decade ahead. It will require not only great investment but also consensus among the Member States, and the Commission will, of course, have to play an active role in implementing a long-term EU energy strategy and guaranteeing adequate energy security in all EU Member States.

One of the greatest obstacles to the successful completion of the EU internal energy market is not just the construction of the cross-border electricity and gas interconnections that are lacking, but the integration of the Baltic region, the only region isolated in terms of energy from the EU's energy system, into the single EU energy space.

With its geographical location and historical past, the Baltic region is unique and, as far as the supply of gas is concerned, unlike other EU Member States, has hitherto been completely dependent on a monopolistic external supplier. The real threat that emerged recently may further increase this region's energy isolation in the case of the supply of electricity. The production of electricity in the Baltic region is becoming not an economic but a political issue that will not only determine the long-term energy and economic prospects for this region, but also the opportunities to establish a single and integrated EU energy market. Due to the economic and perhaps political interests of third countries and certain EU Member States' lack of solidarity in supporting the energy integration of the Baltic region into the EU, the decisions made by the Member States of this region in the field of energy may not, in themselves, be sufficient to reduce this region's dependence on a single external supplier and guarantee its effective integration into EU electricity and gas networks.

Does the Commission not feel that it must play a more active role in this region than in other parts of the EU, particularly in shaping and implementing this region's long-term energy strategy, and that, if necessary, it should also adopt political decisions in order to ensure this region's long-term and stable integration into the EU internal energy market and the energy security of the entire EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

The Commission has been actively and proactively facilitating cooperation of the Baltic Member States already since 2008 through the establishment of the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP). The underlying principle of BEMIP is solidarity with the aim to promote the integration of the energy systems. 25% of the financial support from the European Energy Programme for Recovery (EEPR) has been allocated to projects to be implemented in the Baltic Sea region. Furthermore, the Baltic region is concerned by five of the twelve strategic priority corridor and areas of Regulation No 347/2013 of 17.4.2013 ([1]). In autumn 2013 the Commission will adopt the first Union-wide list of projects of common interest (PCI) implementing those corridors and areas in line with the criteria set out in the abovementioned regulation.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005487/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: EU aid to Lebanon

A decision was made recently by the Commission to provide additional financial support of EUR 30 million to Lebanon to mitigate the impact of the neighbouring Syrian crisis.

Will the Commission outline the total amount of aid given to Lebanon since 2011 and provide a spending breakdown by area?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

For the 2011-2013 period the EU (excluding the Member States' bilateral cooperation) allocated a total of EUR 315 million to Lebanon in the following sectors:

From the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument:

— Support to political reform: justice, elections, human rights and security: EUR 49 million;

— Support to socioeconomic reforms: education (including for Palestinian refugees), social cohesion, agriculture, energy and infrastructures, civil society: EUR 86 million;

— Recovery and reinvigoration of the economy: local development, improving living conditions of Palestinian refugee camps, demining: EUR 40 million;

— Response to the Syrian crisis: support to the education system, infrastructure rehabilitation, support to coordination, livelihood creation: EUR 45 million;

— Humanitarian response to the Syria crisis: registration of refugees, health activities including emergency healthcare for people with injuries, food assistance, the distribution of non-food items such as tents, mattresses, blankets, and heaters, the provision of shelter, water and sanitation activities, legal assistance and logistics: EUR 46 million.

From the Instrument for stability: Palestinian refugees, Special Tribunal for Lebanon and peace and reconciliation activities: EUR 38 million.

From the thematic budget lines: (EIDHR, Gender, Children in armed conflict and migration, Non State Actors/Local Authorities): EUR 11 million.

In addition, the EIB signed loans for EUR 170 million with Lebanon.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005488/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Participation of Kosovo in EU programmes

The Commission has recently adopted a proposal that would, subject to Council approval, allow Kosovo to participate in 22 EU programmes.

Will the Commission provide details of the 22 programmes in question and indicate whether there are any proposals to expand participation beyond these, should they prove to be successful?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

On 22 April, the Commission adopted its proposals for the Council to sign and conclude, on behalf of the European Union, a framework agreement between the European Union and Kosovo ([1]) on the general principles for the participation of Kosovo in Union programmes. These proposals are currently before the Council. The Union programmes included in the annex to the proposal on signature are: European Earth Monitoring Programme; Framework programme on Solidarity and the Management of Migration Flows for the period 2007-2013; Fiscalis 2013; Customs 2013; Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme; Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity — Progress; Programme of Community Action in the Field of Consumer Policy; Galileo Programme; Single European Sky ATM Research Programme (SESAR) and Joint Undertaking; Intelligent Energy-Europe Programme; ICT Policy Support Programme; Interoperability solutions for European public administrations (ISA); LIFE+; Public Health; Lifelong Learning; Culture; Europe for Citizens; European Audiovisual Sector (MEDIA 2007); Pericles (2002-2013); Youth in Action; Research and Innovation; and Knowledge for Growth.

Article 1 of the draft Agreement stipulates that Kosovo is to be eligible for the programmes listed in the annex and their successor programmes, which are open to candidate countries and potential candidate countries benefitting from the pre-accession strategy for the western Balkans, and for Union programmes established or renewed after the entry into force of the Agreement and which contain an opening clause which provides for the participation of Kosovo.

([1]) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005489/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Bureaucratic procedures for obtaining public documents

European citizens and businesses are often faced with a burdensome bureaucratic process when they attempt to gain access to public documents, such as birth certificates, in a format that is deemed authentic in other Member States.

With this in mind, will the Commission outline any measures it has proposed to slash the red tape in these circumstances?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that it adopted on 24 April 2013 a proposal for a regulation on promoting the free movement of citizens and businesses by simplifying the acceptance of certain public documents in the European Union and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 (COM(2013) 228). The proposal aims at cutting red tape to the benefit of citizens and businesses. It proposes to reduce the costs and lengthy procedures caused by bureaucratic formalities which citizens and businesses have to face in order to prove the authenticity of their public documents (such as birth or legal status certificates) issued by their country of origin.

The proposed measures, in particular the abolition of legalisation and Apostille, simplified presentation of certified copies, the abolition of certified translations and the establishment of EU multilingual standard forms will greatly facilitate procedures for citizens to obtain public documents for cross-border use within the EU. Discussions on the proposal are currently launched in the Council and the European Parliament.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005490/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: EU report on financial support for energy efficiency in buildings

The Commission's recently published report on financial support for energy efficiency outlined how the EU needs to improve its financial support in this sector if it is to meet its 2020 and 2050 targets.

What plans does the Commission have to improve finance for those seeking to improve energy efficiency in buildings?

Furthermore, how much is currently spent per year in Member States on improving energy efficiency in buildings and how does the Commission intend to meet its 2020 and 2050 targets?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The Commission's Report on Financial Support for Energy Efficiency in Buildings ([1]) outlines a number of initiatives that the Commission is undertaking to improve investments in this area, including its proposals to increase and ring-fence cohesion policy funding for low carbon economy measures, to step up the use of financial instruments and to remove the 4% limit on support for sustainable energy investments in housing.

Moreover, the Commission has launched an Energy Performance Contracting Campaign to raise further awareness of this important instrument and will develop guidelines for the selection and evaluation of energy efficiency projects in the context of cohesion policy funding. Finally, the Commission intends to continue its support for project development assistance through the continuation of the European Local Energy Assistance (ELENA) Facility.

The analysis undertaken for the report shows that there are no comprehensive data available as regards national spending on energy efficiency in buildings. The Commission intends to remedy this situation by launching a study in 2013 to obtain a detailed overview of the financial support for energy efficiency in the Member States, *inter alia* addressing the lack of information on the impact of this spending on the energy performance of buildings.

Based on the indicative energy savings' targets that the Member States are submitting to the Commission, it will review progress towards the EU's 20% energy efficiency target by mid-2014. Only once the results of this review are available will it be possible to see whether further measures are necessary to meet this target. Targets beyond 2020 have not yet been established.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/buildings/doc/report_financing_ee_buildings_com_2013_225_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005491/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: EU-Africa summit

Given the significant amount of support that the EU provides to countries in Africa and the important trade links that currently exist, will the Commission outline its main aims and objectives for the upcoming EU-Africa summit?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

The 4th Africa-EU Summit will be held in Brussels, 2-3 April 2014. The Commission and the HR/VP have started preparations and, during the recent College-to-College meeting between the African Union and European Commissions in April 2013 in Addis Ababa, proposed to focus the Summit discussions on economic issues, and in particular on investment, job creation and sustainable growth.

The EU also expects that peace and security as well as acute crisis situations in Africa and elsewhere will feature on the Summit agenda. Security remains an essential prerequisite for development; the Summit could highlight the successful partnership of the EU and Africa in this field, and look at ways to further develop its potential.

The EU's overarching objective for the Summit would be to provide fresh political impetus at the hightest level for the comprehensive EU-Africa relationship, and to further strengthen the economic and political dialogue and cooperation between the two continents. On the international scene, the EU envisages intensifying its cooperation with African partners, so as to tackle jointly global challenges such as climate change, non-proliferation, human rights and the post-2015 Development Framework.

In this regard, the Commission and HR/VP consider the Joint-Africa-EU Strategy should be revised to ensure better focus on key strategic objectives and to streamline its implementation structure and working mechanisms in favour of greater effectiveness.

The Commission looks forward to the forthcoming parliamentary pre-summit to be organised in the margins of the 4th Africa-EU Summit, and to pursuing the discussions with Parliament in the run-up to this key event.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005494/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Teacher training in the EU

In 2007, the Commission noted the problems facing Europe's 6.25 million teachers, such as the fact that the profession has a high percentage of older workers. What measures has the Commission since introduced to address the problem of a decline in the size of the workforce?

In addition, the Commission recently published a report entitled 'Teachers' Professional Development: Europe in international comparison'. As a consequence of this it was noted that induction programmes designed to offer personalised support and advice for new teachers are now mandatory in 15 EU Member States. Does the Commission intend to harmonise the mandatory nature of such programmes across all Member States?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

In accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States. The Commission supports Member States by facilitating policy cooperation between them about common challenges, for example through exchanges of good practice and peer learning. Through the Open Method of Coordination, the Commission works closely with Member State experts to identify policy approaches that can help address such challenges.

As part of its 'Rethinking Education' strategy of November 2012, the Commission drew the attention of Member States to the fact that demographic trends point to a serious shortage of teachers in many European countries (Staff Working Paper 'Supporting the teaching professions for better learning outcomes', SEC(2012)374).

One of the recommendations to Member States is that all new teaching staff should take part in a systematic programme of personal and professional support ('induction') in their first years. However, the implementation of such measures is a matter for national authorities in accordance with their own legislation and circumstances.

A study on the issue of how to make teaching a more attractive profession will be published shortly.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005496/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Constitutional changes in Hungary

Will the Commission outline any concerns it has with regard to recent Hungarian constitutional changes?

In particular, will the Commission elaborate on its concerns regarding the Fourth Amendment to the Hungarian Fundamental Law and disclose whether this law is compatible with EU legislation? If it is not compatible, will the Commission outline what action it is taking to address this issue?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Commission repeatedly expressed concerns about the conformity of the Fourth amendment to the Hungarian Fundamental Law both with EC law and with the principle of the rule of law ([1]). These concerns relate to the possibility to levy an ad-hoc tax for ECJ judgments entailing payment obligations, the powers given to the President of the National Office for the Judiciary to transfer cases and the restrictions on the publication of political advertisements notably during European Parliament election campaigns.

The Hungarian authorities confirmed their intention to remove from the Fundamental Law the possibility of the ad-hoc tax for ECJ judgments and to abolish the system of transfers of cases between courts. The Commission welcomes this and will monitor the necessary implementing steps. On the restrictions of political advertisements, in a letter of 28 June 2013, Prime Minister Orbán expressed the government's readiness to address the Commission's concerns and modify the Fundamental Law in this sense. The Commission expects that a satisfactory solution will be found well in time before the next elections, and President Barroso has addressed a letter in this sense to Prime Minister Orbán on 24 July 2013.

On the wider issue of rule of law, the Commission is working very closely with the Council of Europe and expects Hungary to take due account of the Venice Commission's opinion issued on 17 June 2013, and address it in full accordance with both EU and Council of Europe principles, rules and values.

The Commission has asked the Hungarian authorities to engage in a political dialogue with the European Parliament to address the conclusions of its Resolution of 3 July 2013.

([1]) As explained during European Parliament plenary debates on 17 April and on 2 July 2013.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005498/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Dyskryminacja Żydów na Węgrzech

Ostatnimi czasy na Węgrzech zaobserwować można było niepokojące zjawisko nasilania się antysemityzmu. Prawicowa partia, która stała się trzecią pod względem wielkości siłą polityczną Zgromadzenia Narodowego, wezwała do sporządzenia list węgierskich urzędników administracji publicznej pochodzenia żydowskiego. Zbezczeszczono żydowskie pomniki i cmentarze w różnych częściach kraju. Zorganizowano także marsze wymierzone w Żydów ocalałych z Holokaustu i przeprowadzono ataki na obywateli żydowskich. Mimo że prezydent Węgier skrytykował te zajścia, Światowy Kongres Żydów stwierdził, że słowa są niewystarczające. Rzecznik Kongresu powiedział: „Żydzi na podstawie swojej historii nauczyli się już, że czyny mają większy wydźwięk niż wypowiadane nawet w najlepszej wierze słowa". Aby wyrazić wsparcie dla Żydów na Węgrzech, doroczny Światowy Kongres Żydów odbędzie się po raz pierwszy poza granicami Izraela.

Jakie kroki może przedsięwziąć Komisja, aby przeciwdziałać takiej formie dyskryminacji w Europie?

Jaką strategię przyjmuje Komisja w walce z antysemityzmem, a także by promować większą tolerancję?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(4 lipca 2013 r.)

Komisja potępia wszelkie formy i przejawy rasizmu i ksenofobii, w tym antysemityzm, jako że są one niezgodne z wartościami, na których opiera się Unia Europejska.

Komisja jest zaangażowana w zwalczanie tych zjawisk, wykorzystując wszystkie uprawnienia przyznane jej na mocy Traktatów, w tym uważnie monitorując wprowadzanie przepisów UE przeciwko nawoływaniu do nienawiści i przestępstwom z nienawiści, a mianowicie decyzji ramowej Rady 2008/913/WSiSW w sprawie rasizmu i ksenofobii oraz dyrektywy 2010/13/UE o audiowizualnych usługach medialnych zakazującej nawoływania do nienawiści rasowej w ramach audiowizualnych usług medialnych. Publikacja sprawozdania Komisji dotyczącego wprowadzania decyzji ramowej przez państwa członkowskie przewidziana jest na koniec 2013 r. Niemniej jednak to organy krajowe są odpowiedzialne za dochodzenie dotyczące wszelkich przypadków nawoływania do nienawiści i negowania Holokaustu oraz za ściganie sprawców tych przestępstw.

Udzielane jest wsparcie finansowe dla działań mających na celu zwalczanie rasizmu i ksenofobii u samych źródeł, upamiętnianie ofiar Holokaustu oraz działań nastawionych na promowanie tolerancji oraz większego zrozumienia dla innych kultur i wyznań. Agencja Praw Podstawowych gromadzi także dane dotyczące problemu rasizmu i ksenofobii ([1]). Publikacja wyników badań Agencji na temat doświadczeń Żydów oraz postrzegania przez nich antysemityzmu przewidywana jest w październiku 2013 r. ([2])

Komisja zamierza wspierać wysiłki na rzecz poprawy w zakresie gromadzenia danych krajowych dotyczących przestępstw na tle nienawiści, zapewniając wsparcie dla działań w tej dziedzinie w ramach programów finansowania. Kwestia gromadzenia danych została także podjęta przez grupę ekspertów rządowych, której zadaniem jest wspieranie państw członkowskich w wykonywaniu decyzji ramowej w sprawie rasizmu i ksenofobii.

([1]) Dalsze informacje dotyczące działań Komisji w tym zakresie odnaleźć można na stronie internetowej Dyrekcji Generalnej ds. Sprawiedliwości pod adresem http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm

([2]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-jewish-peoples-experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005498/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Discrimination against Jews in Hungary

Lately, Hungary has seen a worrisome rise in anti-Semitism. The right-wing party, which has become the third largest force in the national assembly, has called for lists to be drawn up of Hungarian public officials of Jewish origin. Jewish memorials and cemeteries in various parts of the country have been damaged, and marches have been staged intimidating Jewish Holocaust survivors and attacks made on Jewish citizens. Although the Hungarian President has criticised these events, the World Jewish Congress has stated that words are not enough. As the organisation's spokesman said: 'As the Jewish people have learned throughout history, actions speak louder than words, no matter how well intended they are'. To show support for Hungarian Jewry, the World Jewish Congress will hold its annual assembly for the first time outside of Israel's borders.

What steps can the Commission take to prevent this type of discrimination in Europe?

What is the Commission's strategy to combat anti-Semitism and promote tolerance?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

The Commission condemns all forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, including anti-Semitism, as they are incompatible with the values on which the EU is founded.

The Commission is committed to fighting against these phenomena by making use of all powers available under the Treaties, including by monitoring closely the implementation of EU legislation on hate speech and hate crime, namely Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on racism and xenophobia, as well as Directive 2010/13/EU on Audiovisual Media Services banning racist speech in Audiovisual media services. Publication of the Commission's report on Member State's implementation of the framework Decision is scheduled for the end of 2013. It is, however, for national authorities to investigate any instances of hate speech or Holocaust denial and to prosecute the perpetrators of such offences.

Financial support is given to stakeholders' activities aimed at combating racism and xenophobia on the ground, commemorating the victims of the Holocaust, and activities aimed at promoting tolerance and intercultural and interreligious understanding. The Fundamental Rights Agency also collects data on issues of racism and xenophobia ([1]). The results of its survey of Jewish people's experiences and perceptions of anti-Semitism are expected to be published in October 2013 ([2]).

The Commission aims to support the efforts to improve the collection of national hate crime data by providing assistance through its financing programmes to stakeholders' activities in this area. The issue of data collection has also been addressed in the group of governmental experts set up to assist Member States in the implementation of the framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia.

([1]) For further information about the Commission's activities in this field, please see the website of the Directorate-General Justice at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm

([2]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-jewish-peoples-experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005499/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Islamscy ekstremiści źródłem niepokojów w Nigerii

Prezydent Nigerii ogłosił stan wyjątkowy po atakach islamskich ekstremistów, którzy zajęli wioski, zniszczyli budynki rządowe oraz od 2010 r. pozbawili życia więcej niż 1 600 osób. Zdołali oni teraz zdobyć broń wojskową oraz zaczęli porywać kobiety i dzieci.

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych jest świadoma sytuacji w Nigerii?

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych mogłaby dostarczyć informacji na temat prób władz Nigerii dotyczących powstrzymania islamskich ekstremistów?

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych podjęła jakiekolwiek działania na rzecz ochrony niewinnych obywateli Nigerii?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(28 czerwca 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest świadoma sytuacji w Nigerii i wielokrotnie potępiała eskalację przemocy, do której tam doszło.

Szanowny Pan Poseł słusznie podnosi, że prezydent Nigerii ogłosił stan wyjątkowy w trzech północno-wschodnich stanach: Adamawie, Borno i Yobe. Znacznie wzmocniono operacje w zakresie bezpieczeństwa, a rząd i instytucje państwowe wraz z „Komitetem do spraw dialogu i pokojowego rozwiązania problemów związanych bezpieczeństwa na północy" kontynuują swoje działania. Obydwie strony, wojsko i rebelianci, deklarują przeprowadzenie udanych operacji, jednak ze względu na odcięcie usług telefonii mobilnej oraz ograniczony dostęp do odległych obszarów, nie było możliwe zweryfikowanie twierdzeń obydwu stron.

Podczas ostatniego posiedzenia w ramach dialogu ministerialnego pomiędzy UE i Nigerią, 16 maja 2013 r., UE po raz kolejny wyraziła swoje obawy i potępiła ataki terrorystyczne. UE wezwała nigeryjskie władze do rozwiązania obecnych problemów związanych z bezpieczeństwem poprzez zastosowanie całościowego podejścia obejmującego bezpieczeństwo i zarządzanie, unikając jednocześnie nadmiernego użycia siły i łamania praw człowieka, ponieważ sprzyjałoby to celom terrorystów. UE będzie nadal współpracować z Nigerią, by stawić czoła wyzwaniom związanym z bezpieczeństwem i uporać się z problemami sprzyjającymi radykalizacji postaw i przemocy. Współpraca ta obejmuje zarówno ciągły dialog polityczny na temat właściwych sposobów rozwiązania istniejących problemów, jak również ukierunkowane działania pomocowe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005499/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Islamic extremists causing turmoil in Nigeria

The Nigerian President has declared a state of emergency in parts of Nigeria following attacks by Islamic extremists who have taken over villages, destroyed government buildings and killed more than 1 600 people since 2010. They have now managed to acquire military-grade weapons and have begun kidnapping women and children.

Is the EEAS aware of the situation in Nigeria?

Could the EEAS provide information on the Nigerian attempts to stop the Islamic extremists?

Has the EEAS taken any steps to protect the innocent civilians of Nigeria?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the situation and has repeatedly condemned the escalating violence in Nigeria.

As the Honourable Member rightly states, the Nigerian President has declared a state of emergency in the three north eastern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Security operations have been massively reinforced, whilst government and state institutions and the 'Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of Security Challenges in the North' remain in place. Both sides, military and insurgents, announce successful operations, but with mobile phone services cut and access to remote locations restricted, it has been impossible to verify claims of either side.

At the last EU-Nigeria Ministerial Dialogue meeting on 16 May 2013 the EU repeated its concern and condemnation of terrorist attacks. The EU urged the Nigerian authorities to address the current security challenges with a comprehensive security/governance approach, avoiding excessive use of force and human rights violations which would play into the hands of terrorists. The EU will continue to work with Nigeria to help it tackle the security challenges and the factors conducive to radicalisation and violence, through both continuous political dialogue on appropriate approaches to the problems, as well as targeted aid interventions.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005501/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Przygotowania Polski do budowy pierwszej elektrowni jądrowej

Polska rozpoczęła przygotowania do budowy pierwszej w tym kraju elektrowni jądrowej. Polskie Ministerstwo Gospodarki wydało oficjalne oświadczenie, zgodnie z którym ujawni szczegóły realizacji polskiego programu jądrowego w lipcu 2013 r., a szczegóły lokalizacji elektrowni – w październiku br.

Jakie jest stanowisko Komisji w odniesieniu do wykorzystywania energii jądrowej?

W jaki sposób Komisja może wesprzeć Polskę w wykorzystaniu energii jądrowej, dzięki któremu zmniejszy się jej zależność od węgla?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(12 lipca 2013 r.)

Podjęcie decyzji o wytwarzaniu energii elektrycznej z energii jądrowej leży w gestii poszczególnych państw członkowskich.

Z instrumentu pożyczkowego Euratomu ([1]) można przyznać pożyczki na inwestycje związane z przemysłowym wytwarzaniem energii elektrycznej w elektrowniach jądrowych w państwach członkowskich, pod warunkiem że dysponuje on wystarczającymi środkami finansowymi ([2]). Projekt musiałby zostać zgłoszony Komisji zgodnie z art. 41 traktatu Euratom i uzyskać jej pozytywną opinię. Ponadto Komisja w ramach programu Horyzont 2020 będzie wspierała badania, aby zapewnić najwyższe poziomy bezpieczeństwa przy wykorzystywaniu energii jądrowej, co przyniesie korzyści wszystkim państwom członkowskim decydującym się na wytwarzanie energii elektrycznej z energii jądrowej.

([1]) Ustanowiony w 1977 r. decyzją Rady 77/270/Euratom z dnia 29 marca 1977 r.
([2]) Należy zauważyć, że obecnie zgodnie z obowiązującym pułapem zadłużenia w ramach tego systemu dostępne są bardzo ograniczone środki finansowe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005501/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Poland preparing to build its first nuclear power plant

Poland has started preparing to build its first nuclear power plant. The Polish Ministry for the Economy has officially announced that it will reveal details of the implementation of Poland's nuclear programme in July 2013, and the location of the power plant in October.

What is the Commission's position with regard to the use of nuclear energy?

In what ways can the Commission assist Poland in making use of nuclear energy, and thereby lessening its dependence on coal?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

It is up to each Member State to decide whether or not to produce electricity from nuclear energy.

The Euratom loan facility ([1]) may grant loans for investments relating to industrial production of electricity in nuclear power stations in Member States, provided it has adequate financial resources ([2]). The projects must have been communicated to the Commission on basis of Art. 41 of the Euratom Treaty and must have received a favourable point of view of the Commission. Furthermore the Commission, under Horizon 2020, will support research to ensure the highest safety levels when using nuclear power, for the benefit of all Member States that chose to produce electricity from nuclear energy.

([1]) Created in 1977 by Council Decision 77/270/Euratom of 29.3.1977.
([2]) It is noted that currently there are only very limited financial resources available within the present borrowing limit under this scheme.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005502/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Konflikt między Syrią a Turcją

W dniu 11 maja 2013 r. w jednym z tureckich miast przygranicznych dokonano dwóch zamachów bombowych przy użyciu samochodu-pułapki, których ofiarami padło 46 osób, a wiele innych zostało rannych. Wielu Turków twierdzi, że za atakami stoi rząd syryjski, i obawia się, że syryjska wojna domowa przenosi się na sąsiadujące kraje. Syryjski minister ds. informacji Omran al-Zoubi, obarczając Turcję winą za umożliwianie syryjskim rebeliantom prowadzenia działań operacyjnych z jej terytorium, zaprzeczył, aby Syria ponosiła odpowiedzialność za którykolwiek z ataków. W związku z zamachami przetrzymywanych jest dziewięciu Turków, którym zarzucono kontakty z syryjskimi służbami wywiadu. Ponadto, jak donosi syryjska grupa opozycyjna, siły rządowe Syrii wystrzeliły pociski w kierunku tureckiej południowej prowincji Hatay. Turcja odgrywa główną rolę w zapewnianiu wsparcia syryjskim uchodźcom i grupom opozycyjnym. Narodowa koalicja syryjska twierdzi, że ataki te są próbą zemsty reżimu Assada na obywatelach tureckich za pomoc obywatelom Syrii.

Jakie stanowisko w tej sprawie zajmuje Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel?

Czy ESDZ koordynuje wspólnie z Turcją akcję udzielania pomocy humanitarnej Syrii?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

W oświadczeniu z dnia 12 maja Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca powiedziała, jakim silnym wstrząsem była dla niej wiadomość o zamachu bombowym w Reyhanli i spowodowanych nim licznych ofiarach śmiertelnych. Wyraziła w imieniu UE pełną solidarność z rządem i ludnością Turcji, a także gotowość UE do udzielenia wszelkiej potrzebnej pomocy.

Unia Europejska jest największym ofiarodawcą pomocy humanitarnej na rzecz Syrii oraz syryjskich uchodźców w krajach sąsiednich. UE regularnie kontaktowała się z władzami tureckimi w związku z udzielaną pomocą i wyraziła gotowość do udzielenia wsparcia w rozwiązywaniu w Turcji potrzeb humanitarnych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005502/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Conflict between Syria and Turkey

On 11 May 2013 two car bombs exploded in a Turkish border town, killing 46 people and leaving many more wounded. Many Turks see the hand of the Syrian Government behind the attack, in keeping with fears that the Syrian civil war is spilling over into neighbouring states. Syrian Information Minister Omran al-Zoubi, while blaming Turkey for letting Syrian rebels operate from its territory, has denied that his country has been involved in any such attacks. Nine Turks are being held in connection with the bombings, and all have been found to be in contact with the Syrian intelligence services. In addition, according to a report from a Syrian opposition group, Syrian government forces have fired towards Turkey's southern Hatay province. Turkey has played a major role in providing assistance to Syrian refugees and opposition groups. The Syrian National Coalition believes that these attacks are an attempt by the Assad regime to take revenge on the Turkish people for its support of the Syrian people.

What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative on this matter?

Is the EEAS coordinating its humanitarian aid to Syria with Turkey?

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

In the statement of 12 May the HR/VP voiced her shock at the bomb attack in Reyhanli and its high death toll. She expressed, on behalf of the EU, full solidarity with the government and people of Turkey as well as the EU readiness to help in any way needed.

The EU has been the largest donor of humanitarian aid to Syria and Syrian refugees in the neighbouring countries. The EU has been in regular contact with the Turkish authorities in relation to the assistance provided and has expressed readiness to help addressing the humanitarian needs in Turkey.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005503/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Unijna polityka „jednych Chin" w kontekście umowy o wolnym handlu z Tajwanem

W odpowiedzi na pytanie pisemne E-001267/213 Komisja stwierdziła: „Relacje z Tajwanem należy również oceniać w kontekście jego wyjątkowej sytuacji politycznej. Unijna polityka jednych Chin wspiera dialog między ChRL a Tajwanem, dzięki któremu w ciągu ostatnich pięciu lat nastąpiła poprawa stosunków po obu stronach cieśniny".

Czy unijna polityka „jednych Chin" jest głównym powodem niechęci Komisji do rozpoczęcia rozmów dotyczących umowy o wolnym handlu z Tajwanem?

W jaki sposób Komisja definiuje unijną politykę „jednych Chin"?

Czy Komisja odbierała jakiekolwiek sygnały z Pekinu, które można by postrzegać jako sprzeciw wobec umowy o wolnym handlu między UE a Tajwanem?

Jeśli tak, jakie to były sygnały?

Czy Komisja uważa, że rozpoczęcie rozmów na temat umowy o wolnym handlu z Tajwanem byłoby sprzeczne z unijną polityką „jednych Chin"? Jeśli tak, na czym polegałaby ta sprzeczność, skoro umowa o ruchu bezwizowym, którą UE podpisała już z Tajwanem, nie jest sprzeczna z tą polityką?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Karela De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(28 czerwca 2013 r.)

Komisja w swojej odpowiedzi na wcześniejsze pytanie pisemne E-001267/2013 ([1]) miała możliwość wskazania szeregu powodów, dla których negocjacje umowy o wolnym handlu z Tajwanem nie stanowią bezpośredniego priorytetu. Decyzja Komisji, by zaproponować rozpoczęcie negocjacji handlowych z jakimkolwiek partnerem, uzależniona jest od tego, czy leży to w interesie UE.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005503/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: EU's one-China policy in the context of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Taiwan

In its answer to Written Question E-001267/213 the Commission stated: 'Relations with Taiwan also have to be seen in terms of its unique political situation. The EU's one-China policy is supportive of the cross-strait dialogue, which has led to improvements in cross-strait relations over the past five years.'

Is the EU's one-China policy the main reason for the Commission's reluctance to commence FTA talks with Taiwan?

How does the Commission define the EU's one-China policy?

Has the Commission received any signals from Beijing that could be seen as opposition to a FTA between the EU and Taiwan?

If so, what were those signals?

Does the Commission believe that launching FTA talks with Taiwan would be contrary to the EU's one-China policy? If so, how would an FTA with Taiwan depart from this policy in a way that the visa-free agreement that the EU already has signed with Taiwan does not?

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

The Commission had the opportunity in its answer to previous Written Question E-001267/2013 ([1]) to describe a number of reasons why negotiating a free trade agreement with Taiwan is not an immediate priority. The Commission's decision to propose the opening of trade negotiations with any partner is based on whether this is in the EU's interest.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005504/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wzrost stopy bezrobocia w styczniu 2013 r. do 23,6 %

Zgodnie z danymi dostarczonymi przez Komisję stopa bezrobocia wśród młodzieży w UE osiągnęła w styczniu 2013 r. 23,6 %. Liczba ta to prawie dwukrotność mediany bezrobocia wśród młodzieży na całym świecie. Wskazuje to jasno na poważny problem z siłą roboczą UE, wziąwszy pod uwagę, że okres, w którym bezrobotni pozostają bez pracy, stale się wydłuża. UE zdeklarowała, że na lata 2014-2020 przyzna łączną kwotę 7 mld EUR na walkę z bezrobociem.

Czy Komisja mogłaby przedstawić statystyki dotyczące prognoz bezrobocia wśród młodzieży na nadchodzące lata?

Jakie kroki podjęła Komisja w celu zmniejszenia bezrobocia w państwach członkowskich?

Czy Komisja uważa, że 7 mld EUR w ciągu sześciu lat wystarczy na rozwiązanie tego problemu?

Jakie inne kroki mogłaby Komisja podjąć, aby wesprzeć walkę z bezrobociem?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(9 lipca 2013 r.)

Komisja dokonuje jedynie prognoz co do kształtowania się całkowitej stopy bezrobocia ([1]). Przewidywań dotyczących przyszłej stopy bezrobocia wśród młodzieży dokonuje MOP ([2]). Z jego sprawozdania na 2013 r. ([3]) wynika, że począwszy od 2015 r. całkowita stopa bezrobocia wśród młodzieży ma zacząć spadać i do 2018 r. być zauważalnie niższa (17,9 % w 2013 r., 17,0 % w 2015 r. i 15,9 % w 2018 r.).

Celem inicjatywy „Szanse dla młodzieży" ([4]) jest ułatwianie młodym ludziom wejścia na rynek pracy. Zespoły zadaniowe w 8 państwach członkowskich ([5]) o najwyższej stopie bezrobocia wśród osób młodych przekierowały około 16 mld EUR z programów EFS i EFRR na rzecz zatrudnienia młodzieży. Przy pomocy programów Erasmus i Leonardo da Vinci obsadzanych jest około 140 tys. miejsc pracy rocznie.

Pakiet na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych ([6]) obejmuje propozycję gwarancji dla młodzieży, ramy jakości dla staży oraz europejski sojusz na rzecz przyuczania do zawodu. Inicjatywa na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych posiadająca budżet o wysokości 6 mld EUR przyczyni się do zwiększenia skuteczności środków ujętych w pakiecie na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych. Na posiedzeniu Rady Europejskiej z dnia 27 czerwca br. poparto wniosek Komisji dotyczący koncentracji w ciągu dwóch pierwszych lat perspektywy finansowej puli środków w wysokości 6 mld EUR.

Jednak główny ciężar starań o szybkie wdrożenie tych środków tak, aby ich skutki były rzeczywiście odczuwalne, spoczywa nadal po stronie państw członkowskich. Wniosek dotyczący nowego rozporządzenia EFS przewiduje specjalny priorytet inwestycyjny ukierunkowany na zrównoważoną integrację ludzi młodych na rynku pracy. Komisja będzie w trakcie nieformalnego dialogu w okresie 2014-2020 nadal monitorować, czy państwa członkowskie przeznaczają wystarczającą część ze środków unijnych na wsparcie zatrudnienia młodzieży.

W kontekście semestru europejskiego 2013 Komisja wydała w stosunku do wielu państw członkowskich projekty odpowiednich zaleceń dla poszczególnych krajów w zakresie młodzieży, w tym reformy systemów kształcenia i szkolenia.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/forecasts_en.htm
([2]) Prognozy dotyczące łącznej stopy dla gospodarek rozwiniętych i UE. Do gospodarek rozwiniętych zaliczają się: Kanada, Stany Zjednoczone, Australia, Izrael, Japonia, Nowa Zelandia, Islandia, Norwegia i Szwajcaria.
([3]) Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013: A generation at risk, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_212423.pdf
([4]) COM (2010) 477 final z 15.09.2012.
([5]) EL, ES, IE, IT, LV, LT, PT, SK.
([6]) COM (2012) 727-728-729 z 05.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005504/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Rise in unemployment figures to 23.6% in January 2013

According to data supplied by the Commission, the unemployment rate among young people in the EU reached 23.6% in January 2013. This number is almost twice the median for youth unemployment around the world. This clearly reveals a serious problem in the EU labour force, bearing in mind that the period for which people stay jobless is constantly increasing. The EU has declared that it will allocate a total of EUR 7 billion over the period 2014-2020 to fight unemployment.

Could the Commission provide statistics regarding the youth unemployment prognosis for the coming years?

What steps has the Commission taken to reduce unemployment in the Member States?

Does the Commission consider EUR 7 billion over a six-year period to be sufficient for tackling this problem?

What other measures could the Commission take to help fight unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

The Commission only forecasts the total unemployment rate developments ([1]). The ILO projects future youth unemployment rates ([2]). According to its 2013 report ([3]) the total youth unemployment rate is expected to start to fall in 2015 and be noticeably lower by 2018 (17.9% in 2013, 17.0% in 2015, and 15.9% in 2018).

The Youth Opportunities Initiative ([4]) is aimed to facilitate the entry of young people into the labour market. Action Teams in 8 Member States (MS) ([5]) with the highest youth unemployment rates, have retargeted about EUR 16 billion of ESF and ERDF financing towards youth employment measures. Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programmes support around 140,000 job placements a year.

The YEP ([6]) included a proposal for a Youth Guarantee, a Quality Framework for Traineeships and a European Alliance for Apprenticeships. The EUR 6 billion Youth Employment Initiative will further boost support measures set out in the YEP. The 27 June European Council supported the Commission proposal to 'frontload' the EUR 6 billion envelope to the first 2 years of the financial perspectives.

However, the main thrust of the effort to swiftly implement these measures so that the effects are really felt, remains with the MS. The proposed new ESF Regulation includes a dedicated investment priority targeting the sustainable labour market integration of young people. The Commission will further monitor, in the ongoing informal dialogue, that MS allocate sufficient funding to support the objective of youth employment with EU funds in the 2014-2020 period.

In the context of the 2013 European Semester, the Commission issued relevant draft Country Specific Recommendations to many MS on youth-related areas, including reforms of education and training systems.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/forecasts_en.htm
([2]) As a total comprising Developed Economies and EU. Developed economies include Canada, United States, Australia, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.
([3]) Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013: A generation at risk, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_212423.pdf
([4]) COM(2010) 477 final of 15.09.2012.
([5]) EL, ES, IE, IT, LV, LT, PT, SK.
([6]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 of 5.12.2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-005505/13
à Comissão
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(17 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Passaportes biométricos

Em fevereiro de 2013, submeti uma questão escrita à Comissão (E-001564/2013), procurando saber se já estariam disponíveis os resultados dos estudos que tinham sido solicitados no âmbito do Regulamento (CE) n.° 444/2009 que estabelece normas para os dispositivos de segurança e dados biométricos dos passaportes e documentos de viagem emitidos pelos Estados-Membros.

Foi com alguma surpresa que recebi a resposta da Comissão, salientando que, embora tivesse encarregado o Centro Comum de Investigação de efetuar um estudo sobre a fiabilidade e viabilidade da utilização das impressões digitais de crianças, não foi possível chegar a quaisquer conclusões claras, por falta de dados de testes fiáveis e em quantidade suficiente. O CCI continua, assim, a tentar reunir novos dados.

Esta resposta contradiz claramente a informação que nos foi dada pelo Diretor desse Instituto, Sr. Lechner, no âmbito da audição parlamentar que decorreu no dia 21 de março no Parlamento Europeu. Foram apresentados os resultados preliminares desse estudo, efetuado com base nos dados fornecidos pelas autoridades portuguesas, e a Comissão LIBE foi informada que a única coisa que faltava seria a redação final do estudo, que deveria ser disponibilizado em agosto.

Gostaria que a Comissão me pudesse esclarecer qual é o verdadeiro ponto da situação. Gostava ainda de saber porque é que, nessa mesma resposta enviada pela Comissão, não existe qualquer referência ao segundo estudo previsto no artigo 5°-A do referido Regulamento, ou seja, um estudo comparativo das taxas de rejeição injustificadas em cada Estado-Membro e, com base nos resultados deste estudo, uma análise da necessidade de regras comuns para o processo de comparação.

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(19 de junho de 2013)

Com base nos resultados dos testes fornecidos pelas autoridades portuguesas competentes em matéria de passaportes, o CCI realizou um estudo sobre as impressões digitais dos menores destinado a avaliar se as impressões digitais de crianças com menos de 12 anos podem ser utilizadas de forma fiável para efeitos de verificação e/ou identificação. A resposta da Comissão à pergunta E-001564/2013 ([1]) reflete os resultados do relatório intercalar, que não apresentava resultados conclusivos.

O CCI prosseguiu os seus trabalhos de investigação e realizou análises adicionais sobre os dados dos testes recebidos, tendo concluído que o fraco desempenho de vários sistemas automatizados de comparação de impressões digitais se deve à fraca qualidade dos próprios dados.

Se forem utilizadas impressões digitais de boa qualidade e for aplicado o procedimento correto, os resultados da comparação automática das impressões digitais de crianças com idades compreendidas entre os 6 e os 12 apresentam resultados semelhantes aos obtidos na comparação de impressões digitais de adultos. Foi nesta base que o Diretor do CCI efetuou a sua apresentação. A versão final do relatório do CCI deve ser concluída em agosto.

Quanto à taxa de falsas rejeições em caso de utilização das impressões digitais do passaporte, a única aplicação que atualmente utiliza as impressões digitais do passaporte é o sistema francês Parafe (*Passage Automatisé Rapide aux Frontières Extérieures*), que está a ser aplicado em grandes aeroportos e portos marítimos em França. No entanto, atualmente só pode ser utilizado o passaporte francês, o que torna muito limitadas as possibilidades de analisar a taxa de falsas rejeições. O facto de, atualmente, os passaportes franceses não incluírem as impressões digitais de crianças com menos de 12 anos de idade, torna impossível analisar a taxa de falsas rejeições das impressões digitais dos menores.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-001564&language=PT

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005505/13
to the Commission
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Biometric passports

In February 2013 I submitted a written question to the Commission (E-001564/2013) in which I enquired about the availability of the results of the studies requested under the terms of Regulation (EC) No 444/2009 on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by Member States.

I was somewhat surprised to learn from the Commission's answer that although it had requested the Joint Research Centre (JRC) to carry out a study concerning the reliability and feasibility of using the fingerprints of children, no firm conclusions had been reached owing to the lack of reliable and sufficient test data. The JRC is therefore seeking further test data.

This reply clearly contradicts the information provided by the director of the JRC, Mr Lechner, at the parliamentary hearing held on 21 March 2013. The preliminary results of this study, which was elaborated on the basis of data provided by the Portuguese authorities, have been presented, and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs was told that all that remained to do was to draft the final version of the report, which should be available in August.

Could the Commission clarify the exact state of play? I would also like to know why, in this same reply from the Commission, no reference is made to the second study provided for under Article 5a of the abovementioned regulation, namely, a comparative study comparing the false rejection rates occurring in each Member State and — based on the results of that study — an analysis of the need for common rules regarding the matching process?

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

On the basis of test data provided by the Portuguese passport authorities, the JRC carried out the juvenile fingerprint study in order to analyse whether fingerprints from children under the age of 12 could reliably be used for verification and/or identification purposes. The Commission response to Question E-001564/2013 ([1]) reflected the results from the interim report, which showed no conclusive results.

The JRC continued their research and performed additional analysis on the test data received which led them to conclude that the poor performance of various automated fingerprint matchers is due to the poor quality of the data itself.

If good quality fingerprints were to be used and the correct procedure would be followed, the performance of automated fingerprint matching using fingerprints from children between the ages of 6 and 12 would show comparable results as observed when using adult fingerprints. It was on this basis that the JRC director made his presentation. The final version of the JRC report is due by August.

As to false rejection rates (FRR) when using fingerprints from the passport, the only implementation currently using fingerprints from the passport is the French PARAFE system (Passage Automatisé Rapide aux Frontières Extérieures) being implemented in major air and sea ports in France. However, only the French passport can currently be used, thus leading still to very limited opportunities to analyse the FRR. Since the French passport currently does not store fingerprints from children under the age of 12, it will be impossible to analyse FRR on juvenile prints.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-001564&language=EN

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005506/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Inmigrante hondureña sin cráneo por la actuación de la sanidad pública española

El pasado 14 de mayo, diversos medios de comunicación españoles publicaron la noticia del caso de una ciudadana hondureña a la que los servicios sanitarios de la Comunidad Valenciana han dejado en situación de extremo riesgo sanitario.

Tras una operación de craneotomía, los servicios del Hospital General de Valencia detectaron que carecía de documentación en regla y recibió el alta forzosa inmediatamente, dejándola sin haber recolocado el hueso craneal extirpado e informándola que debería pagar para que se le vuelva a implantar. Esta es una situación de extremo riesgo para su vida porque el más mínimo golpe en la zona donde carece de cráneo podría suponer su muerte.

Esta no es la primera ocasión en la que España pone en riesgo la integridad física de los inmigrantes sin documentos. Recientemente presentamos otra pregunta que presentaba el trágico caso de un ciudadano senegalés que murió al serle negada la atención médica de la sanidad pública española. Es un nuevo ejemplo claro de cómo la política de austeridad que implementa el Gobierno, siguiendo los dictámenes de Bruselas, se traduce en violencia contra los migrantes.

El caso de esta ciudadana hondureña es aún más grave, puesto que el Hospital General de Valencia la había operado, pero dejado su tratamiento a medias y sin cráneo. Siendo la propia operación realizada por el hospital la causa que ha puesto en riesgo la vida de dicha persona, esto debería convertir al hospital en el responsable último de haber puesto en riesgo su vida.

¿Considera la Comisión que las autoridades españolas han sido responsables de poner en riesgo la vida de la ciudadana hondureña en este caso? ¿Considera la Comisión Europea que la exclusión de asistencia sanitaria a inmigrantes sin papeles puede suponer el incumplimiento de la Directiva 2005/85/CE sobre la reglamentación del estatuto del refugiados, considerando el claro riesgo que existe sobre su vida? ¿Considera la Comisión que España ha incumplido en este caso la Directiva 2008/115/CE relativa al retorno de personas sin documentos al haberle negado asistencia sanitaria en un momento de riesgo extremo? ¿Considera la Comisión que España ha incumplido en este caso la Directiva 2011/24/UE relativa a la atención sanitaria transfronteriza, al haber dejado en riesgo sin terminar su tratamiento?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión lamenta el caso que describe Su Señoría y ruega a los Estados miembros que eviten cualquier incidente de este tipo.

La Directiva 2008/115/CE sobre el retorno obliga a los Estados miembros a proporcionar atención sanitaria de urgencia y tratamiento básico de las enfermedades a los residentes ilegales nacionales de terceros países que estén sujetos a procedimientos de retorno [artículo 14, apartado 1, letra b), y artículo 16, apartado 3, de la Directiva]. El acceso de nacionales de terceros países en situación irregular que no estén sujetos a las disposiciones de la Directiva de retorno, esto es, los inmigrantes irregulares presentes en el territorio de un Estado miembro que no hayan sido interceptados y no estén sujetos a una decisión de retorno, todavía no está armonizada a nivel de la Unión, y la Comisión no está en condiciones de intervenir ante los Estados miembros en este ámbito.

En la actualidad, la Comisión está comprobando la correcta incorporación a los ordenamientos jurídicos nacionales de las disposiciones de la Directiva 2008/115/CE sobre el retorno por parte de los Estados miembros y no ha podido detectar ninguna deficiencia en lo referido a la incorporación de las disposiciones mencionadas al ordenamiento español. En los casos en que resulte necesario, la Comisión hará uso de las facultades que le otorga el Tratado para incoar procedimientos de infracción en relación con el incumplimiento de las normas mencionadas.

La Directiva 2011/24/UE trata de los derechos a reembolso de las personas aseguradas por el tratamiento recibido fuera de su Estado miembro de residencia. Los nacionales de terceros países que no residan legalmente en el territorio de un Estado miembro no están asegurados a tenor de la Directiva y, por lo tanto, no están cubiertas por sus disposiciones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005506/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Honduran immigrant left without part of her skull due to the actions of the Spanish public health service

On 14 May 2013, several Spanish newspapers reported on the case of a Honduran national left in a potentially deadly situation by the Valencian health services.

After a craniotomy procedure, Valencia General Hospital found that the Honduran woman did not have the proper residence documents and forcibly discharged her immediately, leaving her with the removed piece of skull still missing and telling her that she would have to pay to have it put back. This has left her in a potentially deadly situation because the slightest blow to the spot where the piece of skull is missing could kill her.

This is not the first time that Spain has endangered the physical wellbeing of undocumented immigrants. We recently submitted another question that highlighted the tragic case of a Senegalese national who died after being denied medical care by the Spanish public health service. This is another clear example of how the austerity policy implemented by the government, in line with the dictates of Brussels, is resulting in abuses against migrants.

The case of this Honduran national is even more serious, since the Valencia General Hospital had operated on her but left her treatment half-finished with part of her skull missing. As it was the operation carried out by the hospital that actually put this person's life at risk, the hospital should be held ultimately responsible for having endangered her life.

Does the Commission think that the Spanish authorities are guilty of having endangered the life of this Honduran national in this case? Does the Commission consider that denying healthcare to undocumented immigrants could constitute an infringement of Council Directive 2005/85/EC on the regulations regarding refugee status, in view of the evident risk to life involved? Does the Commission consider that Spain has in this case failed to comply with Council Directive 2008/115/EC on returning persons without valid papers, by having refused to provide healthcare in a high-risk situation? Does the Commission consider that this case constitutes an infringement by Spain of Directive 2011/24/EU on cross-border healthcare, by having left the patient at risk without completing her treatment?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission regrets the incident described by the Honourable Member and pleads on Member States to avoid any incident of this kind.

The Return Directive 2008/115/EC obliges Member States to provide emergency healthcare and essential treatment of illness to illegally staying third-country nationals who are subject of return procedures (Articles 14(1)(b) and 16(3) of the directive). The access of illegally staying third-country nationals who are not covered by the provisions of the Return Directive — i.e. irregular migrants staying on Member State territory who have not been apprehended and thus not made subject of a return decision — is not harmonised at Union level and the Commission is not in a position to intervene with Member States in this field.

The Commission is currently in the process of checking the correct legal transposition of the provisions of the Return Directive by Member States and could not identify, in this context, any shortcoming as regards the transposition of the abovementioned provisions by Spain. In those cases in which it is necessary, the Commission will make use of its powers under the Treaty to launch infringement procedures relating to non-compliance with the abovementioned rules.

Directive 2011/24/EU deals with the rights of insured persons to reimbursement for treatment received outside of their Member State of residence. Nationals of third countries that are not legally resident on the territory of a Member State are not insured persons within the meaning of the directive and are not therefore covered by its provisions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005507/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Declive de la confianza ciudadana en el proyecto europeo y los retos de la Unión

A un año de las elecciones al Parlamento Europeo, un sondeo reciente elaborado por Peer Research Centre, un «think tank» americano con sede en Washington, pone de manifiesto el declive pronunciado de la confianza ciudadana en el proyecto europeo y las discrepancias entre países como Alemania, Francia y el Reino Unido sobre el camino que debe seguir la Unión Europea, dando lugar, en opinión de los autores del informe, a una combinación peligrosa que podría derivar en la fragmentación de la unidad europea.

Según datos recabados por la última encuesta del Eurobarómetro de otoño de 2012 ([1]), la percepción negativa de la UE entre sus ciudadanos continúa aumentando, situándose alrededor del 30 %, una tendencia observada desde 2009.

Nos queda un año para restaurar la confianza en las instituciones europeas y en el proyecto de integración europea. Las elecciones al Parlamento Europeo de 2014 serán especialmente cruciales para el futuro de Europa y el de sus ciudadanos. No debemos olvidar que la ciudadanía constituye la piedra angular de la integración europea.

Una de las principales razones del desencanto ciudadano con la UE es la percepción de que la llamada troika ejerce como Gobierno de la Unión y que sus decisiones son tomadas al margen de la voluntad ciudadana representada por el Parlamento Europeo. ¿No cree la Comisión que este hecho ahonda en la percepción de que los ciudadanos no tienen capacidad de influir de ningún modo en la política europea?

El desinterés de los ciudadanos hacia la UE y su funcionamiento no puede achacarse a la falta de información, sino a la imposibilidad de participar en el proceso de construcción europea. ¿Cómo prevé la Comisión Europea fomentar la participación ciudadana en el debate sobre el futuro de Europa?

¿No cree la Comisión que la UE debería buscar un nuevo discurso que vaya más allá de la consecución de la paz y el bienestar para hacer frente a la crisis de confianza en la EU?

Informes como el publicado por Peer Research Centre ponen de relieve la pérdida de relevancia internacional de Europa. A juicio de la Comisión, ¿cómo se debería mejorar la comunicación sobre Europa con el resto del mundo? ¿Cómo se propone la Comisión recuperar el prestigio y credibilidad internacional de Europa?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a sus respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-2685/2012 ([2]) y E-1416/2013 ([3]).

La Comisión ha adoptado iniciativas ([4]) para facilitar a los ciudadanos el ejercicio de sus derechos electorales en la EU y seguir mejorando la transparencia de las elecciones europeas. El fomento de la participación de los ciudadanos en el proceso de toma de decisiones de la UE es un elemento clave según el Informe sobre la Ciudadanía de la UE de 2013 ([5]), que presenta medidas concretas con este fin.

Durante el Año Europeo de los Ciudadanos, la Comisión ha puesto en marcha un debate sobre el futuro de Europa: «Diálogos con los ciudadanos» ([6]) y otros actos en toda la UE animan a los ciudadanos a que se comprometan con la elaboración de políticas de la UE. El sitio web oficial del Año Europeo proporciona una visión general de las actividades en toda la UE ([7]). Además, se ha puesto en marcha un proyecto piloto propuesto por el Parlamento Europeo relativo a una «Nueva narrativa sobre Europa» en el que pueden participar todos los diputados del Parlamento Europeo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_publ_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-002685%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-001416%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/voting-rights/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/2013eucitizenshipreport_en.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/index_en.htm
([7]) http://europa.eu/citizens-2013/es/events

Además, la Comisión favorece el desarrollo de nuevas formas de espacio cívico europeo mediante la financiación de proyectos para facilitar la participación de la sociedad civil en la elaboración de políticas ([8]).

([8]) Por ejemplo, http://www.puzzledbypolicy.eu/ o http://ep-ourspace.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005507/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Decline in public trust in the European project and the challenges faced by the EU

One year ahead of the European Parliament elections, a recent poll conducted by the Peer Research Centre, a US think tank based in Washington, has shown a marked decline in public trust in the European project and disagreement between countries such as Germany, France and the United Kingdom as to the path the EU should take, creating, in the opinion of the report's authors, a dangerous mix that could result in the fragmentation of European unity.

According to data collected in the most recent Eurobarometer survey from autumn 2012 ([1]), the negative perception of the EU among its citizens continues to grow, standing at about 30%, a trend observed since 2009.

We have one year to restore trust in the European institutions and in European integration. The European Parliament elections in 2014 will be particularly crucial for Europe's future and that of its people. We must not forget that the people form the cornerstone of European integration.

One of the main reasons for public disenchantment with the EU is the perception that the 'Troika' is acting as an EU government and its decisions are taken with no regard for the will of the people represented by Parliament. Does the Commission not think that this fact is closely bound up with the perception that the public is powerless to influence European policy in any way?

The lack of public interest in the EU and its functioning cannot be attributed to a lack of information, but to the fact that the public cannot participate in the European integration process. How does the Commission plan to foster public participation in the debate on Europe's future?

Does the Commission not think that the EU should seek a new debate that looks beyond achieving peace and wellbeing in order to address the crisis of trust in the EU?

Reports like the one published by the Peer Research Centre stress that Europe has lost its standing on the international stage. In the Commission's view, how could the rest of the world be better informed about Europe? How does the Commission propose to restore Europe's prestige and international credibility?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to the written questions E-2685/2012 ([2]) and E-1416/2013 ([3]).

The Commission adopted initiatives ([4]) to facilitate the exercise by citizens of their EU electoral rights and further enhance the transparency of European elections. Fostering citizens' participation in the EU's decision-making process is a key element in the 2013 EU Citizenship Report ([5]) which presents concrete actions to this effect.

During the European Year of Citizens, the Commission has launched a debate about the future of Europe: 'Citizens' Dialogues' ([6]) and other events across the EU encourage citizens to engage with EU policy-making. The European Year's official website provides an overview of activities across the EU ([7]). In addition, a pilot project proposed by the European Parliament on a 'New Narrative on Europe' has been launched in which all Members of Parliament can take part.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_publ_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-002685%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-001416%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/voting-rights/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/2013eucitizenshipreport_en.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/index_en.htm
([7]) http://europa.eu/citizens-2013/en/events.

Further, the Commission is fostering the development of additional forms of European civic space by funding projects to facilitate participatory policy-making ([8]).

([8]) e.g. http://www.puzzledbypolicy.eu/ or http://ep-ourspace.eu/.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005509/13
an die Kommission
Daniel Caspary (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE) und Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(17. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Leistungserklärung gemäß der Europäischen Bauprodukteverordnung

Am 9.3.2011 wurde die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 305/2011 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Festlegung harmonisierter Bedingungen für die Vermarktung von Bauprodukten verabschiedet. In Artikel 7 (1) wird die Zurverfügungstellung der Leistungserklärung geregelt. Laut diesem ist es ausreichend, eine einzige Abschrift der Leistungserklärung in gedruckter oder elektronischer Form beizufügen, wenn einem einzigen Abnehmer ein Los gleicher Produkte geliefert wird. In diesem Zusammenhang wird um die Beantwortung folgender Fragen gebeten.

1. Welche Anzahl von Leistungserklärungen ist erforderlich, wenn ein Unternehmen ein Los gleicher Bauprodukte an einen Abnehmer (bspw. einem Baumarkt) im europäischen Ausland liefert, der diese Bauprodukte einzeln und an verschiedene Endkunden weiterverkaufen möchte?

2. Angesichts der vier Grundfreiheiten des europäischen Binnenmarkts, insbesondere der Personenfreiheit, scheint es denkbar, dass der Endnutzer des Produkts weder derselben Nationalität des Herstellers noch des Abnehmers angehört. In welchen bzw. wie vielen Sprachen muss die Leistungserklärung einem Bauprodukt beigefügt werden?

3. Gemäß Artikel 7 (3) der Verordnung kann die Leistungserklärung gemäß Bedingungen, die von der Kommission in einem delegierten Rechtsakt festzulegen sind, auf einer Webseite zur Verfügung gestellt werden. Ist ein solcher delegierter Rechtsakt bereits verabschiedet worden? Wenn ja, welche Regelung sieht dieser vor? Wenn nein, warum nicht und wann ist mit einer Verabschiedung zu rechnen?

4. Ist es laut der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 305/2011 ausreichend, dem jeweiligen Bauprodukt einen Verweis auf eine Webseite (wobei sichergestellt ist, dass keine nachträglichen Abänderung erfolgen können und dem Endverbraucher die Rechtmäßigkeit der Leistungserklärung garantiert werden) beizulegen, auf welcher die dem Produkt entsprechende Leistungserklärung in allen Sprachen der 27 Mitgliedstaaten abrufbar ist?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juli 2013)

1. Für Produkte desselben Loses kann der Hersteller dem Abnehmer eine einzige Abschrift der Leistungserklärung übermitteln. Der Abnehmer kann dann die Produkte mit einer Abschrift des Originals der Leistungserklärung weiterverkaufen. Alternativ kann der Abnehmer vom Hersteller auch mehrere Abschriften der Leistungserklärung erhalten, so dass er seinen jeweiligen Kunden eine Abschrift zur Verfügung stellen kann. Zweifelsohne ist die erste Lösung die bei weitem einfachere.

2. Nach Artikel 7 Absatz 4 der Bauprodukteverordnung ([1]) wird die Leistungserklärung in der Sprache beziehungsweise den Sprachen zur Verfügung gestellt, die von dem Mitgliedstaat, in dem das Produkt bereitgestellt wird, vorgeschrieben werden. Lebt der Endverwender in dem Mitgliedstaat, in dem das Produkt bereitgestellt wird, sollte er mit der Leistungserklärung in der (den) in diesem Mitgliedstaat vorgeschriebenen Sprache(n) keine Schwierigkeiten haben. Erwirbt er das Produkt in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat, sollte er die Leistungserklärung in der (den) in diesem Mitgliedstaat vorgeschriebenen Sprache(n) erhalten. Daher hat dies keine Auswirkungen auf die Grundfreiheiten des Binnenmarkts.

3. Der in Artikel 7 Absatz 3 und Artikel 60 Buchstabe b der Bauprodukteverordnung vorgesehene delegierte Rechtsakt wurde noch nicht verabschiedet, da diese Artikel erst am 1. Juli 2013 in Kraft treten. Die zu diesem Thema veranstaltete öffentliche Konsultationssitzung, zu der die Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments ausdrücklich willkommen sind, findet am 8. Juli statt. Der delegierte Rechtsakt dürfte bis September 2013 von der Kommission abgefasst sein und verabschiedet werden.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 305/2011, ABl. L 88 vom 4.5.2011, S. 5.

4. Zum Verweis auf ein Bauprodukt auf einer Website ist anzumerken, dass für die Umsetzung einer solchen Lösung zunächst der obengenannte delegierte Rechtsakt in Kraft treten muss. In diesem Rechtsakt werden die Bedingungen für die Zulässigkeit festgelegt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005509/13
to the Commission
Daniel Caspary (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE) and Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Declaration of performance according to the European Construction Products Regulation

Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products was adopted on 9 March 2011. Article 7(1) regulates the supply of the declaration of performance. This states that where a batch of the same product is supplied to a single user, it may be accompanied by a single copy of the declaration of performance either in paper form or by electronic means. In view of this, we would like to ask the following questions:

1. How many declarations of performance are needed when a company supplies a batch of the same product to a single purchaser (such as a builders' merchant) in another European Union Member State who wishes to resell these products individually and to different end users?

2. In view of the four fundamental freedoms of the European single market, in particular freedom of movement, it seems conceivable that the end user of the product may not be of the same nationality as the producer or the purchaser. In which languages and how many languages must the declaration of performance accompanying a construction product appear?

3. According to Article 7(3) of the regulation, the declaration of performance may be made available on a website in accordance with conditions to be established by the Commission by means of delegated acts. Has such a delegated act already been passed? If so, what provisions does it contain? If not, why not and when is a delegated act to be expected?

4. Is it sufficient, according to Regulation (EU) No 305/2011, for the relevant construction product to be accompanied by a reference to a website where a declaration of performance in all the languages of the 27 Member States is available (while ensuring that retrospective changes cannot be made and that end users are provided with a guarantee that the declaration of performance is legal)?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

1. For products of the same batch the manufacturer can send only one copy of the Declaration of Performance (DoP) to the client. The client can then resell the products accompanied by a copy of the original DoP. As an alternative, the manufacturer can also provide his client with several copies of the DoP, so that he can supply each of his clients with such a copy. Undoubtedly, the first solution is far easier to apply.

2. According to Article 7(4) of the Construction Products Regulation (the CPR) ([1]), the DoP shall be supplied in the language, or the languages, required in the Member State where the product is made available. If the end user is living in the Member State where the product is made available, he should not encounter difficulties with the DoP supplied in the language(s) required in this Member State. If he purchases the product in another Member State, he should find the DoP in the language(s) required in that Member State. Therefore, this does not have any effect on the fundamental freedoms of the internal market.

3. The delegated act foreseen in Articles 7(3) and 60(b) of the CPR has not been adopted yet as these Articles shall apply as of 1 July 2013. The public consultation meeting on this topic, where MEPs are very welcome, will take place on 8 July. The delegated act is expected to be finalised and adopted by the Commission in September 2013.

4. On the reference of a construction product on a website, it should be pointed out that for such a solution to be implemented, the abovementioned delegated act needs to be in place. In this future act, the conditions for acceptability will be established.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 305/2011, OJ L88, 4.4.2011, pp. 5-43.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005510/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(17 mei 2013)

Betreft: De opmerkingen van de heer Jyrki Katainen

Tijdens de vergaderperiode van april 2013 zei de Finse premier Jyrki Katainen tegen de leden van het Europees Parlement dat eerlijke integratie inhoudt dat de lidstaten hun huishouding op orde moeten houden en hun verantwoordelijkheden niet mogen afschuiven. Hij stelde dat de lidstaten zich aan de regels moeten houden omdat dat het wezen van de democratie vormt en verklaarde tegen euro-obligaties te zijn omdat schuldverdeling niet de juiste oplossing biedt voor de huidige problemen. Hij gaf voorts aan de uitgifte van euro-obligaties een onhaalbaar en onevenwichtig plan te vinden, vanwege de grote verschillen in risiconiveaus tussen de lidstaten in de eurozone. Het feit dat in het eerste decennium na de invoering van de euro alle landen geld hebben kunnen lenen tegen dezelfde rentevoet heeft naar zijn mening bijgedragen aan het ontstaan van het probleem.

De heer Katainen gaf aan dat Finland niet van plan is belasting op financiële transacties in te voeren omdat de twee belangrijkste handelspartners van Finland, Zweden en Estland, niet deelnemen aan de nauwere samenwerking. Invoering van een dergelijke belasting zou schadelijk zijn voor de Finse economie en tot enorme verliezen leiden.

Gezien het voorgaande:

1. Zal de werkgroep euro-obligaties naar behoren rekening houden met de opmerkingen van de heer Katainen inzake schuldverdeling?

2. Zou de Commissie willen reageren op het besluit van Finland om niet over te gaan tot invoering van een belasting op financiële transacties?

3. Is de Commissie van oordeel dat voldoende rekening wordt gehouden met de gevolgen van invoering van die belasting voor niet-deelnemende lidstaten, aangezien de heer Katainen een andere mening toegedaan schijnt te zijn?

4. Wat zijn, gezien het feit dat het voorstel waarschijnlijk ongewenste gevolgen zal hebben voor de economieën van zowel deelnemende als niet-deelnemende lidstaten, de mogelijkheden voor terugtrekking uit de nauwere samenwerking?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(1 juli 2013)

1. In haar Blauwdruk voor een hechte economische en monetaire unie heeft de Commissie verklaard dat een aflossingsfonds en eurobills onder bepaalde strenge voorwaarden op middellange termijn mogelijk deel kunnen uitmaken van een hechte economische en monetaire unie. Het leidende beginsel moet zijn dat elke stap tot verdere wederzijdse risicowaarborging gepaard moet gaan met een grotere discipline en integratie op begrotingsgebied. De Commissie zal een deskundigengroep oprichten om de analyse te verdiepen. De resultaten daarvan worden in het voorjaar van 2014 verwacht.

2. Het is aan de lidstaten om te besluiten of zij deel wensen te nemen aan de nauwere samenwerking op het gebied van belasting op financiële transacties.

3-4. De effectbeoordeling van de Commissie (COM(2013) 71) bij haar voorstel van februari 2013 toont dat noch deelnemende, noch niet deelnemende lidstaten negatieve macro-economische gevolgen zullen ondervinden van de invoering van een gemeenschappelijk FTT-stelsel in een groep van 11 lidstaten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005510/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Mr Jyrki Katainen's statements

On April 2013, during the part-session, Finnish Prime Minister Mr Jyrki Katainen said to Members of the European Parliament that fair integration implies that Member States have to keep their house in order and cannot outsource all responsibility to others. He stated that Member States should abide by the rules since this represented the very essence of democracy, and criticised eurobonds, declaring that debt mutualisation was not a proper solution to current problems. Furthermore, he suggested that the issuing of eurobonds would prove unfeasible as well as unbalanced, since risk levels differed considerably from one eurozone member state to another. He also stated that, since for the first decade after the introduction of the euro, all the countries had been getting money at the same price, these equal interest rates were themselves part of the problem.

He stated that Finland would not introduce the financial transaction tax (FTT) since its two main commercial partners, Sweden and Estonia, had not participated in enhanced cooperation. Mr Katainen acknowledged that the introduction of such a tax would damage the Finnish economy and cause the loss of huge sums of money.

In the light of the above:

1. Will the working group on eurobonds take into adequate account Mr Katainen's remarks on debt mutualisation?

2. Can the Commission comment on Finland's decision not to introduce a FTT?

3. Does the Commission consider that it has taken due account of the tax's impact on non-participating Member States, since Mr Katainen seems not to be of that opinion?

4. How will an eventual withdrawal of the enhanced cooperation procedure work, since the proposal is likely to produce undesirable effects on the economies of both participating and non-participating Member States?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

1. In its Blueprint for a Deep and Genuine EMU, the Commission considered that, in the medium-term, joint issuance within the framework of a redemption fund and eurobills could be possible elements of deep and genuine EMU under certain rigorous conditions. The guiding principle would be that any steps to further mutualisation of risk must go hand-in-hand with greater fiscal discipline and integration. The Commission will establish an expert group to deepen the analysis, the results of which are expected in spring 2014.

2. It is for each Member States to decide whether they wish to take part in the enhanced cooperation on the FTT.

3-4. The Commission's impact assessment [COM(2013) 71] accompanying its proposal of February 2013 shows that neither participating nor non-participating Member States should suffer a negative macroeconomic effect from the establishing of a common system of FTT in a group of 11 Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005511/13
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Personal assistance services for disabled people

An issue of concern for people with disabilities is that personal assistance services are not portable, thereby hindering the free movement of people with disabilities.

As the free movement of people, goods and services is at the cornerstone of EU policy, would the Commission consider initiating legislation to facilitate access to personal assistants for people with disabilities who wish to take up employment in another Member State?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

EU Regulations (EC) Nos 883/2004 and 987/2009 coordinate social security systems of the Member States with the aim of preventing persons losing their social security protection when they exercise their right of free movement within the EU.

Determining entitlement to benefits is within the competence of Member States, but they must respect the EU rules set out in the above Regulations when determining entitlement. Accordingly Member States are free to define in their legislation the benefits they provide to people with disabilities and the conditions of access to them, but depending on the character of these benefits, there is an obligation to export them or not under the EU rules.

The Honourable Member does not state which benefit the question concerns. As a rule, benefits in kind provided under Member States' legislation are not exportable under the EU rules, while benefits in cash must usually be provided to insured persons who reside outside of the State competent for paying those benefits. However, a limited group of special non-contributory cash benefits that are listed in Annex X to Regulation (EC) No 883/2004, such as the Irish Disability and Mobility Allowances, are also exempt from export.

The Commission is considering a proposal for a revision of Regulations (EC) Nos 883/2004 and 987/2009 which may take into account the specific rules and needs identified linked to the coordination of the long-term care benefits for citizens moving to another Member State.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005513/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Refugees fleeing violence in Syria

An increasing number of Syrian refugees are fleeing into neighbouring countries, trying to escape the violence in Syria. The countries concerned say that the long-term hosting of refugees is putting a strain on their resources as increasing numbers of Syrians, and refugees from other countries, try to reach the relative safety of refugee camps and elsewhere within their borders.

What is the Commission doing to assist in this refugee crisis? Does the Commission have any plans to bring some of these people into the EU?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

In response to the Syrian crisis, the EU is concentrating primarily on the continued provision of humanitarian assistance to both Syrians displaced by the conflict who are still in Syria, and to refugees in neighbouring countries, in particular Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq. In doing so, the EU has also been paying close attention to the increasing burden for host communities in neighbouring countries due to the influx of refugees. The EU has thus been providing assistance to these countries too, to ensure their resilience in this crisis, to enhance their capacities to deal with refugees, and encourage them to continue their open-border policy. Since the beginning of the crisis, the Commission and the Member States together have committed over EUR 877 million for the provision of aid. As the worsening situation requires extraordinary measures, the Commission has announced a comprehensive assistance package mobilising an additional EUR 400 million for Syria and the neighbouring countries.

The Commission has also called on Member States to show generosity by providing resettlement places to refugees from the Middle East, including a number of Syrian nationals, identified by the UNHCR as being particularly vulnerable and in need of urgent resettlement. The decision whether or not to resettle refugees rests ultimately with the authorities of the Member States.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005514/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(17 mai 2013)

Objet: Politique de gestion du sable

Le sable est une ressource naturelle qui semble inépuisable et pourtant elle commence à constituer un problème vu la quantité astronomique utilisée pour les projets de construction dans le monde.

Pour construire 1 km d'autoroute il faut 30 000 tonnes de sable, pour une centrale nucléaire, il faut 12 millions de tonnes. Les Emirats Arabes Unis importent des milliards de tonnes de sable pour la construction d'îles artificielles. Ce paradoxe pour un pays désertique vient du fait que le sable du désert ne se solidifie pas suffisamment du fait de sa forme arrondie et lisse afin de rentrer dans la composition du béton. Le sable issu des plages ou des fonds marins, lui, le permet.

L'extraction de sable ne constitue pas une priorité vu le faible coût de cette denrée à disposition. Pourtant, les conséquences de cette extraction massive sont terribles: destruction d'écosystèmes marins, érosion des côtes, trafic et vols.

Le sable contenu dans le verre ou le béton pourrait être mieux valorisé par le biais du recyclage notamment et constituer ainsi un exemple pour les pays tiers.

1. La Commission a-t-elle pris en compte l'urgence d'un débat autour du recyclage du verre et surtout du béton afin de réutiliser le sable? Compte-t-elle soutenir les entreprises réutilisant du béton dans leur projet de construction?

2. Que compte faire l'UE dans la lutte contre les trafics de sable qui constituent une ressource nouvelle pour la mafia?

3. L'UE compte-t-elle limiter l'exportation de sable issu des pays membres?

4. Sachant que 70 % des plages sont en régression dans le monde, quel est le pourcentage des plages européennes qui souffre de la même régression?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(1er août 2013)

1. La Commission adhère pleinement au principe de l'efficacité des ressources et encourage le recyclage. Dans sa communication intitulée «Feuille de route pour une Europe efficace dans l'utilisation des ressources» ([1]), elle propose de transformer les déchets en une ressource clef dans le but d'atténuer la dépendance de l'Union européenne à l'égard des importations de matières premières, de réduire les incidences sur l'environnement et d'ouvrir de nouveaux marchés. Par ailleurs, la directive 2008/98/CE relative aux déchets ([2]) prévoit que les États membres doivent, d'ici à 2020, réutiliser, recycler ou récupérer en tant que matériaux au moins 70 % des déchets de construction et de démolition. Cet objectif sera réexaminé en 2014 et la nécessité de mesures supplémentaires sera aussi évaluée.

2. L'UE n'a pas prévu d'action spécifique à court terme pour lutter contre le trafic de sable. Si la Commission a connaissance d'éléments de preuve relatifs à ces activités criminelles, elle peut prendre des mesures appropriées ou saisir les autorités nationales compétentes.

3. La Commission ne prévoit pas de limiter les exportations de sable en provenance des États membres.

([1]) COM(2011) 571 final.
([2]) JO L 312 du 22.11.2008, p. 13.

4. La Commission ne dispose pas d'informations sur le pourcentage de plages européennes en régression. L'UE a adopté une recommandation relative à la mise en œuvre d'une stratégie de gestion intégrée des zones côtières en Europe ([3]), qui favorise une stratégie de la gestion des zones côtières fondée sur une approche écosystémique tenant compte, notamment, de la dynamique du trait de côte. L'UE a aussi ratifié le protocole sur la gestion intégrée des zones côtières dans le cadre de la convention de Barcelone, qui fait obligation aux États membres riverains de la Méditerranée d'inclure des mesures de prévention de l'érosion côtière dans leurs stratégies de gestion des zones côtières.

([3]) 2002/413/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005514/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Sand management policy

Sand is a natural resource of which there appears to be an endless supply, yet the astronomical quantities used in construction projects around the world mean that problems are starting to emerge in this area.

Thirty thousand tonnes of sand are needed to build 1 km of motorway, and 12 million tonnes are needed for a nuclear power plant. The United Arab Emirates imports billions of tonnes of sand in order to build artificial islands. This is paradoxical in a desert country, but it is because desert sand cannot be compacted enough to be used in concrete due to its overly rounded and smooth shape. It is however possible to use sand from beaches or the seabed for this purpose.

Given the low cost and availability of this commodity, sand extraction is not a priority. Yet the consequences of its large-scale extraction are terrible: the destruction of marine ecosystems, coastal erosion, traffic and flights.

Sand in glass or concrete could be recycled in order to put it to more profitable use, and this could serve as an example for third countries.

1. Is the Commission aware of the urgent need for a debate on the recycling of glass, and in particular concrete, with a view to reusing the sand they contain? Does it intend to support companies which reuse concrete in their construction projects?

2. What steps does the EU intend to take in the fight against the trafficking of sand, which is a new resource for the mafia?

3. Does the EU intend to limit exports of sand from Member States?

4. In view of the fact that 70% of the world's beaches are receding, what percentage of European beaches are experiencing this problem?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

1. The Commission fully subscribes to the principle of resource efficiency and promotes recycling. In its communication 'Roadmap to a resource efficient Europe' ([1]), it proposes turning waste into a key resource with the aim of decreasing the EU's dependency on imports of raw materials, lowering impacts on the environment and opening up new markets. In addition, Directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([2]) provides that Member States shall reuse, recycle or recover as a material at least a 70% of construction and demolition waste by 2020. This target will be reviewed in 2014 and the need for additional measures will be assessed.

2. The EU does not plan to have any specific action in the short term against the trafficking of sand. If the Commission becomes aware of evidence of such criminal activities it may take appropriate action or refer it to the relevant national authorities.

3. The Commission does not have any plans to limit the export of sand from Member States.

4. The Commission does not have information of the percentage of European beaches experiencing receding. The EU adopted a recommendation on integrated coastal zone management in Europe ([3]) that promotes a strategic approach for the management of coastal zones based on an ecosystem approach, including recognition of shoreline dynamics. The EU also ratified the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management under the Barcelona Convention that requires Mediterranean Member States to include erosion prevention measures in their coastal management strategies.

([1]) COM(2011) 571 final.
([2]) OJ L 312/13, 22.11.2008.
([3]) 2002/413/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005515/13
alla Commissione
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(17 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Verifica delle iniziative intraprese dalla Commissione per l'accertamento dell'uso dei fondi europei del POR 2000-2006 da parte della Regione Siciliana

In data 18 aprile 2012, ho provveduto a presentare un'interrogazione scritta avente ad oggetto la richiesta di iniziative urgenti per la verifica dell'uso dei fondi europei del POR 2000-2006 da parte della Regione Siciliana, a seguito di una denuncia in cui viene rappresentata una situazione di gravi irregolarità relative ai procedimenti di ammissione ed assegnazione di finanziamenti dal Dipartimento Pesca dell'Assessorato Regionale Cooperazione Artigianato e Pesca della Regione Siciliana, attraverso il POR Sicilia 2000-2006, misura 4.17, sottomisura A e B, per promuovere la valorizzazione e commercializzazione del pesce povero di Mazara del Vallo.

In data 15 giugno 2012, il Commissario Maria Damanaki ha risposto a nome della Commissione, annunciando l'intenzione di chiedere alle autorità competenti italiane di trasmettere informazioni esaustive riguardo ai fatti denunciati.

Considerato quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Ha provveduto a richiedere alle competenti autorità italiane le informazioni necessarie al fine di accertare l'avvenuto corretto utilizzo dei fondi europei oggetto dell'interrogazione?

2. Ha riscontrato delle irregolarità nella procedura di chiusura finanziaria degli interventi cofinanziati dallo SFOP, nell'ambito del POR 2000-2006 della Regione Siciliana?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2013)

A seguito della corrispondenza con le autorità siciliane, i servizi della Commissione hanno identificato solo un progetto finanziato a titolo della misura 4.17, sottomisura A, nel comune di Mazara del Vallo, riguardante la promozione del «pesce povero». Tuttavia, in base alle informazioni attualmente disponibili, non dispongono di prove che confermino irregolarità durante la procedura di selezione.

La chiusura finanziaria degli interventi cofinanziati dallo Strumento finanziario di orientamento della pesca (SFOP) nell'ambito del POR 2000-2006 della Regione Sicilia è ancora in via di discussione. In questo contesto, la Commissione deve valutare l'affidabilità della dichiarazione di chiusura fornita da un organismo indipendente sulla validità della domanda di pagamento del saldo nonché la legalità e la regolarità delle relative operazioni dichiarate dalle autorità siciliane. Se la Commissione dovesse riscontrare irregolarità nella domanda, procederà al recupero della somma indebitamente versata detraendo l'importo corrispondente dal saldo finale del contributo e informerà l'OLAF dell'accaduto per garantire un seguito e stabilire le responsabilità delle eventuali irregolarità.

I servizi della Commissione hanno programmato una missione in Sicilia nel terzo trimestre del 2013 per svolgere un audit ex-post ed esaminare ulteriormente l'affidabilità della dichiarazione di chiusura finanziaria summenzionata e, di conseguenza, la spesa dichiarata per lo SFOP 2000-2006 nell'ambito del POR della Regione Sicilia.

Attualmente, l'OLAF non è stato informato del caso in questione. Se l'onorevole deputato dovesse ottenere ulteriori informazioni utili per chiarire il caso e le eventuali irregolarità, è invitato a trasmetterle ai servizi della Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005515/13
to the Commission
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Verification of the action taken by the Commission to verify the Sicilian Regional Council's use of EU funding in connection with the 2000-2006 ROP

On 18 April 2012, I tabled a written question calling for urgent action to verify the Sicilian Regional Council's use of EU funding in connection with the 2000-2006 ROP, following a complaint about serious irregularities in procedures for determining funding eligibility and allocating funds used by the Fisheries Department of the Sicilian Regional Council's Crafts and Fisheries Cooperation Office in connection with the implementation of sub-measures A and B of measure 4.17 in the 2000-2006 ROP for Sicily, covering the promotion and marketing of 'pesce povero' (fish considered unsaleable) from Mazara del Vallo.

On 15 June 2012, Commissioner Maria Damanaki answered on behalf of the Commission, announcing its intention to ask the competent Italian authorities to retrieve all possible information on the case.

1. Has the Commission asked the competent Italian authorities for the information necessary to check that the EU funds discussed in this question are being used correctly?

2. Has it found irregularities in the financial closure procedure for measures co-financed by the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG), within the context of the 2000-2006 ROP for the Sicily Region?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

Following the correspondence with the Sicilian authorities, the Commission services have identified only one project financed under measure 4.17a in the municipality of Mazara del Vallo concerns the promotion of 'Pesce Povero'. However, with the information available at this stage the Commission services have no evidence to support the claim of any irregularities occurred during the selection procedure.

The financial closure exercise for the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) 2000-2006 ROP Sicily assistance is still ongoing. Within this framework the Commission has to assess the reliability of the closure declaration provided by an independent body on the validity of the final payment claim and the legality and the regularity of the underlying transactions declared by the Sicilian authority. Should the Commission conclude that the claim refers to an irregularity, it will recover the sum unduly paid by deducting the corresponding amount from the final balance of the assistance. In addition, OLAF would be notified accordingly in order to ensure a follow up for determining the responsibilities of the possible irregularity.

The Commission services have planned an *ex-post* audit mission in Sicily for the third trimester of 2013 to further examine the reliability of the abovementioned closure declaration and consequently the expenditure declared for the FIFG 2000-2006 ROP Sicily assistance.

For the time being, OLAF has not been notified of this case. If the Honourable Member is in possession of additional information useful to clearly identify the case and the possible irregularities, he is kindly requested to notify the Commission services accordingly.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005516/13
aan de Commissie
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(17 mei 2013)

Betreft: 5e Nederlands Actieprogramma Nitraatrichtlijn

Op dit moment vinden er onderhandelingen plaats tussen Nederland en de Europese Commissie over het 5e Nederlandse Actieprogramma Nitraatrichtlijn.

Conform EU-beleid moet de gemiddelde nitraat-concentratie in alle KRW (Kaderrichtlijn Water) grondwaterlichamen onder de 50 mg/l komen te liggen, ook op uitspoelingsgevoelige droge zand- en losgronden. Mede uit het KRW-rapport „De gevolgen van vermesting voor drinkwaterwinning in beeld" (2012) blijkt dat er op deze gronden nog steeds sprake is van overschrijding van de nitraatnorm en dat overbemesting een actueel probleem is voor drinkwaterbedrijven. Mestgift leidt tot verhoging van het nitraatgehalte en veroorzaakt verzuring, verhoogde sulfaat- en zware metalengehalten, toename van de hardheid, hogere fosfaatgehaltes en belasting met diergeneesmiddelen in grondwater dat voor drinkwaterproductie wordt gebruikt. Om de drinkwaterbronnen te beschermen is afstemming van het mestbeleid met de doelstellingen van de KRW noodzakelijk.

Omdat de nitraatnorm in grondwater wordt uitgedrukt als gemiddelde per gebied treden voor drinkwaterwinningen, met name op de droge zandgronden, overschrijdingen van de drinkwaternorm op die niet als zodanig aangemerkt worden omdat ze gecompenseerd worden door een „onderschrijding" in een ander deelgebied. Daardoor worden bij deze knelpunten niet voldoende maatregelen genomen. De gemiddelde nitraatnorm van 50 mg/l zou daarom moeten gelden voor de intrekgebieden van de kwetsbare winningen.

1. Kijkt de Commissie, in de onderhandelingen met Nederland over het 5e Actieprogramma, ook naar het beleid om de overschrijdingen bij drinkwaterwinningen terug te dringen?

2. Is de Commissie met mij van mening dat het mestbeleid afgestemd moet zijn op de doelen van de KRW en de gemiddelde nitraatnorm van 50 mg/l moet gelden voor de intrekgebieden van de kwetsbare winningen?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(23 juli 2013)

Op grond van de nitratenrichtlijn moeten de lidstaten in het kader van de criteria voor het vaststellen van door verontreiniging beïnvloede wateren of wateren waarvoor het risico van verontreiniging bestaat, beoordelen of grondwater meer dan 50 mg nitraat per liter bevat of zou kunnen bevatten indien aanvullende maatregelen achterwege blijven. Bovendien moeten de lidstaten overeenkomstig artikel 5, lid 5, van de richtlijn aanvullende of verscherpte maatregelen nemen indien duidelijk wordt dat de huidige maatregelen niet toereikend zijn om de doelstellingen van de richtlijn binnen een redelijke termijn te verwezenlijken. De vereiste om hun actieprogramma's ten minste eens in de vier jaar opnieuw te bezien en te versterken tot de doelstellingen van de nitratenrichtlijn kunnen worden verwezenlijkt, geldt voor alle stukken land die afwateren in de wateren die worden vastgesteld aan de hand van criteria uit de richtlijn.

Daarom zullen aanvullende of verscherpte maatregelen in het vijfde actieprogramma moeten worden overwogen om passende aandacht te besteden aan alle gebieden in Nederland waar de normen worden overschreden of waarvoor het risico van overschrijding bestaat. In dit verband is de verontreiniging uit agrarische bronnen van water dat voor de bereiding van drinkwater wordt gebruikt, van bijzonder belang.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005516/13
to the Commission
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Fifth Netherlands Nitrates Directive Action Programme

Negotiations are currently taking place between the Netherlands and the Commission on the Fifth Netherlands Nitrates Directive Action Programme.

According to EU policy, the average nitrate concentration in all WFD (Water Framework Directive) bodies of groundwater must be less than 50 mg/l, including on dry sandy and loess soil which is prone to flushing. The report from the KWR Watercycle Research Institute, entitled 'De gevolgen van vermesting voor drinkwaterwinning in beeld' [Visual overview of consequences of overfertilisation for the extraction of drinking water] (2012), also indicates that these soils still exceed the nitrate standard and that overfertilisation is a topical issue for drinking water companies. Fertilisers increase the nitrate content and cause acidification, higher contents of sulphates and heavy metals, increased hardness, a higher phosphate content and pollution from veterinary medicinal products in the groundwater which is used to produce drinking water. In order to protect drinking water sources, policy on the use of fertilisers needs to be brought into line with WFD objectives.

Since the nitrate standard in groundwater is expressed as an average per area, in the case of drinking water extraction schemes, particularly on dry sandy soil, the drinking water standard is exceeded, which is not noticed as such because it is offset by a 'shortfall' in another sub-area. This means that inadequate measures are taken to deal with these issues. Therefore, the average nitrate standard of 50 mg/l ought to apply to the infiltration areas of vulnerable extraction schemes.

1. Is the Commission also examining the policy during the negotiations with the Netherlands on the Fifth Action Programme with a view to limiting excess values in the case of drinking water extraction schemes?

2. Does the Commission agree with me that the policy on the use of fertilisers needs to be brought into line with WFD objectives and that the average nitrate standard of 50 mg/l must apply to the infiltration areas of vulnerable extraction schemes?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2013)

Under the Nitrates Directive, amongst the criteria for identifying waters affected by pollution or at risk of pollution, Member States have to assess if groundwaters contain more than 50 mg/l nitrates or could contain more than 50 mg/l if additional action is not taken. In addition, in accordance with Article 5(5) of the directive, Member States must take additional measures or reinforced actions if it becomes evident that the current measures are not sufficient to achieve the objectives of the directive within a reasonable timescale. The requirement of reviewing, at least every four years, and reinforcing action programmes until the objectives of the Nitrates Directive can be achieved applies to all areas that drain into the waters identified in accordance with criteria set out in the directive.

Therefore, additional or reinforced measures will have to be considered in the Fifth Action Programme in order to address properly all the areas in the Netherlands where the standards are exceeded or at risk of being exceeded. Within this context, the pollution from agricultural sources of waters used for the production of drinking water is of special concern.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005517/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Conservación de la biodiversidad en Cantabria

Los incendios y la desaparición de las zonas rurales están poniendo en peligro la biodiversidad de Cantabria, especialmente en lo que se refiere a las aves asociadas al matorral de montaña como la perdiz pardilla o el aguilucho pálido. Asimismo los excesos de caza deportiva han puesto en peligro de extinción al urogallo cantábrico.

A este problema se une que Cantabria tiene censadas más de medio centenar de plantas invasoras (en concreto 57), cuya erradicación es difícil. Una expansión que acaba con los ecosistemas autóctonos, sobre todo de transición entre praderías y bosques, con setos y arbustos pequeños, que son necesarios para especies de invertebrados que se sirven de ellos como refugio.

¿Considera la Comisión que España y el Gobierno regional de Cantabria están incumpliendo la Directiva 79/409/CEE relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres y la Directiva 92/43/CEE relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y la flora silvestres?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión reconoce que pesan peligros sobre la biodiversidad de Cantabria. La Directiva sobre aves ([1]) establece un régimen global de protección de todas las especies de aves silvestres que están presentes de forma natural en la Unión Europea. A ella hay que sumar la Directiva sobre hábitats ([2]), que contribuye a garantizar la biodiversidad mediante la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres.

La responsabilidad de garantizar el cumplimiento de las Directivas sobre hábitats y sobre aves compete principalmente a los Estados miembros y estos son los encargados de poner en vigor las disposiciones jurídicas, reglamentarias y administrativas necesarias con ese fin.

Según la información disponible, España ha tomado medidas para crear un sistema general de protección de las especies de aves, como por ejemplo las disposiciones de la Ley 42/2007 ([3]). En Cantabria, se han designado ocho zonas de protección especial, algunas de las cuales lo fueron para proteger la perdiz pardilla, el aguilucho pálido o el urogallo cantábrico.

A juicio de la Comisión, nada indica que España y el Gobierno de Cantabria estén incumpliendo las Directivas sobre hábitats y sobre aves en este caso.

([1]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 20 de 26.1.2010, p. 7).
([2]) 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, p. 7).
([3]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2007/12/14/pdfs/A51275-51327.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005517/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Biodiversity conservation in Cantabria

Fires and the disappearance of rural areas are jeopardising Cantabria's biodiversity, particularly as regards birds associated with mountain scrubland, such as the grey partridge or the hen harrier. Furthermore, excessive sport hunting means that the Cantabrian capercaillie is threatened with extinction.

In Cantabria, this problem is compounded by hard-to-eradicate alien plant species, 57 of which have been recorded. Their expansion is killing off native ecosystems, particularly the transition zones between grassland and forest with small bushes and shrubs, which are necessary for invertebrate species that use them as shelter.

Does the Commission consider Spain and the Cantabrian Regional Government in breach of Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The Commission acknowledges that the Cantabrian biodiversity is subject to certain threats. The Birds Directive ([1]) provides a comprehensive scheme of protection for all wild bird species naturally occurring in the European Union. In addition, the Habitats Directive ([2]) contributes to ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats of wild fauna and flora.

The responsibility to ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives relies primarily with Member States and they are responsible for bringing into force relevant laws, regulations and administrative provisions to ensure this.

According to the information available, Spain has adopted measures for establishing a general system of protection for bird species, including through the provisions of the Act 42/2007 ([3]). Eight Special Protection Areas have been designated in Cantabria, some of which were designated for the protection of the grey partridge, the hen harrier and the Cantabrian capercaillie.

The Commission has no indication that Spain and the Cantabrian regional government are in breach of the Habitats and Birds Directives concerning this case.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 30 November 2009, on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010).
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. O.J. L 206 of 22.07.1992.
([3]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2007/12/14/pdfs/A51275-51327.pdf .

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005518/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Brotes de brucelosis en Cantabria

A finales de 2012 han vuelto a aparecer brotes de brucelosis en el ganado bovino de Cantabria. Soy consciente que, en la medida en que las indemnizaciones concedidas por una autoridad pública no superen el valor de mercado del animal sacrificado, la Comisión Europea no tiene nada que objetar sobre la forma en la que se organizan esos regímenes compensatorios.

¿Han adoptado las autoridades sanitarias de la Comunidad Autónoma de Cantabria y de la Comisión Europea todas las medidas necesarias para evitar el empeoramiento y la difusión del brote?

¿Cree la Comisión que España aplica correctamente las disposiciones legales, reglamentarias y administrativas necesarias para el cumplimiento de las Directivas por las que se establece una acción de la Comunidad para la erradicación de la brucelosis, de la tuberculosis y de la leucosis de los bovinos?

¿No tiene nada que especificar la Comisión sobre la claridad y transparencia de la información que se les ofrece a los ganaderos sobre la cantidad exacta y total de ayudas que van a percibir para compensar tanto el coste del vacío de la explotación como los gastos extraordinarios, el lucro cesante durante la cuarentena y la reposición de las reses sanas?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de junio de 2013)

La legislación de la UE establece requisitos legislativos específicos para el control de la brucelosis bovina ([1]).

La Comisión ha aprobado el programa plurianual de erradicación de la brucelosis bovina en España. La cofinanciación de la Unión se ha determinado sobre la base de los mencionados requisitos legislativos, el resultado de la reunión de expertos en brucelosis bovina de la Task Force celebrada en Santander los días 27 y 28 de octubre de 2010 ([2]) y en los informes sobre las misiones ([3]) llevadas a cabo por la Oficina Alimentaria y Veterinaria (OAV) de la Dirección General de Salud y Consumidores de la Comisión para verificar la correcta ejecución del programa.

La información facilitada por las autoridades españolas sobre los resultados de la aplicación de los programas pone de manifiesto que tanto la prevalencia como la incidencia de la enfermedad a nivel de rebaño en Cantabria han disminuido, lo que confirma la tendencia favorable de los últimos diez años. Además, el último informe de auditoría de la OAV ([4]) confirmó que España está aplicando correctamente la legislación de la UE, así como el programa de erradicación aprobado.

El artículo 1 de la Decisión de Ejecución 2011/807/UE ([5]) de la Comisión contiene detalles sobre las medidas subvencionables cofinanciadas por la UE en el marco del programa de erradicación para 2012. En particular, la contribución financiera de la UE a los programas de erradicación españoles asciende a 4 000 000 de euros, y consiste en lo siguiente:

— una serie de importes a tanto alzado para compensar todos los gastos contraídos a fin de llevar a cabo las actividades o las pruebas previstas en el programa aprobado, y

— un porcentaje del 50 % de los gastos en que incurran los Estados miembros para sufragar las indemnizaciones que deban pagarse a los propietarios por el valor de los animales sacrificados en el marco de este programa (con un límite máximo de 375 euros).

([1]) Directiva 64/432/CEE del Consejo, DO L 121 de 29.7.1964, p. 1977; Directiva 77/391/CEE del Consejo, DO L 145 de 13.6.1977, p. 44, y Decisión 78/52/CEE del Consejo, DO L 015 de 19.1.1978, p. 34.

([2]) Informe SANCO/10114/2010, disponible en la siguiente dirección: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/index_es.htm

([3]) La OAV forma parte de la Dirección General de Salud y Consumidores. Su misión es garantizar, mediante auditorías, inspecciones y actividades conexas, que los sistemas de control sean eficaces y evaluar el cumplimiento de las normas de la UE, tanto en Europa como en países terceros por cuanto se refiere a sus exportaciones a la UE.

([4]) Informe SANCO/2008/7792, disponible en la siguiente dirección: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm

([5]) DO L 322 de 6.12. 2011, p. 11, modificada por la Decisión 2012/147/UE de la Comisión, DO L 73 de 13.3.2012, p. 6.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005518/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Outbreaks of brucellosis in Cantabria

In late 2012, outbreaks of brucellosis again started to appear in Cantabrian cattle. I am aware that, provided that the compensation awarded by a public authority does not exceed the market value of the slaughtered animal, the Commission has no objection as to how such compensation schemes are organised.

Have the health authorities of the region of Cantabria and the Commission adopted all the measures necessary to prevent the outbreak from worsening and spreading?

Does the Commission believe that Spain is correctly applying the legal, regulatory and administrative provisions necessary for compliance with the directives underpinning EU action to eradicate bovine brucellosis, tuberculosis and leucosis?

Can the Commission clarify and make more transparent the information offered to cattle farmers on the exact total amount of aid that they will receive to cover the cost of vaccinating their herd, of extraordinary expenditure, of their loss of income during the quarantine, and of investing in new cattle?

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

Specific legislative requirements for the control of bovine brucellosis are laid down in EU legislation ([1]).

The Commission has approved the Spanish bovine brucellosis (BB) eradication programme for several years. Co-financing by the Union has been allocated on the bases of the abovementioned legislative requirements, on the outcome of the bovine brucellosis Task Force held in Santander on 27-28 October 2010 ([2]) and on the reports of the missions ([3]) carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) to verify the correct implementation of the programme.

The information provided by Spain on the results of the implementation of the programmes show that both the prevalence and the incidence of the disease at herd level in Cantabria has decreased, confirming the favourable trend of the last 10 years. In addition, the most recent mission report of the FVO ([4]) confirmed that Spain is correctly implementing EU legislation and the approved eradication programme.

Article 1 of Commission Decision 2011/807/EU ([5]) details the eligible measures co-financed by the EU in the framework of the eradication programme for 2012. In particular, the EU financial contribution to the Spanish eradication programmes amounts to EUR 4 000 000 and consists of:

— a set of lump sums compensating for all costs incurred to perform the activities and/or tests foreseen in the approved programme, and

— the rate 50% of the costs to be incurred by a Member State for the cost of the compensation to be paid to owners for the value of their animals slaughtered subject to the programme (up to a ceiling of EUR 375).

([1]) Council Directives 64/432/EEC, OJ L 121, 29.7. 1964, p. 1977. Council Directive 77/391/EEC, OJ L 145, 13.6.1977, p. 44; Council Decision 78/52/EEC, OJ L 015, 19.1.1978, p.34.
([2]) Report SANCO/10114/2010 available on: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/index_en.htm
([3]) The FVO is part of the Health and Consumers Directorate-General. Its mission is to assure, by means of audits, inspections and related activities, effective control systems and to evaluate compliance with EU standards within the EU, and in third countries in relation to their exports to the EU.
([4]) Report SANCO/2008/7792, available on: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm).
([5]) OJ L 322, 6.12. 2011, p. 11, as amended by Commission Decision 2012/147/EU, OJ L 73, 13.03.2012, p. 6.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005519/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Cumplimiento del déficit: paralización económica y empobrecimiento

Las presiones para la reducción del déficit español han puesto de manifiesto la situación de endeudamiento de las comunidades autónomas y por tanto se ha reforzado la línea de la austeridad presupuestaria. En Cantabria, en concreto, la receta que se va a aplicar para reducir el déficit en 2013 al 0,7 % consiste en más recortes y austeridad.

Austeridad que están pagando los ciudadanos cántabros con un paro desbocado y nuestra industria y economía, con su paralización.

A diario se habla de la crisis financiera de los países europeos, pero no se habla en absoluto de la situación económica de las estructuras regionales y locales. Estudios recientes señalan el problema del endeudamiento excesivo de los municipios europeos, grandes y pequeños, ya sea debido a una mala gestión, ya sea porque las inversiones financieras se han visto afectadas por la crisis. Como resultado de ello, las entidades locales disminuyen drásticamente las prestaciones sociales a los ciudadanos.

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-002427-13, la Comisión declaró:

«La Comisión hace hincapié en que, a fin de encontrar una solución a sus efectos negativos en el empleo y el crecimiento a corto plazo, los saneamientos presupuestarios deben llevarse a cabo de forma diferenciada y favorable al crecimiento, dando prioridad a los gastos en sectores de la investigación y desarrollo y la educación, así como a proyectos concretos y bien enfocados que tengan las mayores probabilidades de mejorar la capacidad de crecimiento. La Comisión también considera importante que el saneamiento sea justo para proteger a las capas más débiles de la población.»

1. Teniendo en cuenta la situación en España y concretamente la de Cantabria, donde el 20,3 % de la población vive por debajo de la pobreza, ¿qué opina la Comisión acerca de las políticas de saneamiento presupuestario no diferenciado que se están llevando a cabo desde el Gobierno central para afrontar los problemas económicos de los entes autonómicos y locales en este país?

2. Con los nuevos paquetes de medidas financieras y económicas ¿qué propuestas específicas tiene la Comisión para promover un modelo de bienestar sostenible de los entes autonómicos y locales?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

En muchos Estados miembros existe la necesidad de realizar un esfuerzo conjunto de todas las partes interesadas para consolidar las finanzas públicas y aplicar las reformas pendientes a fin de mejorar el funcionamiento de la economía. Los Tratados de la UE no confieren a la Comisión competencias en materia de distribución de los ingresos y los gastos fiscales dentro de los países.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005519/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Making good the deficit: economic paralysis and impoverishment

The pressures to reduce the Spanish deficit have made it clear how deeply indebted the country's regional governments are, and budgetary austerity has intensified accordingly. Specifically, the Cantabrian Regional Government is making more cuts and applying more austerity measures to bring the deficit down to 0.7% in 2013.

Cantabrian citizens are paying for this austerity with runaway unemployment, and our industry and economy are grinding to a halt.

There is talk every day of the financial crisis in European countries, but no one ever mentions the economic situation at regional and local level. Recent studies show that European municipalities, large and small alike, are overburdened with debt, a problem caused either by maladministration or because financial investment has been hit by the crisis. As a result, local authorities are drastically scaling down the social services that they offer to the public.

In its answer to Question E-002427/2013 the Commission made the following points:

'The Commission stresses that in order to assuage the negative effects on employment and growth in the short term, fiscal consolidations should be conducted in a differentiated, growth-friendly manner by prioritising expenditure areas such as R&D, education and specific, well-targeted investment projects which have the largest probability of increasing growth potential. The Commission also considers it important that the consolidation is fair, in order to protect the weaker part of the population.'

1. Given the situation in Spain, and specifically Cantabria, where 20.3% of the population are living below the breadline, how does the Commission view the fiscal consolidation policies being implemented indiscriminately by central government in order to tackle the economic problems of Spanish regional and local authorities?

2. As regards the new packages of financial and economic measures, what specific proposals can the Commission put forward to promote a sustainable social welfare model at regional and local level?

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

In many Member States there is a need for a joint effort by all stakeholders to consolidate public finances and implement overdue reforms to improve the working of the economy. The EU Treaties do not give the Commission responsibility concerning the distribution of fiscal revenues and expenditures within countries.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005520/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Dación en pago

La profunda crisis económica en España disparó el paro a la cifra récord del 27,16 % en el primer trimestre de 2013, y, como ya señalé a la Comisión hace unos meses, ha provocado una fuerte subida de los casos de desahucio por impago de préstamos hipotecarios. 335 familias cántabras perdieron sus casas por desahucio el año pasado.

¿Tiene la Comisión datos finales de la investigación comisionada al Grupo de los Usuarios de Servicios Financieros, encargado de asesorar a la Comisión en la preparación de actos legislativos u otras iniciativas de actuación que afecten a los usuarios de servicios financieros, sobre el uso de la dación en pago como instrumento jurídico?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de julio de 2013)

En el contexto de la pregunta de Su Señoría, el concepto de «dación en pago» parece referirse a la noción de «datio in solutum», según el cual los prestatarios que no puedan reembolsar sus préstamos hipotecarios son liberados en su totalidad de la deuda subyacente entregando su propiedad hipotecada al prestamista.

El «Estudio sobre la manera de proteger a los consumidores en dificultades financieras: insolvencia personal, dación en pago en hipotecas y restricciones de las prácticas abusivas de cobro de deudas» (Study on means to protect consumers in financial difficulty: Personal Bankruptcy, datio in solutum of mortgages, and restrictions on debt collection abusive practices) se puede consultar en la página web del Grupo de los Usuarios de Servicios Financieros ([1]). Este estudio indica el marco jurídico en vigor en determinados Estados miembros, España inclusive, y los modelos de mejores prácticas para hacer frente a las deudas de los consumidores, desde la reestructuración o la reducción de las deudas hasta la condonación de la deuda, incluida la dación en pago. La evaluación de la empresa que ha llevado a cabo el estudio es que la condonación de la deuda, así como la indulgencia hipotecaria, en caso de aplicarlas correctamente todos los prestamistas, parecen ser las soluciones que redundan en mayor ventaja de los consumidores. El estudio no proporciona datos cuantitativos sobre el uso de la dación en pago.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/fsug/papers/debt_solutions_report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005520/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Payment in kind

The deep economic crisis in Spain led to the record unemployment figure of 27.16% in the first quarter of 2013. As the Commission pointed out a few months ago, this has led to a major rise in repossessions because of failure to meet mortgage payments. In the last year, 335 Cantabrian families have had their homes repossessed.

The Financial Services User Group is charged with advising the Commission in the preparation of legislation or other initiatives which affect the users of financial services. Does the Commission have final figures for the research that it commissioned on the use of payment in kind as a legal instrument?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

In the context of the question of the Honourable Member, the notion of 'payment in kind' seems to refer to the concept of 'datio in solutum' according to which borrowers who cannot repay their mortgage loans are released in full from the underlying debt by handing their mortgage property over to the lender.

The 'Study on means to protect consumers in financial difficulty: Personal bankruptcy, datio in solutum of mortgages, and restrictions on debt collection abusive practices' is available on the Financial Services User Group's website ([1]). It identifies the legal framework in place in selected Member States — including Spain — and best practice models to address consumer debts, from debt reorganisation or relief to debt cancellation including datio in solutum. The assessment of the firm that carried out the study is that the debt cancellation together with mortgage forbearance, when appropriately applied by all lenders, appears to deliver greater benefits to consumers. The study does not provide quantitative data relating the use of datio in solutum.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/fsug/papers/debt_solutions_report_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005521/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Regeneración de la política industrial

Los recortes del actual Gobierno de España en Investigación, Desarrollo e innovación (I+D+i) para asegurar el equilibrio de las cuentas públicas contradice los objetivos de la Estrategia Europa 2020, que sitúa el I+D y la innovación en el núcleo de los cambios que deben conducir al logro de una economía basada en el conocimiento.

Durante el Semestre Europeo de 2011, la Comisión reconoció que España precisa un cambio hacia una economía más sostenible y basada en el conocimiento, a lo que España respondió con más recortes. En mi región, Cantabria, el Gobierno regional ha recortado en inversión en I+D+i. Durante el 2011, el gasto en I+D+i descendió un 10,2 % en Cantabria respecto al de 2010, casi cuatro veces más que la media nacional que descendió un 2,8 %. En 2012 el paro industrial en mi región ha aumentado un 20,51 %, seis puntos más que la media nacional. Sólo en marzo de 2013 la actividad industrial en Cantabria disminuyó un 14 % interanual. Estos datos son alarmantes.

Por otro lado, la Comisión ha propuesto que, en el período de programación 2014-2020, la innovación se mantenga como uno de los principales ámbitos de ayuda de la Unión.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que aunque incumpla los objetivos de la Estrategia Europa 2020, este recorte en la inversión española en I+D+i es positivo?

2. ¿Con el objetivo de cumplir los objetivos de la Estrategia Europa 2020, tiene la Comisión la intención de hacer recomendaciones a los Estados miembros para evitar recortes masivos en este sector clave para la recuperación económica de la Unión?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión concede gran importancia a garantizar la compatibilidad del saneamiento presupuestario con el crecimiento, incluida la mejora de la calidad y la eficiencia del gasto público. Esta era una de las cinco prioridades puestas de relieve en el Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento correspondiente a 2013, adoptado el 28 de noviembre de 2012, y que se confirmó en el paquete «Sacar a Europa de la crisis», adoptado el 29 de mayo de 2013, en el que la Comisión hizo hincapié en que la inversión pública en investigación, innovación y capital humano debería considerarse prioritaria, inclusive mediante una mayor rentabilidad ([1]).

La situación del gasto en I+D e innovación en España se ha analizado en el documento de trabajo de los servicios de la Comisión en el marco del Semestre Europeo de 2013 ([2]). De hecho, tanto el gasto público como el privado en investigación e innovación se han reducido en los últimos años. Al mismo tiempo, con todo, el aumento de este tipo de gasto a lo largo del decenio de 2000 a 2009 no impulsó la innovación de forma significativa, lo que pone de manifiesto la importancia de mejorar la eficiencia del gasto público y privado en I+D, en consonancia con la Estrategia Española de Ciencia y Tecnología y de Innovación adoptada en febrero de 2013.

([1]) Véase http:/ /ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/2013eccomm_en.pdf
([2]) Véase http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_spain_es.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005521/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Revamp of industrial policy

Cuts made by the current Spanish Government to spending on research, development and innovation (R&D&I) to balance public finances run counter to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, which puts research, development and innovation at the heart of the changes to turn Spain into a knowledge-based economy.

In the 2011 European Semester, the Commission acknowledged that Spain needed to change to a more sustainable, knowledge-based economy, to which Spain responded by making more cuts. In my region, Cantabria, the regional government has cut investment in R&D&I. In 2011, spending on R&D&I was down by 10.2% in Cantabria compared with 2010, almost four times the national average, which fell by 2.8%. In 2012, manufacturing job losses in my region went up by 20.51%, six percentage points more than the national average. Only in March 2013, industrial activity in Cantabria fell by 14% year-on-year. These are alarming figures.

Moreover, the Commission has proposed keeping innovation as one of the main areas for EU support in the programming period 2014-2020.

1. Does the Commission think that, despite failing to comply with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, this cut in R&D&I investment in Spain is a good thing?

2. With the aim of meeting the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, does the Commission intend to recommend that the Member States avoid massive cuts in this sector, which is key for the EU's economic recovery?

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

The Commission attaches great importance to ensuring the growth-friendliness of fiscal consolidation, including by improving the quality and efficiency of public spending. This was one of the five priorities highlighted in the Annual Growth Survey 2013 adopted on 28 November 2012, and it has been repeated in the package 'Moving Europe beyond the crisis' adopted on 29 May 2013 where the Commission therefore underscored that public investment in research, innovation and human capital should be given priority, including through greater cost-efficiency ([1]).

The situation of R&D and innovation spending in Spain has been analysed in the Staff Working Document under the 2013 European Semester ([2]). Indeed, both public and private spending on research and innovation has decreased in recent years. However, at the same time, the increase in such spending over the decade 2000-09 did not boost innovation significantly. This highlights the importance of improving the efficiency of public and private expenditure on R&D, in line with the national strategy for science, technology and innovation adopted in February 2013.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/2013eccomm_en.pdf
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_spain_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005522/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Preferentes en Cantabria

Muchas entidades bancarias españolas han comercializado en los últimos años una gran cantidad de participaciones preferentes. Ya en varias ocasiones la Comisión Nacional del Mercado de Valores (CNMV) española reconoció que este tipo de producto financiero era tóxico, no transparente y con gran limitación en lo referente a su liquidez y rentabilidad.

En el caso de Cantabria unas 15 000 familias invirtieron cantidades medias de entre 40 000 y 60 000 euros en estos productos pensando que se trataba de depósitos de ahorro y no de productos de inversión y de riesgo. El importe global es de 180 millones de euros, repartidos entre Caixa Bank y Liberbank.

En este sentido, se ha cometido una clara violación del derecho a la información, así como un abuso sin parangón por parte de las entidades financieras. Los afectados denuncian ausencia de soluciones por parte de algunas entidades bancarias y las malas opciones que otras ya han impuesto a los clientes de este producto.

¿Cree la Comisión que España ha tomado las suficientes medidas para asegurar el cumplimiento de la Directiva 2004/39/CE, que regula la prestación de servicios de inversión por parte de las empresas de inversión y las entidades de crédito, incluidas las participaciones preferentes?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de junio de 2013)

Crear un sistema sólido de protección de los inversores es uno de los principales objetivos de la Directiva 2004/39/CE, relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros (DMIF) ([1]). Las normas definidas tienen en cuenta el tipo de servicios y la clasificación de los clientes, concediéndose mayor protección a los clientes minoristas. Las normas de conducta empresarial de la DMIF también disponen que las empresas de inversión recojan la información suficiente para garantizar que los productos ofrecidos siempre sean adecuados para el cliente.

Sobre la idoneidad de las medidas de las autoridades españolas para garantizar el cumplimiento de lo dispuesto en la DMIF, la Comisión desea señalar que, en su opinión, la CNMV adoptó diversas iniciativas de reglamentación y supervisión en relación con las acciones preferentes. Por último, compete principalmente a los tribunales nacionales investigar la conducta de las empresas de inversión o entidades de crédito en la relación con sus clientes a la luz de la legislación nacional por la que se incorpore la DMIF y, llegado el caso, decidir las vías de recurso abiertas a los inversores afectados.

([1]) Directiva 2004/39/CE, DO L 145 de 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005522/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Preferred shares in Cantabria

Many Spanish banks have sold a large number of preferred shares in recent years. The Spanish National Securities Market Commission (CNMV) has admitted on several occasions that this kind of financial product was toxic, non-transparent and very limited in terms of liquidity and profitability.

In Cantabria, some 15 000 families invested on average between EUR 40 000 and 60 000 in these products, thinking that they were savings deposits and not risky investment products. The total figure sits at EUR 180 million, shared between Caixa Bank and Liberbank.

In this regard, there has been a clear violation of the right to information, and unparalleled abuse on the part of the financial institutions. Those affected are complaining of a lack of solutions from some banks and the poor options that others have already offered to customers who have invested in this product.

Does the Commission believe that Spain has done enough to ensure compliance with Directive 2004/39/EC, which governs the provision of investment services by investment firms and credit institutions, including preferred shares?

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

Establishing a robust system of investor protection is one of the key objectives of the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive 2004/39/EC (MiFID) ([1]). The defined rules take into account the type of services and the classification of clients, with higher protection granted to retail clients. MiFID conduct of business rules also require that investment firms collect sufficient information to ensure that any products provided are suitable or appropriate for the client.

Concerning the suitability of Spanish authorities' actions to ensure compliance with MiFID rules, the Commission would like to point out that, to its knowledge, CNMV undertook several supervisory and regulatory initiatives with respect to the preference shares. Finally, it is the primary competence of national courts to investigate the conduct of individual investment firms or credit institutions in the relationship with their clients in the light of national legislation transposing MiFID and possibly decide the remedies available to affected investors.

([1]) Directive 2004/39/EC, OJ L 145, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005523/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Privatización de la sanidad en España: el caso del Hospital Universitario Marqués de Valdecilla

El Gobierno de Cantabria está impulsando un proyecto para conceder la gestión y explotación del Hospital Universitario Marqués de Valdecilla a una empresa privada —por determinar vía concurso— a cambio de que la misma se encargue de sufragar las obras de remodelación de dicho hospital.

Esta nueva política de privatización llevada a cabo por el Partido Popular (PP) en España tendrá como consecuencia la pérdida de puestos de trabajo y un más que previsible descenso en el acceso a una sanidad de calidad y para todos. He de recordar que el actual Gobierno ha llevado a cabo la privatización de seis hospitales y veintisiete centros de salud, mientras que los expertos sanitarios no paran de recordar al Gobierno que no sólo no es necesaria una privatización del servicio sanitario, sino que es contraproducente.

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión de que los recortes presupuestarios se centren en sectores como el sanitario que son necesarios para proteger a las capas más débiles de la población?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de julio de 2013)

De conformidad con el artículo 168, apartado 7, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, los Estados miembros son responsables de la gestión de los servicios de salud y de atención médica, así como de la asignación de los recursos que se destinan a dichos servicios. La Comisión carece de competencias para actuar respecto de la decisión de un Estado miembro de recurrir al sector privado para la prestación servicios de atención médica.

Por lo que se refiere a los recortes presupuestarios en asistencia sanitaria en general, en su Comunicación titulada «Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento 2013» la Comisión recomienda reformar los sistemas de asistencia sanitaria en aras de su eficiencia y sostenibilidad, y evaluar el rendimiento de esos sistemas teniendo presente el doble objetivo de garantizar el acceso a una atención sanitaria de calidad y aumentar la eficiencia de la utilización de los recursos públicos.

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de que España ha puesto en práctica diversas reformas para garantizar la sostenibilidad del sistema nacional de salud y mejorar la calidad y seguridad de sus prestaciones. En consonancia con el Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento 2013, la Comisión presta su apoyo a los esfuerzos de España por alcanzar estos objetivos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005523/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Privatisation of healthcare in Spain: case of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital

The Cantabrian regional government is promoting a project to hand over the management and running of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital to a private company — to be chosen via a tender procedure — in exchange for which this company will cover the cost of the hospital's renovation work.

As a result of this new privatisation policy led by the People's Party (PP) in Spain, jobs will be lost and access to quality healthcare for all is likely to suffer. I should like to point out that the current government has privatised six hospitals and 27 health centres, even though health experts are constantly reminding the government that not only is privatisation of the health service unnecessary, but it is also counterproductive.

What is the Commission's opinion on the fact that budget cuts are focusing on sectors such as health, which are necessary in order to protect the weakest sections of the population?

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

Under Article 168 paragraph 7 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union, Member States are responsible for the management of health services and medical care and the allocation of resources assigned to them. The Commission has no competence on a Member State's decision to involve the private sector in the delivery of medical care.

As regards budget cuts in healthcare more generally, the Commission Communication '2013 Annual Growth Survey' recommends reforming health systems to ensure their cost-effectiveness and sustainability and assessing their performance against the twin aims of providing access to high-quality healthcare and using public resources more efficiently.

The Commission is aware that Spain has put in place various reforms to ensure the sustainability of its National Health System and to improve the quality and safety of its services. In accordance with the 2013 Annual Growth Survey, the Commission supports Spain in its efforts to achieve these goals.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005524/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Abandono de las políticas de educación

El pasado 16 de febrero, la organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económico (OCDE) presentó sus propuestas de reformas económicas para este año, en las que alarmantemente insisten en que la educación es uno de los principales problemas de España, ya que su escaso nivel reduce la competitividad de los futuros trabajadores y la productividad en general. Asimismo, el informe propone que, para consolidar el crecimiento, las inversiones en educación y sanidad son claves.

Además, el desempleo, la flexibilidad del despido, los recortes en las pensiones y en los salarios, la subida de las tasas universitarias, así como el desmantelamiento de la red de protección social, imposibilitan a muchas familias españolas asumir el gasto económico necesario para que sus hijos continúen sus estudios de secundaria y universitarios.

El actual Gobierno español ha basado su política de educación en recortar en esta materia. En mi comunidad, Cantabria, un recorte de un 30 % en la partida destinada a los colegios públicos y de un 35 % en la asignación para el funcionamiento de los centros escolares han supuesto que 324 niños se quedaran fuera de las aulas especiales para menores de dos años en el curso 2012-2013. Estos datos son aún más preocupantes teniendo en cuenta que, durante los dos últimos años, el Semestre Europeo ha subrayado que el abandono escolar prematuro sigue siendo uno de los principales problemas de España.

1) ¿Qué medidas piensa proponer la Comisión para asegurar que España cumple las recomendaciones realizadas en la Evaluación del Semestre Europeo en materia de educación?

2) ¿Considera la Comisión que, con los recortes presupuestarios y los cambios propuestos por la Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa, España puede cumplir con los objetivos de la Estrategia Europa 2020?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de junio de 2013)

Efectivamente, en el marco de la Estrategia Europa 2020 las cuestiones relacionadas con la educación y la formación constituyen una parte importante de las recomendaciones específicas destinadas a España. En las nuevas recomendaciones propuestas para 2013 la lucha contra el abandono escolar prematuro y la mejora de la adecuación de la educación y de la formación al mercado de trabajo constituyen una de las principales prioridades.

La Comisión respalda a través del método abierto de coordinación los esfuerzos que está haciendo España por llevar a cabo las reformas en este sector. Dado que para España el abandono escolar prematuro sigue siendo un problema especialmente acuciante, el país participa en el grupo de trabajo temático sobre las políticas para combatir este problema. La nueva Alianza Europea para la Formación de Aprendices respaldará a España en la aplicación de sus reformas en el ámbito de la educación y de la formación profesional.

Los Fondos Estructurales y, concretamente, el Fondo Social Europeo financian las medidas destinadas a luchar contra el abandono escolar prematuro y apoyan el aprendizaje en el lugar de trabajo. Al negociar las prioridades de inversión de los Fondos Estructurales para el período 2014-2020, la Comisión insistirá en el fuerte vínculo existente entre los desafíos económicos y sociales que plantea la Estrategia Europa 2020 y el futuro uso de los fondos.

La Comisión apoya el hecho de que entre los objetivos del proyecto de Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa figuren la lucha contra el abandono escolar prematuro, así como la mejora de la flexibilidad del sistema de educación y formación y la del sistema de formación profesional básica de dos años. La Comisión observa que todavía se está debatiendo la financiación de dicha Ley y la reforma de la formación profesional. Llevar a cabo este tipo de reformas requerirá importantes recursos, incluidos los procedentes de los presupuestos nacionales y regionales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005524/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Abandoning education policies

On 16 February 2013, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) presented its proposed economic reforms for this year. Alarmingly, education is highlighted as being a major problem in Spain, as the low standard of education reduces the competitiveness of future workers and productivity in general. The report also suggests that investment in education and health is crucial for consolidating growth.

Moreover, unemployment, relaxed redundancy arrangements, cuts in pensions and salaries, higher university tuition fees and the dismantling of the social protection network mean that many families in Spain cannot afford to pay for their children to continue their secondary and university education.

The education policy of the current Spanish Government is one of cuts. In my community, Cantabria, a 30% cut in the budget for state schools and a 35% cut in allocations for running educational establishments have left 324 children without a place in special classes for the under-twos in 2012-2013. These figures are even more worrying considering that, over the last two years, the European Semester has highlighted early school leaving as still being a major problem in Spain.

1. What measures does the Commission intend to propose to ensure that Spain complies with the recommendations made in the European Semester assessment of education?

2. Does the Commission think that, with the budget cuts and changes proposed by the Organic Law to improve the quality of education, Spain can meet the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

Issues related to education and training have indeed formed an important part of the country-specific recommendations to Spain under the Europe 2020 process. Within the proposed new recommendations for 2013, the fight against early school leaving (ESL) and improving the labour-market relevance of education and training have been identified as main priorities.

The Commission supports the reform efforts of Spain to address these challenges through the Open Method of Coordination. As ESL continues to be a particular challenge for Spain, the country participates in the Thematic Working Group on policies to fight ESL. The new European Alliance for Apprenticeships will support Spain in implementing its reforms in the area of vocational education and training.

The Structural Funds (SF), in particular the European Social Fund, support measures aimed at fighting ESL and supporting work-based learning. When discussing the SF investment priorities for 2014-2020, the Commission will insist on a strong link between the economic and social challenges identified under Europe 2020 and the future use of the funds.

The Commission supports the fact that fighting ESL and enhancing flexibility in the education and training system and two-year basic vocational training are among the objectives of the draft Organic Law to improve the quality of education. The Commission notes that the discussion on the financing of the Law and the VET reform are ongoing. Reforms in these two areas will require significant resources, including from national and regional budgets.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005525/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Lucha contra la violencia de género

El Consejo de la Unión Europea especificó, el 22 de noviembre de 2012, en sus conclusiones sobre la «Lucha contra la violencia contra la mujer y prestación de servicios de apoyo a las víctimas de la violencia doméstica» que los Estados han de garantizar que haya suficientes servicios de apoyo a las mujeres víctimas de la violencia y que dichos servicios apliquen una perspectiva de igualdad de género, con vistas a proteger y capacitar a las mujeres y a sus hijos, así como que esos servicios se adapten a las necesidades específicas de esas mujeres, tanto inmediatamente como a más largo plazo.

Por el contrario, la política de recortes del actual Gobierno español está afectando a los colectivos de la sociedad más vulnerables, donde se incluyen las mujeres víctimas de la violencia machista. Así se demuestra en el recorte del 43 % en los Presupuestos Generales de Cantabria para 2013 en políticas de Igualdad y de la Mujer. También con el desmantelamiento en Cantabria y en otras comunidades autónomas de los centros y servicios de asistencia a las víctimas de violencia de género y a sus hijos e hijas, y la disminución de los recursos económicos y humanos destinados a apoyarlos. Pese a los recortes en políticas públicas y en sanidad, sabemos que en Cantabria en 2012 se atendieron 303 casos de malos tratos y 25 casos de agresiones sexuales.

No podemos permitir que los avances realizados hasta el 2011 caigan en el olvido, ahora, el Gobierno no condena los asesinatos, no sensibiliza y está dejando de prestar apoyo a las víctimas.

¿Considera la Comisión que la actual política de recortes a nivel nacional y regional en España contraviene los esfuerzos de la Unión en la lucha contra la violencia de género?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de junio de 2013)

En abril de 2013, la Comisión organizó en España un intercambio de buenas prácticas con el propósito de presentar cuatro prácticas relacionadas con los servicios de apoyo a las víctimas de violencia de género que utilizasen tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC). Por otra parte, el informe del Instituto Europeo de la Igualdad de Género ([1]) sobre la situación actual de las respuestas nacionales para combatir la violencia doméstica en la EU pone de manifiesto que en España se ha adoptado una serie de medidas políticas y se prestan determinados servicios que resultan eficaces para apoyar a las víctimas de la violencia doméstica.

En el ámbito de la justicia penal y civil, la Directiva 2012/29/UE ([2]) («Directiva de las víctimas») garantiza que las mujeres que hayan sufrido actos de violencia disfruten de unos derechos procesales mínimos comunes durante el proceso penal. Además se adoptará toda una batería de medidas especiales, entre ellas la formación de profesionales y servicios de apoyo, para proteger y apoyar a las víctimas más vulnerables, en especial a las mujeres que hayan sido víctimas de, por ejemplo, delitos o agresiones sexuales en el marco de sus relaciones personales más cercanas.

Por otra parte, el Reglamento sobre el reconocimiento mutuo de las medidas de protección de Derecho civil completará la Directiva sobre la orden europea de protección aplicable en materia penal ([3]) a fin de garantizar que las víctimas de violencia (en particular de actos de violencia doméstica) puedan seguir contando con órdenes de alejamiento o protección contra sus agresores emitidas en sus países de origen en caso de que se viajen o se trasladen a otro Estado miembro.

La Comisión apoyará activamente a todos los Estados miembros en la aplicación de todas estas nuevas medidas y continuará velando por que los Estados miembros transpongan y apliquen de manera efectiva las normas europeas con objeto de proteger y apoyar a las víctimas de la violencia de género ([4]).

([1]) Este informe apoya las conclusiones sobre la violencia ejercida contra las mujeres adoptadas por el Consejo en diciembre de 2012 http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/violence-against-women-victim-support-report

([2]) Directiva 2012/29/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2012, por la que se establecen normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección de las víctimas de delitos, y por la que se sustituye la Decisión marco 2001/220/JAI del Consejo. El plazo de transposición expira el 16 de noviembre de 2015.

([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:315:0057:0073:EN:PDF

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:338:0002:0018:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005525/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Combating gender-based violence

On 22 November 2012, in its conclusions on 'Combating violence against women, and the provision of support services for victims of domestic violence', the Council of the European Union stated that the Member States had to ensure that support services for victims of violence were in adequate supply and apply a gender equality perspective in particular with a view to protecting and empowering women and children, and that such services were tailored to their specific immediate and longer-term needs and safety.

In contrast to this, the current Spanish Government's policy of cuts is affecting the most vulnerable groups in society, including female victims of violence by men. This is shown in the 43% cut in the 2013 general budget for Cantabria for equality and women's policies. It is also seen in the dismantling in Cantabria and in other autonomous communities of centres and services providing assistance to the victims of gender-based violence and their children, and the reduction in financial and human resources to support them. Notwithstanding the cuts in public policies and health services, there were 303 cases of abuse and 25 cases of sexual assault in Cantabria in 2012.

We cannot allow the progress made up to 2011 to come to nothing, now the government is not condemning murders, is not raising awareness and is ceasing to support victims.

Does the Commission think that the current policy of national and regional cuts in Spain is at odds with the EU's efforts to combat gender-based violence?

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

In April 2013, the Commission organised an exchange of good practices hosted by Spain aimed at presenting four practices related to support services for victims of gender based violence, using ICT. Moreover, the report of the European Institute for gender equality ([1]) aimed at presenting the current situation on national responses to combat domestic violence in the EU also indicates that Spain provides a series of effective policies and services to support victims of domestic violence.

In the criminal and civil justice area, Directive 2012/29/EU ([2]) ('Victims' Directive') will ensure that women victims of violence benefit from common minimum standards of procedural rights during criminal proceedings. A whole range of special measures, including training to practitioners and support services, will be further put in place to protect and support vulnerable victims, including women victims of e.g. sexual crime or violence in close relationship.

Moreover, the regulation on the mutual recognition of civil law protection measures will complement the directive on the European protection order applicable in criminal matters ([3]) to ensure that victims of (in particular domestic) violence can still rely on restraint or protection orders issued against the perpetrator in their home country if they travel or move to another Member State.

The Commission will actively assist all Member States in implementing these new measures and will continue to ensure that the Member States transpose and apply European rules effectively in order to protect and support victims of gender-based violence ([4]).

([1]) Which supports the Council conclusions on violence against women adopted by the Council in December 2012, http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/violence-against-women-victim-support-report

([2]) Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA. The transposition deadline is 16 November 2015.

([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:315:0057:0073:EN:PDF

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:338:0002:0018:EN:PDF

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005526/13
a la Comisión
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Verdel en Cantabria

En Cantabria, la situación de las familias que viven de pesca del verdel es cada vez más insostenible. La cuota para España de esta especie es muy baja, de 18 000 toneladas, una cuota mínima que este año prácticamente se ha pescado en seis días. Este cupo se ha visto reducido en 11 000 toneladas en el último año y el sector continuará siendo penalizado durante once años con una reducción inadmisible de las cuotas.

¿Cree la Comisión necesaria la realización de nuevos estudios sobre las poblaciones del verdel en el mar Cantábrico para renegociar el cupo de pesca?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

El Consejo Internacional para la Exploración del Mar (CIEM) considera la caballa del Atlántico Nororiental una población con tres componentes de desove, siendo el componente del mar del Norte el único con características lo suficientemente específicas para recibir un trato diferenciado. La caballa de las zonas meridionales y occidentales migra para alimentarse en los mares escandinavos y en el mar del Norte durante la segunda mitad del año, antes de mezclarse con el componente del mar del Norte. Por tanto, la Unión ha gestionado la caballa en el ámbito de su competencia con un criterio unitario, otorgando a las aguas de la Península Ibérica un porcentaje constante.

El Reglamento (UE) n° 165/2011 de la Comisión redujo las cuotas de España para el periodo de 2011 a 2015 en el marco de las medidas destinadas a subsanar la considerable sobrepesca practicada por los buques españoles en 2010 en esa zona. El Reglamento de Ejecución (UE) n° 185/2013 de la Comisión redujo de nuevo la cuota de España para el periodo de 2013 a 2023 y adoptó medidas adicionales para combatir la importante sobrepesca no declarada por parte de los buques españoles en 2009. La Comisión considera que, dadas las circunstancias, el nivel de la cuota que mantiene España está justificado. Compete a las autoridades españolas organizar la aplicación pormenorizada de esas medidas.

En opinión de la Comisión, el dictamen del CIEM ya reconoce los cambios en las poblaciones de caballa, concretamente en la zona del golfo de Vizcaya. En consecuencia, no está previsto ningún estudio adicional de las poblaciones de caballa de esa zona.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005526/13
to the Commission
Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Mackerel in Cantabria

The situation of families in Cantabria who make a living from fishing for mackerel is becoming increasingly unsustainable. Spain's quota for this species is very low, some 18 000 tonnes, a negligible quota that was practically fished completely in six days this year. This quota has been reduced by 11 000 tonnes in the last year and the sector will continue to be penalised with unacceptable quota reductions for 11 years.

Does the Commission think that new studies on mackerel populations in the Bay of Biscay should be carried out in order to renegotiate the fishing quota?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) assesses Northeast Atlantic mackerel as one stock comprising three spawning components with the North Sea component being the only one distinct enough to be identified as separate. Mackerel from the southern and western areas migrate to feed in the Nordic seas and the North Sea during the second half of the year before mixing with the North Sea component. Consequently, the Union has managed the mackerel in its area of jurisdiction on a single basis with the proportion fixed for the area off the Iberian Peninsula as a constant.

The availability to Spain from 2011 to 2015 was reduced under Commission Regulation (EU) No. 165/2011 as part of measures aimed at addressing serious overfishing by Spanish vessels in 2010 in the area. Under Commission Implementing Regulation (EC) No. 185/2013, the Spanish quota for 2013 to 2023 was further reduced with additional measures addressing vast undeclared overfishing by Spanish vessels in 2009. The Commission considers that the level of quota remaining for Spain is justified in the given circumstances. The detailed implementation of these measures is to be organised by the Spanish authorities.

The Commission considers that the ICES advice already recognises the changes to mackerel populations, in particular in the Bay of Biscay area. Consequently, no additional studies on the mackerel populations in the area are envisaged.