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Aviso al lector

La presente publicación contiene preguntas escritas formuladas por los diputados al Parlamento Europeo y las respuestas de una de las instituciones de la Unión Europea.

En el caso de cada una de las preguntas y respuestas se presenta, antes de una posible traducción, la versión original.

Es posible que, en algunos casos, la respuesta esté redactada en una lengua distinta a la de la pregunta. Esto depende de la lengua de trabajo de la comisión a la que se solicita la respuesta.

Las cuestiones y respuestas se publican de conformidad con los artículos 117 y 118 del Reglamento del Parlamento Europeo.

Se puede acceder a todas las preguntas y respuestas a través de la página web del Parlamento Europeo (Europarl) bajo el epígrafe «Preguntas parlamentarias»:

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

ABREVIATURAS UTILIZADAS PARA LOS GRUPOS POLÍTICOS

PPE	Grupo del Partido Popular Europeo (Demócrata-cristianos)
S&D	Grupo de la Alianza Progresista de Socialistas y Demócratas en el Parlamento Europeo
ALDE	Grupo de la Alianza de los Demócratas y Liberales por Europa
Verts/ALE	Grupo de los Verdes/Alianza Libre Europea
ECR	Conservadores y Reformistas Europeos
GUE/NGL	Grupo Confederal de la Izquierda Unitaria Europea/Izquierda Verde Nórdica
EFD	Europa de la Libertad y de la Democracia
NI	No inscritos

ES

IV

(Informaciones)

INFORMACIÓN PROCEDENTE DE LAS INSTITUCIONES, ÓRGANOS Y ORGANISMOS DE LA UNIÓN EUROPEA

PARLAMENTO EUROPEO

PREGUNTAS ESCRITAS FORMULADAS CON SOLICITUD DE RESPUESTA ESCRITA

Preguntas escritas formuladas por los diputados al Parlamento Europeo y las respuestas de una de las instituciones de la Unión Europea

(2014/C 47 E/01)

Sumario **Página**

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006465/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Lobbyarbeit der USA zu genetisch veränderten Organismen (GVO)

Im Bericht „Biotech Ambassadors", der kürzlich von der gemeinnützigen US-amerikanischen Organisation für Verbraucherschutz „Food & Water Watch" veröffentlicht wurde, werden die gezielten Bemühungen des Außenministeriums der Vereinigten Staaten, bei Regierungen weltweit Lobbyarbeit zugunsten von Biotechnologieunternehmen, insbesondere zugunsten des Unternehmens Monsanto zu leisten, sehr ausführlich beschrieben. Für diesen Bericht wurden von der Nichtregierungsorganisation kürzlich auf der Internetplattform „WikiLeaks" veröffentlichte Diplomatenberichte untersucht. Die Lobbyarbeit soll unter anderem auch in Europa stattgefunden haben: So versuchte die Botschaft der Vereinigten Staaten in der Slowakei angeblich, „Interessen im Namen von Monsanto zu vertreten", und die spanische Botschaft forderte Berichten zufolge „eine hochrangige Intervention seitens der amerikanischen Regierung", um den „Widerstand gegen genetisch veränderte Nutzpflanzen zu bekämpfen".

1. Fanden Treffen zwischen den Vertretern von Generaldirektionen oder Agenturen der Kommission und Vertretern der amerikanischen Regierung statt, in denen über genetisch veränderte Organismen (GVO), die Kennzeichnung von Lebensmitteln, Nahrungsmitteleinfuhren, die Patentierung von Genen, Vorschriften zur Lebensmittelsicherheit, Biokraftstoffe oder andere GVO-bezogene Themen gesprochen wurde?

2. Wie viele solcher Treffen zu diesen Themen fanden zwischen Beamten der Kommission oder einer ihrer Agenturen und Vertretern der amerikanischen Regierung statt?

3. Zu welchen Rechtsvorschriften betreffend GVO bzw. Förderung, Forschung, Herstellung, Anbau und Absatz von GVO und von aus GVO gewonnenen Erzeugnissen wurde die amerikanische Regierung von der Kommission um Stellungnahme oder Rat ersucht?

4. Welche EU-Rechtsvorschriften betreffend GVO bzw. Förderung, Forschung, Herstellung, Anbau und Absatz von GVO und von aus GVO gewonnenen Erzeugnissen wurden von der Regierung der Vereinigten Staaten oder ihren Vertretern beeinflusst bzw. hätten von ihnen beeinflusst werden können?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(31. Juli 2013)

1./2. Die mit GVO befassten Generaldirektionen der Kommission stehen über etablierte Foren zur Zusammenarbeit in Regulierungsfragen und zum Informationsaustausch über Themen im Zusammenhang mit GVO, insbesondere im Rahmen des Übereinkommens über die Anwendung gesundheitspolizeilicher und pflanzenschutzrechtlicher Maßnahmen (SPS-Übereinkommen) und des Übereinkommens über technische Handelshemmnisse (TBT-Übereinkommen) der Welthandelsorganisation (WTO), in regelmäßigem Kontakt mit den entsprechenden Stellen der US-amerikanischen Regierung.

3. Im Zusammenhang mit dem SPS- und dem TBT-Übereinkommen notifiziert die EU wie auch andere WTO-Mitglieder diejenigen Legislativvorschläge, die möglicherweise Auswirkungen auf den internationalen Handel haben. Stellungnahmen von Drittländern werden in geeigneter Form berücksichtigt. Die jüngste EU-Notifizierung hinsichtlich GVO wurde 2012 veröffentlicht und betraf den Entwurf einer Durchführungsverordnung über Anträge auf Zulassung genetisch veränderter Lebensmittel und Futtermittel ([1]), die von der Kommission am 3. April 2013 angenommen wurde. Die Pflicht zur Transparenz gilt für alle WTO-Mitglieder, daher kann die EU auch zu Entwürfen von Legislativmaßnahmen Stellung nehmen, die von den USA notifiziert werden. Die WTO-Notifizierungen sind auf der WTO-Website veröffentlicht ([2]).

4. Die Rechtsvorschriften der EU über das Inverkehrbringen von GVO werden von den Gesetzgebern der EU angenommen, Beschlüsse über die Zulassung von GVO von der Kommission in enger Zusammenarbeit mit den Mitgliedstaaten im Wege von Durchführungsrechtsakten. Stellungnahmen, die über die WTO von Drittländern eingehen, werden berücksichtigt, stellen allerdings die Unabhängigkeit des Entscheidungsfindungsprozesses der EU nicht in Frage.

([1]) ABl. L 157 vom 8.6.2013.
([2]) http://www.wto.org/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006465/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: US lobbying for genetically modified organisms (GMO)

The report 'Biotech Ambassadors', recently released by the US non-profit consumer protection group 'Food & Water Watch', details concerted efforts by the US State Department to lobby governments around the world in favour of biotech companies, in particular the Monsanto Corporation. For this report the NGO analysed diplomatic cables recently released on the WikiLeaks online platform. Some of the alleged lobbying took place in Europe, such that the US embassy in Slovakia supposedly sought to 'advocate on behalf of Monsanto' and the Spanish embassy reportedly requested 'high-level US government intervention' in order to 'combat opposition to GE [genetically engineered] crops'.

1. Representatives of which DGs or agencies of the Commission met representatives of the US Government or its agencies to discuss genetically modified organisms (GMOs), food labelling, food imports, gene patenting, food safety regulation, biofuels or any other GMO-related topics?

2. How many meetings addressing these issues took place between officials employed by the Commission, or one of its agencies, and representatives of the US Government?

3. For what legislation concerning GMOs or the promotion, research, manufacturing, farming or selling of GMOs and GMO-derived products did the Commission explicitly ask the US Government for an opinion or for advice?

4. What EU legislation concerning GMOs or the promotion, research, manufacturing, farming or selling of GMOs and GMO-derived products was influenced or could have been influenced by the US Government or its representatives?

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

1 and 2. Directorate-Generals of the Commission dealing with GMOs have regular contacts with the relevant counterparts of the U.S. administration through established fora on regulatory cooperation and information exchange on GMO related matters, in particular in the context of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) and on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement).

3. In the context of the SPS and TBT Agreements, the EU, likewise other WTO members, notifies those legislative proposals that may have an effect on international trade. Comments received from third countries are taken into account as appropriate. The latest EU notification with regards to GMOs was published in 2012 and concerned the draft implementing Regulation on applications for authorisation of GM food and feed ([1]), which was adopted by the Commission on 3 April 2013. The obligation of transparency applies to all WTO members, therefore the EU also has the capacity to comment on draft legislative measures notified by the USA. The WTO notifications are publicly available on the WTO website ([2]).

4. Union legislation on placing on the market of GMOs is adopted by the EU legislators and decisions on the authorisation of GMOs are adopted by the Commission in close collaboration with the Member States, by way of implementing acts. Comments received from third countries via the WTO are taken into consideration, but do not put into question the independence of the EU decision making process.

([1]) OJ L 157; 8.6.2013.
([2]) http://www.wto.org/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006466/13
al Consejo
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE) y Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Presentación de una propuesta legislativa de reforma de la CEPOL

La Escuela Europea de Policía emprendió con éxito una profunda reestructuración interna en 2010. De este modo, la CEPOL corrigió los puntos débiles señalados por el Parlamento en cuanto a la gestión presupuestaria y financiera y mejoró el rendimiento en el ámbito de la formación y la cooperación policial.

Aunque la gran mayoría de los grupos políticos del Parlamento Europeo se hayan mostrado contrarios a la fusión de la CEPOL y Europol, la Comisión Europea solo ha presentado un texto legislativo para la reforma de Europol.

Esto deja a la CEPOL en una situación de gran incertidumbre jurídica, pues es necesario modificar su fundamento jurídico para, por un lado, adaptarlo al Tratado de Lisboa y, por otro, para permitir que se proponga una nueva sede, porque el personal debe abandonar las instalaciones de Bramshill a más tardar el 1 de marzo de 2014.

Parece ser que, en el Consejo, la mayoría de los Estados miembros se oponen al proyecto de fusión de la CEPOL y Europol. Los miembros de la Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior que intervinieron en la reunión de dicha comisión de este 7 de mayo también se han pronunciado en contra del proyecto de fusión, así como lo han hecho los representantes de la CEPOL y Europol.

¿Estaría dispuesto el Consejo, dadas las circunstancias, a cooperar con el Parlamento para trabajar paralelamente con dos fundamentos jurídicos, uno para la CEPOL y otro para Europol?

Respuesta
(7 de octubre de 2013)

El 7 de junio de 2013, el Consejo mantuvo un debate público sobre la propuesta de la Comisión Europea de un Reglamento relativo a la Agencia de la Unión Europea para la cooperación y la formación en funciones coercitivas (Europol) y llegó a un acuerdo sobre una serie de orientaciones para proseguir el trabajo en el nivel técnico. Estas orientaciones tienen que ver con las dos cuestiones principales que plantea la propuesta de la Comisión: la fusión de la Escuela Europea de Policía (CEPOL) con Europol y el suministro de información de los Estados miembros a Europol. El Consejo llegó a la conclusión de que una muy amplia mayoría de Delegaciones se oponía a la fusión, fundamentalmente por considerar que no sería beneficiosa para ninguna de las dos agencias y por no estar seguras de que pudiera derivarse algún ahorro de dicha fusión. El trabajo en su nivel técnico deberá, por tanto, centrarse en temas no relacionados con la fusión. El Consejo invitó a la Comisión a que reconsiderara su posición al respecto y buscara otra solución por lo que respecta a la CEPOL y a las cuestiones de formación.

El Consejo proseguirá su estudio de este expediente, tanto en el nivel de los expertos como, cuando proceda, mediante un debate político en el Consejo.

El Consejo garantiza a Sus Señorías que cooperará plenamente con el Parlamento, conforme a los procedimientos pertinentes que establecen los Tratados.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006466/13
au Conseil
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE) et Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(6 juin 2013)

Objet: Présentation d'une proposition législative pour la réforme du CEPOL

Le Collège européen de police a entrepris avec succès une profonde restructuration interne en 2010. Le CEPOL a ainsi corrigé les faiblesses relevées par le Parlement concernant sa gestion budgétaire et financière et amélioré sa performance en matière de formation et de coopération policière.

Bien qu'une grande majorité des groupes politiques au Parlement européen se soit opposée à la fusion du CEPOL avec Europol, la Commission européenne a présenté un seul texte législatif pour la réforme d'Europol.

Cela laisse le CEPOL dans une grande incertitude juridique car la base juridique de l'agence doit être, d'une part, alignée sur le traité de Lisbonne et, d'autre part, modifiée pour lui permettre de proposer un nouveau siège puisque le personnel doit quitter les locaux de Bramshill au plus tard le 1er mars 2014.

Il semblerait qu'au Conseil, une majorité des États membres soit opposée au projet de fusion du CEPOL avec Europol. Les membres de la commission des libertés civiles, de la justice et des affaires intérieures qui sont intervenus lors de la réunion de cette commission le 7 mai dernier se sont également prononcés contre le projet de fusion, tout comme les représentants du CEPOL et d'Europol.

Dans ces circonstances, le Conseil serait-il prêt à coopérer avec le Parlement afin de travailler parallèlement sur deux bases juridiques pour les agences CEPOL et Europol?

Réponse
(7 octobre 2013)

Le 7 juin 2013, le Conseil a tenu un débat public sur la proposition de règlement relatif à l'Agence de l'Union européenne pour la coopération et la formation des services répressifs (Europol), présentée par la Commission européenne, et est convenu d'un certain nombre d'orientations pour la suite des travaux au niveau technique. Ces orientations portent sur les deux principales questions que soulève la proposition de la Commission, à savoir la fusion du Collège européen de police (CEPOL) et d'Europol, et la communication d'informations par les États membres à Europol. Le Conseil a conclu qu'une très large majorité de délégations est opposée à la fusion, principalement parce qu'elle ne présenterait d'avantages pour aucune des deux agences et parce qu'elles ne sont pas convaincues qu'une fusion permette de réaliser des économies. Les travaux au niveau technique devraient se concentrer sur les questions qui n'ont pas trait à la fusion. Le Conseil a invité la Commission à reconsidérer sa position sur ce point et à rechercher une autre solution en ce qui concerne le CEPOL et les questions de formation.

Le Conseil poursuivra l'examen de ce dossier, au niveau des experts et aussi, au besoin, par un débat d'orientation au niveau ministériel.

Les Honorables Parlementaires peuvent être assurés que le Conseil coopérera pleinement avec le Parlement européen, conformément aux procédures prévues par les traités.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006466/13
to the Council
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE) and Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Tabling of a legislative proposal for the reform of CEPOL

The European Police College (CEPOL) successfully undertook substantial internal restructuring in 2010. As such, CEPOL remedied the weaknesses identified by Parliament with regard to budgetary and financial management and improved its performance in terms of training and police cooperation.

Although the large majority of political groups in Parliament are opposed to merging CEPOL with Europol, the Commission has tabled a single legislative act for the reform of Europol.

This leaves CEPOL in considerable legal uncertainty as the legal basis for the agency must, on the one hand, remain in line with the Treaty of Lisbon, and, on the other, be amended in order to propose a new seat since its staff are required to leave the Bramshill premises on 1 March 2014 at the latest.

It would seem that in the Council, most Member States are opposed to plans to merge CEPOL with Europol. The members of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs who spoke at that committee's meeting on 7 May 2013 also argued against the proposed merger, as did the representatives of CEPOL and Europol.

In these circumstances, would the Council be prepared to cooperate with Parliament to develop two legal bases simultaneously for CEPOL and Europol?

Reply
(7 October 2013)

On 7 June 2013, the Council held a public debate on the European Commission proposal for a regulation on the European Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation and Training (Europol) and agreed on a number of guidelines for the continuation of work at technical level. These guidelines relate to two main questions arising from the Commission proposal: the proposed merger of the European Police College (CEPOL) into Europol, and the supply of information from Member States to Europol. The Council concluded that a very large majority of delegations opposed the merger essentially on the grounds that it would not be beneficial for either agency and they were not convinced that savings could be made through a merger. The work at technical level should focus on issues not related to the merger. The Council invited the Commission to re-consider its position on this matter and search for another solution regarding CEPOL and training issues.

The Council will continue its examination of this file, both at the level of experts and, when appropriate, through an orientation debate at the Council.

The Honourable Members can be assured that the Council will cooperate fully with the Parliament, in accordance with the relevant procedures as set out in the Treaties.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006467/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(6 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Salvataggio banche

Le forze politiche e l'opinione pubblica continuano ad interrogarsi sull'evolversi della crisi finanziaria e sulle conseguenti ricadute nella crisi economica. La mancata riforma del sistema si è risolta in seno all'Unione con una serie di misure tendenti al controllo ed alla vigilanza bancaria e con il progetto conosciuto come Unione bancaria.

Per avere elementi di giudizio concreti che possano suffragare una scelta rispetto ad un'altra, può la Commissione riferire:

1. quante e quali banche in seno all'UE (e per quali importi) sono state salvate con denaro pubblico;

2. se è in grado di comunicare le conseguenze riscontrate in seguito a questi «salvataggi»;

3. in che misura questi interventi hanno giovato ai risparmiatori-clienti;

4. se il progetto di Unione bancaria prevede meccanismi e/o clausole che assicurino ai clienti che i loro risparmi non saranno messi a rischio per il salvataggio della finanza speculativa;

5. per quando è prevista una norma che separi chiaramente nelle banche, a tutela dei risparmiatori, l'attività speculativa da quella commerciale e generica?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(26 luglio 2013)

Le banche che sono state salvate («bailed out») grazie al sostegno pubblico, nonché gli importi di tale sostegno, sono elencati in un'apposita tabella, disponibile sul sito Internet della DG Concorrenza, che offre una panoramica delle decisioni e delle indagini approfondite in corso nel contesto della crisi finanziaria:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-1018_en.htm

La tabella contiene riferimenti ai comunicati stampa e alle versioni pubbliche delle decisioni in materia di aiuti di Stato adottate dalla Commissione nel corso della crisi finanziaria nel settore bancario. Le decisioni valutano in dettaglio tutti gli elementi importanti delle misure, compresi gli importi degli aiuti di Stato concessi.

L'effetto ultimo dell'intervento statale nel settore bancario è quello di ripristinare la fiducia e il corretto funzionamento dei mercati finanziari, il che rappresenta un presupposto indispensabile per una ripresa dalla crisi finanziaria. In particolare, le misure di aiuto di Stato sono concepite in maniera tale da permettere agli istituti finanziari di ripristinare la redditività a lungo termine senza ulteriore ricorso al sostegno statale, in modo da poter continuare a concedere prestiti all'economia reale. Le banche non redditizie vengono sottoposte ad una procedura di risoluzione ordinata e escono dal mercato.

L'Unione bancaria verrà costruita, tra l'altro, sulla base della direttiva sulla risoluzione delle crisi nel settore bancario. La direttiva fornisce agli Stati membri gli strumenti per intervenire in caso di crisi bancaria, compreso lo strumento del «bail-in», ossia la possibilità di ridurre gli importi dovuti ai creditori non garantiti di un ente in dissesto. I depositi inferiori ai 100 000 EUR sono esplicitamente esclusi da questo strumento.

In una risoluzione del giugno 2013, il Parlamento europeo ha invitato la Commissione «ad adottare al più presto possibile» una proposta sulla riforma strutturale delle banche. L'adozione della proposta legislativa da parte della Commissione è prevista dopo l'estate 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006467/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Bank bailouts

Political forces and the general public continue to reflect upon the future of the financial crisis and the consequent repercussions on the economic crisis. The failure to reform the system has been resolved in the EU by a range of measures for banking oversight and supervision and by the banking union project.

In order to have tangible information which can justify one choice over another, can the Commission state:

1. how many and which banks in the EU have been bailed out with public money (and the relevant amounts);

2. whether it is able to communicate the effects of these bailouts;

3. to what extent these interventions have benefited savers/customers;

4. whether the banking union project provides for mechanisms and/or clauses which guarantee that customers' savings will not be put at risk in order to bail out the speculative finance sector;

5. when legislation is planned to clearly separate speculative activity from commercial or generic activity in banks, in order to protect savers?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

The banks that have been bailed out with public support, as well as the amounts of support, are listed in the *'Overview of Decisions and ongoing in-depth investigations in the context of the financial crisis' table,* which is accessible on DG Competition's website: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-1018_en.htm

The table contains references to the press releases and the public versions of state aid decisions adopted by the Commission in the course of the financial crisis in the banking sector. The decisions address in detail all important elements of the measures, including the amounts of state aid granted.

The ultimate effect of State intervention in the banking sector is restoration of confidence and proper functioning of the financial markets, which is a precondition for recovery from the financial crisis. In particular, the state aid measures are designed to enable financial institutions to return to long term viability without further relying on State support, in order to continue lending to the real economy. Non viable banks undergo orderly resolution and exit the market.

The Banking Union is to be built on, *inter alia*, the Bank Resolution Directive. The directive will provide Member States with the tools to intervene in banking crisis, including bail-in, i.e. the power to write down the claims of unsecured creditors of a failing institution. Deposits under EUR 100,000 will be explicitly excluded from bail-in.

In a Resolution of June 2013, the EP called on the Commission 'to adopt as quickly as possible' a proposal on bank structural reform. The adoption of the legislative proposal by the Commission is scheduled after the summer 2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006468/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(6 juni 2013)

Betreft: Niet te controleren effectiviteit ESF fondsen t.b.v. oudere werknemers

In haar Speciaal Rapport nummer 25 ([1]) probeert de Europese Rekenkamer de vraag te beantwoorden of de Europese Sociale Fondsen, die specifiek gestemd zijn voor oudere werknemers, effectief zijn. Het antwoord is helaas negatief. De Rekenkamer concludeert onder andere het volgende: „Neither the memberstates nor the Commission are in a position to establish how many older workers have gained new qualifications or found or kept a job after having benefited from an action funded by the ESF. The necessary tools to provide relevant and reliable information in this respect have not been put in place by most memberstate authorities. Furthermore, the amounts spent on this kind of action are also unknown."

In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Waarom gaat de Commissie door met het bestemmen van ESF subsidies voor dit doel als volstrekt onmeetbaar is wat de effectiviteit ervan is en zelfs niet bekend is hoevéél subsidie hieraan besteed wordt?

2. Wat gaat de Commissie eraan doen om zo spoedig mogelijk deze totale verspilling van belastinggeld, dat mede door hardwerkende oudere Nederlandse werknemers is opgebracht, te stoppen?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(29 juli 2013)

Het ESF ondersteunt een aantal primaire strategische doelen, zoals het aanpassingsvermogen van werknemers en de toegang tot werk verbeteren. In deze context is de ondersteuning van oudere werknemers geen specifiek doel van het ESF, maar een van de prioriteiten om de arbeidskansen en de sociale integratie in heel Europa te verbeteren. Daarbij wordt rekening gehouden met nationale of regionale sociaaleconomische omstandigheden.

Bij de evaluatie van de besteding van de bijdragen uit het ESF is de Commissie noodzakelijkerwijs beperkt door de huidige regelgeving die in 2006 door de Raad is overeengekomen ([2]). Uit hoofde van deze regelgeving moeten de lidstaten enkel verslag uitbrengen over de kenmerken van de deelnemers aan projecten die door het ESF zijn gefinancierd. In 2011 had ongeveer 1 miljoen deelnemers, of 6 % van het totale aantal, een leeftijd tussen 55 en 64 jaar. Deze indicatoren op EU-niveau maken het niet mogelijk om de bereikte resultaten op zich te meten.

Daarom wordt verwacht van de lidstaten, die medeverantwoordelijk zijn voor de uitvoering van het programma en voor het bereiken van de doelen die zij voor elk operationeel programma vaststellen, dat zij met behulp van aanvullende en programmaspecifieke indicatoren de concrete resultaten meten van de in deze programma's voorziene maatregelen.

Voor de nieuwe programmeringsperiode 2014-2020 heeft de Commissie voorgesteld dat met de toekomstige programma's wordt bijgedragen tot de Europa 2020-strategie door de bevindingen en aanbevelingen van het Europees Semester op te volgen. Investeringen moeten veel meer resultaatgericht zijn. Actief ouder worden moet een van de specifieke investeringsprioriteiten zijn. Voortaan zouden de lidstaten verslag moeten uitbrengen over de mate waarin resultaten zijn geboekt inzake deze prioriteiten.

([1]) http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/21340769. PDF.
([2]) Bijlage XXIII bij Verordening (EG) nr. 1828/2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006468/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Impossibility of monitoring the effectiveness of ESF funding for older workers

In its Special Report No 25 ([1]), the EU Court of Auditors tries to establish whether the appropriations from the European Social Fund which are specifically intended for older workers are effective. Regrettably, the answer is negative. The Court of Auditors concludes *inter alia* that 'Neither the Member States nor the Commission are in a position to establish how many older workers have gained new qualifications or found or kept a job after having benefited from an action funded by the ESF. The necessary tools to provide relevant and reliable information in this respect have not been put in place by most Member State authorities. Furthermore, the amounts spent on this kind of action are also unknown.'

1. Why does the Commission continue to earmark ESF subsidies for this purpose if it is completely impossible to measure their effectiveness and it is not even known how much subsidy is being spent on it?

2. What will the Commission do to halt as soon as possible this complete waste of tax revenue derived in part from hardworking older workers in the Netherlands?

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

The ESF supports a number of primary strategic objectives, such as improving the adaptability of workers and enhancing access to employment. In this context, support to older workers is not a specific ESF goal, but is one of a number of priorities to improve employment opportunities and social inclusion throughout Europe, taking into account national or regional socioeconomic circumstances.

In assessing the performance of the use of ESF funds, the Commission is necessarily limited by the current regula-tory framework agreed by the Council in 2006 ([2]). This framework only requires Member States to report on the characteristics of people participating in ESF financed projects. In 2011, around 1 million participants or 6% of all participants, were aged 55 to 64 years. These EU level indicators do not allow measuring the results achieved as such.

Member States, who are co-responsible for implementing the programme and reaching the goals they set in each Operational Programme, are thus expected to measure the concrete results of the actions foreseen in these programmes using additional, and programme-specific indicators.

For the new programming period 2014-2020, the Commission has proposed that future programmes contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy by following the findings and recommendations issued in the context of the European Semester. Investments are due to be much more performance and results-oriented. Active ageing is due to be one of the specific investment priorities. Member States would henceforth be required to report on how results on these priorities have been achieved.

([1]) http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/21340769.PDF
([2]) Annex XXIII of Reg. (EC) No 1828/2006.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006469/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Prospección de petróleo en Ibiza

La petrolera irlandesa Cairn Energy prevé iniciar a finales de año una serie de prospecciones submarinas a 35 millas de la costa ibicenca con el objetivo de encontrar petróleo.

Estas prospecciones consistirán en realizar una serie de detonaciones submarinas que generan ondas de resonancia que les permitan descifrar la composición de la roca bajo el mar.

La comunidad científica ha adoptado los 180 decibelios como el nivel de intensidad acústica a partir del cual se pueden producir males fisiológicos irreversibles en cetáceos y tortugas marinas, y las detonaciones de estas prospecciones alcanzarán los 249 decibelios.

La emisión de ondas afecta al sistema de colocación de los cetáceos, alterando su comportamiento, capacidad de alimentación, orientación y rutas migratorias, por no hablar de los efectos devastadores para la pesca, que quedará literalmente arrasada. Según los estudios elaborados tanto por la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia como por el Cabildo de Lanzarote, la aparición de cadáveres de cetáceos desorientados en las playas será una de las principales consecuencias de estas detonaciones.

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre esta prospección y los efectos que va a tener en el ecosistema?

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de las especies van a resultar afectadas?

¿Cree la Comisión que el Estado español debería llevar a cabo alguna acción para evitar los efectos en cetáceos, tortugas marinas, aves marinas y recursos pesqueros?

¿Cree la Comisión que es admisible que las detonaciones sean de 249 dB cuando existe consenso entre la comunidad científica sobre la afectación a cetáceos y tortugas por encima de los 180 dB?

¿Cree la Comisión que se deberían llevar a cabo las prospecciones mediante una tecnología con un impacto menor sobre el ecosistema?

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

La Comisión ha preguntado a las autoridades españolas qué medidas se han tomado o se prevé tomar para que las actividades a las que se refiere Su Señoría se ajusten al acervo medioambiental de la UE aplicable al caso. No teniendo todavía una opinión formada, la Comisión procederá, tras la evaluación de la respuesta que den dichas autoridades, a examinar si es preciso o no algún tipo de actuación.

El buen estado medioambiental de las aguas marinas —que habrá de haberse alcanzado antes de que finalice 2020 o cuyo mantenimiento deberá ya haber quedado garantizado en ese año— exige que la introducción de diversas formas de energía, incluido el ruido submarino, se sitúe en niveles que no afecten negativamente al entorno marino.

En general, son varias las especies (cetáceos, invertebrados, peces y larvas de peces) que pueden verse afectadas por el ruido submarino. Es por ello necesario seguir investigando para evaluar con más detalle el alcance del impacto que pueda tener en ellas ese ruido.

En cualquier caso, toda tecnología que se utilice debe ajustarse a la normativa de la UE o contribuir a la consecución de los objetivos medioambientales establecidos en ella. La Comisión no realiza evaluaciones de tecnologías. Esta tarea es competencia de los Estados miembros cuando las autorizan para una actividad o un uso en aguas marinas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006469/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Exploration for oil in Ibiza

Towards the end of this year, the Irish oil company Cairn Energy plans to begin a series of underwater explorations for oil 35 miles off the coast of Ibiza.

These explorations will involve carrying out a series of underwater explosions, generating resonance waves that make it possible to identify the composition of the rocks on the seabed.

The scientific community agrees that 180 decibels is the level of acoustic intensity above which cetaceans and sea turtles may suffer irreversible physical harm, and the explosions involved in these explorations will reach 249 decibels.

Wave emissions affect cetaceans' location systems, altering their behaviour, feeding ability, orientation and migration routes. Furthermore, there will be devastating effects on fisheries, which will be literally destroyed. According to studies by the Polytechnic University of Valencia and the Council of Lanzarote, one of the main consequences of these explosions will be dead disoriented cetaceans washing up on beaches.

What is the Commission's opinion of this exploration and the effects it will have on the ecosystem?

Is the Commission aware of which species will be affected?

Does the Commission believe that the Spanish Government should take action to prevent cetaceans, sea turtles, seabirds and fish stocks being affected?

Does the Commission believe that it is acceptable for explosions to reach 249 dB, when the consensus among the scientific community is that cetaceans and turtles are affected at levels above 180 dB?

Does the Commission believe that explorations should be carried out using technology that would have a lesser impact on the ecosystem?

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

The Commission has asked the Spanish authorities which measures are taken or envisaged so that the activities referred to by the Honourable Member are in compliance with the applicable EU environmental *acquis*. The Commission does not have an opinion yet and will examine whether action is necessary after assessment of the reply of the Spanish authorities.

Good environmental status of marine waters, to be achieved or maintained by 2020, requires that introduction of various forms of energy, including underwater noise, is at levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment.

In general, several species (cetaceans, invertebrates, fish and fish larvae's) can be affected by underwater noise and further research is needed to assess in more detail the extent of the impact on these species.

However, any technologies used must comply with EU legislation or contribute to the achievement of environmental standards laid down in EC law. The Commission does not carry out assessment of technologies. This is up to Member States when authorising on activity or use in marine waters.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006470/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Moneyval-Deloitte-Bericht über Geldwäsche in Zypern

Am 30. April 2013 veröffentlichte die Tageszeitung *Cyprus Mail* einen Artikel mit der Information, dass der Moneyval-Deloitte-Bericht über Geldwäsche in Zypern fertig gestellt wurde.

1. Welche Ergebnisse sind in diesem Bericht festgehalten?

2. Wird der Bericht veröffentlicht werden?

3. Was plant die Kommission nun in Bezug auf den Bericht, nachdem das Rettungspaket bereits vereinbart worden ist?

4. Wie viel Geld gab die EU für diesen Bericht aus?

5. Gibt es vergleichbare Berichte über Geldwäsche in anderen Mitgliedstaaten?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(18. Juli 2013)

1.-2. Der Deloitte-Bericht wurde von der Zentralbank Zyperns (Central Bank of Cyprus — CBC) in Auftrag gegeben. Somit obliegt es Zypern, im Einklang mit den einschlägigen Geheimhaltungs- und Datenschutzvorschriften zu entscheiden, ob er veröffentlicht wird. Das zyprische Finanzministerium hat auf seiner Website eine Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse eingestellt. ([1]) Generell zeigt der Bericht, dass es in Zypern einer besseren Umsetzung der Rechtsvorschriften zur Bekämpfung von Geldwäsche bedarf.

3. Die Ergebnisse des Berichts werden den Programmpartnern und Zypern als Grundlage für die Formalisierung des Aktionsplans dienen, der erforderlich ist, um in Zypern bessere Rahmenbedingungen für die Bekämpfung von Geldwäsche zu schaffen. Die bei der Durchführung des Aktionsplans erzielten Fortschritte werden von den Programmpartnern überwacht.

4. Da der Bericht von der CBC in Auftrag gegeben wurde, sind den EU-Organen keine Kosten entstanden.

5. Von vergleichbaren Berichten in anderen Mitgliedstaaten ist der Kommission nichts bekannt. Es handelte sich um eine punktuelle Initiative, die auf die besonderen Gegebenheiten in Zypern abstellte.

([1]) http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/mof.nsf/All/43235D20B3BE0932C2257B8D003D4CE5/USDfile/Deloitte%20Final%20Report%20Sections%2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006470/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Moneyval-Deloitte report on money laundering in Cyprus

On 30 April 2013, the *Cyprus Mail* published an article stating that the Moneyval-Deloitte report on money laundering in Cyprus had been completed.

1. What is the outcome of this report?

2. Will the report be published?

3. What is the Commission planning to do with the report now that the bailout has been agreed?

4. How much money did the EU spend on this report?

5. Are there similar reports on money laundering in other Member States?

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

1-2. The Deloitte report was commissioned by the Central Bank of Cyprus (CBC) and it is for Cyprus to decide whether to make the report public in accordance with confidentiality and data protection provisions. The Cypriot Ministry of Finance has published a summary of the findings on its website ([1]). This generally shows that improvements are required in implementation of the legal and regulatory regime for anti-money laundering in Cyprus.

3. The findings of the report will be used by the Programme partners and Cyprus to formalise the action plan needed to make improvements in the anti-money laundering framework in Cyprus. Progress against this Action Plan will be monitored by the Programme partners.

4. The report was commissioned by the CBC, and thus there was no cost to the EU institutions.

5. The Commission is not aware of similar reports in other Member States. This was a one-off exercise, particular to the circumstances found in Cyprus.

([1]) http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/mof.nsf/All/43235D20B3BE0932C2257B8D003D4CE5/USD file/Deloitte%20Final%20Report%20Sections%2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006471/13
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Staff conditions on cruise ships

It has been brought to my attention by a constituent of mine that on a recent cruise operated by the Italian shipping line MSC Cruises, she observed that the treatment of staff was below minimum standards expected. She mentioned that one employee told her that he worked up to 16 hours a day and that he had never received a day off in 9 months. On further enquiry it became clear that his situation was not unique and that all of the staff from outside of the European Union were treated like this. These members of staff originate from countries such as El Salvador, Nepal and Indonesia. Their wages are minimal and they do not receive lunch breaks. My constituent has further stated that this clearly breaches EU employment law.

I am aware that the application of EU employment law is dependent on the flag of convenience used by the cruise ships and I know that the majority of cruise liners opt to register in countries such as Panama and the Cayman Islands to avoid EC laws. However, I would be grateful if the Commission could update me on any current agreements or negotiations with other countries to redress this loophole and raise employment standards wherever the vessels are registered.

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

The Honourable Member is correct in assuming that the law of the Flag State, i.e., the country in which the ship is registered and which flag it flies, is the law applicable to the ship. Hence, if the ship in question flies the flag of an EU Member State, the EU legislation applies, including the legislation applicable to the working time of seafarers. The competent authorities of the EU Member States are responsible for monitoring the compliance of ships which fly their flag with these rules.

If the ship in question flies the flag of a country outside the EU, the ILO Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) provides for minimum rules on living and working conditions for seafarers. It is the first 'Bill of Rights for Seafarers' worldwide. Among others this Convention regulates the working time of seafarers. The MLC has been ratified by more than 30 countries worldwide, including 13 EU Member States and Panama. Substantial parts of the MLC including those relevant for working time have been implemented in EU legislation by Directive 2009/13/EC.

If a ship flying the flag of a country outside the EU arrives in EU ports, the EU legislation on Port State Control equally applies. This legislation gives the possibility for EU port State authorities to monitor the compliance of ships, which come into their port, with international standards for — amongst others — shipboard living and working conditions, irrespective of the flag.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006472/13
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: European Cooperation Group on Undercover Activities and EU secret police networks

The Commission may be aware of the article by Statewatch about EU secret police networks ([1]).

I would be very grateful to have answers to the following:

1. What is the remit and activities of the European Cooperation Group on Undercover Activities? What funding and support does the group receive from the Commission and from Europol?

2. How is it ensured that the activities of this group are in compliance with Articles 7 (Respect for Private and Family Life), 8 (Data Protection), 11 (Freedom of Expression and Information) and 12 (Freedom of Assembly and Association) of the European Convention on Human Rights and Articles 16 (Data Protection), 87 (Police Cooperation) and 89 (Police Cooperation) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), as well as the draft Data Protection Directive and the draft Europol Regulation?

3. What processes relate to the accountability of the European Cooperation Group on Undercover Activities and how can individuals affected by the Group's activities voice their grievances and seek redress?

4. In this context, how does the Commission view the inclusion of the use of undercover agents in the European Investigation Order?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

1. The European Commission is aware of the existence of the European Cooperation Group on Undercover Activities (ECG) which looks into the exchange of expertise and knowledge on undercover techniques/activities between investigators involved in these activities for law enforcement purposes. The Group is not an EU group. Instead it was established between authorities of European countries (EU members and non-EU countries). The European Commission and Europol do not provide support or funding to this Group.

2. To the extent that the countries which belong to the ECG are parties to the European Convention on Human Rights and members of the EU, they are subject to that Convention and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

3. The Commission has no knowledge of the processes relating to the accountability of the ECG. To the Commission's knowledge the Groups' activities will be conducted by national authorities which are subject to the national, European and international judicial systems.

4. Regarding the initiative for a directive on a European Investigation Order (EIO) ([2]) the Commission supported a broad scope for the proposed directive ([3]).

([1]) http://www.statewatch.org/news/2012/aug/09eu-secret-police-networks.html

([2]) Initiative taken by the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Estonia, the Kingdom of Spain, the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Slovenia and the Kingdom of Sweden Under Title V of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union which is known as the proposal for a European Investigation Order.

([3]) As expressed in document C(2010) 5789 of 10 September 2010, in particular the comment on Article 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006473/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Oppression of the political opposition in Bahrain

It has been two years since the uprising in February 2011 by an anti-government movement in Bahrain, the oppression of peaceful protesters which led to the loss of 80 lives, and the deportation of numerous journalists.

In November 2011 the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) released its report outlining violations by the current regime of its citizens' rights in its handling of the protest, including torture and forced confessions. The king has accepted all the recommendations. However, political dialogue between the government and its citizens has been further hindered by the continuous crackdown on the opposition and the incomplete implementation of the human rights recommendations of the BICI. Only last month the Bahraini government was accused of using spy software to target leading opposition activists and human rights groups in Bahrain and abroad. In April three ITV News journalists were detained by the police and deported, despite the official authorisation gained previously. Many political prisoners remain in jail with no prospect of appeal, while other activists have fled the country.

The High Representative/Vice-President has welcomed the resumption of the national dialogue in Bahrain in February 2013. However, the progress of the dialogue is questionable.

How does the High Representative/Vice-President intend to take action to investigate the continuous human rights violations and oppression of political opposition in Bahrain?

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

The HR/VP follows the situation in Bahrain very closely and will continue to do so.

Since the resurgence of unrest in early 2011, she has used all the means at her disposal to convey clear messages to Bahrain, including through many statements, and direct contacts with the Bahraini authorities, including at the highest level. These were complemented by visits to the country by senior officials from the European External Action Service. The visit of EUSR Lambrinidis during the week of 24 June also allowed for broad ranging exchanges with the authorities, opposition parties, civil society and local stakelholders to assess the situation and see how to further support progress towards national reconciliation.

The Human Rights situation in Bahrain clearly needs further improvement. The framework set by the BICI provides a solid basis for engagement with the authorities. The establishment of Human Rights institutions and the reform of the judiciary were positive steps, but more is needed. The EU will continue to call on authorities to prioritize the implementation of BICI and UPR recommendations, and will remain a steadfast advocate and supporter of the ongoing National Dialogue, which is the sole way to ensure sustainable reforms for the benefit of all Bahrainis. At the same time it is also important that all sides abstain from all forms of violence, intimidation and provocation.

The HR/VP used her visit to Bahrain on 30 June for the EU-GCC Ministerial meeting to advocate once more for a combination of moderation and concrete confidence building steps needed to bridge the gulf between communities created by the polarisation of the political climate, lack of trust and violence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006474/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Comune di Monteriggioni: possibile violazione dei principi di sana e corretta gestione finanziaria e contabile

Durante la seduta del consiglio comunale di Monteriggioni, in provincia di Siena, dello scorso 29 aprile 2013, l'Assemblea viene messa a conoscenza dell'esistenza di un debito fuori bilancio di 900 346 euro, pari a circa il 6,5 % dell'intero bilancio comunale, contratto dal comune di Monteriggioni nei confronti della partecipata Siena Casa S.p.A.

Tale debito deriva dal mancato versamento da parte della Fondazione Monte Paschi di Siena della quota promessa a copertura di un intervento urbanistico per la realizzazione di un lotto di appartamenti da destinarsi alla locazione a canone concordato.

Inoltre, la stessa Assemblea viene messa a conoscenza in quella circostanza del fatto che la giunta comunale era informata di tale debito già dal novembre 2012.

Tale situazione viene successivamente certificata dall'organo di revisione del comune nella sua riunione del 10 aprile 2013, dedicata all'esame dello schema di rendiconto dell'esercizio finanziario 2012 e alla proposta del rendiconto della gestione 2012.

Tale operazione contabile dovrebbe ora essere iscritta nel bilancio dell'esercizio successivo, comportando una riassegnazione delle voci di spesa.

Premesso che il rispetto delle regole contabili a ogni singolo livello di amministrazione è un principio cardine e inviolabile su cui si basa la sana e corretta gestione della finanza pubblica, può la Commissione far sapere:

— quali sono le conseguenze contabili e l'incidenza di tale operazione sul computo del patto di stabilità;

— se l'Italia ha recepito la direttiva 2011/85/UE del Consiglio relativa ai requisiti per i quadri di bilancio degli Stati membri;

— se la situazione descritta nell'interrogazione è compatibile con la summenzionata direttiva.

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(25 ottobre 2013)

1. La valutazione degli effetti dell'operazione contabile citata sul patto di stabilità interno dell'Italia, che si applica ai governi subnazionali, non rientra nelle competenze dell'Unione.

2. L'Italia ha infatti recepito la direttiva 2011/85/UE attraverso disposizioni contenute in vari atti (in parte già in vigore). Di recente la Commissione ha pubblicato una valutazione intermedia sul recepimento di detta direttiva in tutti gli Stati membri:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp128_en.pdf

3. La direttiva non precisa in dettaglio le norme contabili applicabili a ogni pubblica amministrazione. La Commissione confida nel fatto che le autorità nazionali incaricate di controllare i conti pubblici dei comuni italiani, compreso quello di Monteriggioni, si occuperanno di questa situazione specifica. Allo stesso tempo, il processo di graduale armonizzazione delle pratiche contabili del settore pubblico in Italia dovrebbe migliorare la trasparenza generale in materia di finanze pubbliche, in particolare a livello locale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006474/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Possible infringement of the principles of sound and proper financial management and accounting procedures in the municipality of Monteriggioni

At its meeting of 29 April 2013, the attention of the Monteriggioni municipal council (province of Siena) was drawn to an off-balance-sheet debt of EUR 900 346, amounting to around 6.5% of the entire municipal budget, incurred by the municipality in its dealings with Siena Casa SpA.

The deficit relates to the non-payment by the Siena Monte Paschi Foundation of the agreed contribution to the costs of an urban development project involving the construction of a number of fixed-rent apartments.

Furthermore, the meeting learned that the municipal council had been apprised of the debt as early as November 2012, as subsequently confirmed by the municipal audit office, which had convened on 10 April 2013 to examine the 2012 draft profit-and-loss accounts and management report.

The accounting operation in question must now be entered on the balance sheet for the following year under different expenditure items.

Given that compliance with accounting procedures at every single administrative level is an inviolable and cardinal rule of sound public financial management:

1. What are the implications of this transaction in accounting terms and with regard to the Stability Pact estimates?

2. Has Italy transposed Council Directive 2011/85/EU on requirements for budgetary frameworks of the Member States?

3. Is the situation outlined above in accordance with the provisions of the above directive?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

1. The assessment of the impact of the transaction on Italy's Domestic Stability Pact, which applies to subnational governments, falls outside the competence of the Union.

2. Italy has indeed transposed Directive 2011/85/EU through provisions contained in several acts (partly already in force). The Commission recently published an interim assessment of the transposition in all Member States: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp128_en.pdf

3. The directive does not specify detailed rules of accounting applicable to every public administration. The Commission trusts that the national authorities in charge of auditing the public accounts of Italian municipalities, including that of Monteriggioni, will deal with this specific situation. At the same time, the ongoing process of harmonisation of accounting practices across Italy's public sector is expected to improve the general transparency of Italian public finances, notably at the local level.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006475/13
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(6 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Necesitatea creării pieței europene unitare a calificărilor profesionale, un pandant indispensabil al pieței unice europene a muncii

Una dintre principalele probleme europene este crearea pieței unice a muncii, care ar duce în mod categoric la crearea unui sistem global, eficient de folosire a forței de muncă pregătite în statele membre potrivit specializării acesteia, dar și a nevoii specifice de cadre calificate în domenii de interes pentru fiecare stat membru.

1. Având în vedere acest deziderat, nu consideră Comisia că s-ar impune crearea unei piețe unitare europene a calificării forței de muncă, care să ajute statele membre să se asigure că pregătirea profesională a forței de muncă a fiecărui stat, instruirea tinerilor, în special, este făcută în așa fel încât forța de muncă „europeană" astfel calificată să își găsească debușeu pe piața europeană unică a muncii?

2. Nu consideră Comisia că ar trebui să fie acordată o atenție sporită anticipării nevoilor pieței forței de muncă europene, pentru evitarea calificărilor inutile sau greu de utilizat, indiferent de statul în care aceste calificări se produc?

3. Ce măsuri crede Comisia că ar putea lua pentru a evita risipa de bani și creier, mai ales în rândul tinerilor, care se produce, din păcate, la nivelul multor state membre, ceea ce duce la crearea de șomeri cu diplome inutilizabile?

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(26 iulie 2013)

1. Recunoașterea calificărilor profesionale în UE este reglementată de Directiva 2005/36/CE ([1]). Această directivă prevede norme generale referitoare la recunoașterea reciprocă a calificărilor profesionale și stabilește cerințe minime de formare pentru profesiile sectoriale, ceea ce are drept consecință recunoașterea automată a calificărilor profesionale.

Propunerea legislativă din 2011 de modernizare a directivei menționate, care a făcut obiectul unui acord politic în luna iunie, are drept obiectiv să faciliteze recunoașterea calificărilor profesionale. Aceasta va permite persoanelor cu înaltă calificare profesională să se angajeze oriunde în UE și va contribui la reducerea numărului de persoane (tinere) aflate în căutarea unui loc de muncă. Acest obiectiv se va realiza prin înființarea cardului profesional european, introducerea de principii comune în domeniul formării, recunoașterea stagiilor profesionale etc. Propunerea va contribui în mod semnificativ la realizarea unei piețe unice europene în domeniul forței de muncă.

2. Comisia recunoaște importanța deosebită a anticipării nevoilor pieței forței de muncă din Europa și a lansat Panorama competențelor în UE ([2]), care îndeplinește funcția de punct central de acces la toate informațiile existente privind cererea și oferta de competențe și privind necorelarea dintre competențe și necesitățile pieței forței de muncă.

3. Acțiunile UE în domeniul combaterii șomajului (tinerilor) au fost prezentate în detaliu într-o comunicare a Comisiei ([3]). Comisia a emis recomandări specifice fiecărei țări privind modul de abordare a acestei probleme la nivel național. Sistemele de educație și de formare trebuie să fie mai eficace și să asigure dobândirea de către tineri a tuturor aptitudinilor și a competențelor necesare. Sistemele solide de învățământ profesional și tehnic înregistrează rezultate mai bune în ceea ce privește facilitarea tranziției de la școală la viața activă și menținerea unei rate scăzute a șomajului în rândul tinerilor. Alianța europeană pentru ucenicii ([4]) va da un nou impuls cererii și ofertei de ucenicii de înaltă calitate, precum și oportunităților de învățare de tip dual.

([1]) Directiva 2005/36/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 7 septembrie 2005 privind recunoașterea calificărilor profesionale, JO L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 22.
([2]) A se vedea inițiativa emblematică a Strategiei Europa 2020 „O agendă pentru noi competențe și locuri de muncă"; euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu
([3]) „Împreună pentru tinerii Europei" din 19 iunie 2013 [COM (2013) 447 final].
([4]) Lansată la 2 iulie 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006475/13
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Need to create a uniform European market in professional qualifications as a vital counterpart to the single European labour market

One of Europe's main concerns is the creation of a single labour market, which would automatically lead to the creation of an efficient and comprehensive system where the labour force trained in the Member States can be used in a way that matches both their skills and the specific demand for skilled workers in key sectors in each Member State.

1. In this context, does the Commission not believe that a uniform European market in professional qualifications should be created that will help Member States to ensure that the vocational training provided in each country, and training for young people in particular, is such that it will enable 'European' workers in possession of these qualifications to find work on the single European labour market?

2. Does the Commission not believe that more attention should be paid to anticipating the needs of the European labour market in order to prevent a situation where the qualifications obtained are of little or no use, regardless of the country concerned?

3. What steps might the Commission take to prevent the regrettable waste of money and effort in many Member States, particularly affecting young people, which produces unemployed workers with unusable qualifications?

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

1. The recognition of professional qualifications in the EU is governed by Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]). This directive foresees general rules concerning mutual recognition and sets out the minimum training requirements for sectoral professions leading to automatic recognition.

The legislative proposal of 2011 modernizing the directive (political agreement in June) aims to facilitate the recognition qualifications. This will allow highly skilled professionals to find jobs across the EU and will contribute to reducing the number of (young) job seekers. This aim will be achieved by the setting up of the European Professional Card, introducing common training principles, the recognition of professional traineeships, etc. The proposal will significantly contribute to the realisation of a single European labour market.

2. The Commission acknowledges the high importance of anticipating the needs of the labour market in Europe and launched the EU Skills Panorama ([2]), functioning as a central access point to all existing information on skills demand, supply and mismatches.

3. EU action regarding fight against (youth) unemployment has been set out in detail in a Commission Communication ([3]). The Commission issued country-specific Recommendations on how to tackle the problem at national level. Education and training systems have to be more effective and ensure that they equip young people with all the skills and competences needed. Strong vocational education and training systems perform better in facilitating the transition from school to work and in keeping youth unemployment down. The European Alliance for Apprenticeships ([4]), will give new impetus to the supply and demand of high-quality apprenticeships and dual learning opportunities.

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p.22.
([2]) See Europe 2020 flagship initiative 'An agenda for new skills and jobs'; euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu.
([3]) 'Working together for Europe's young people' of 19 June 2013 (COM(2013) 447 final).
([4]) Launched on 2 July 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006479/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Transparenz bei Industriestrompreisen in der EU

Im Zuge der Energiewende, die derzeit in Deutschland umgesetzt wird, ist in Medienberichten immer wieder zu vernehmen, dass energieintensive Industriebetriebe von der EEG-Umlage, mit der die Energiewende finanziert wird, ausgenommen sind.

1. Kann die Kommission einen Überblick über die Industriestrompreise in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten der EU geben?

2. In welchem Maße weichen diese Preise von den Preisen ab, die Privathaushalte für Strom bezahlen müssen?

3. Was unternimmt die Kommission, um einen einheitlichen Binnenmarkt für Energie zu fördern und die etwaigen Preisunterschiede zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten auszugleichen?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(23. Juli 2013)

1. Eurostat erstellt pro Mitgliedstaat zweimal jährlich Statistiken über die Strom- und Erdgas-Endkundenpreise für Haushalte und für die Industrie ([1]). Für den Industriesektor sind die Strompreise nach dem jährlichen Verbrauch in sieben Bänder unterteilt. Es werden drei Preise gemeldet: Preise einschließlich aller Steuern, Preise ohne alle Steuern und Preise ohne Mehrwertsteuer (und sonstige für die Industrie erstattungsfähige Steuern) ([2]). Entsprechend dem Ersuchen des Europäischen Rates ([3]) wird die Kommission bis Ende 2013 eine Analyse der Zusammensetzung der Energiepreise und Energiekosten sowie der entsprechenden Preis- und Kostentreiber in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten vorlegen, mit besonderem Schwerpunkt auf den Haushalten, KMU und energieintensiven Industriezweigen und generell auf der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der EU gegenüber ihren weltweiten wirtschaftlichen Gegenspielern.

2. In der EU sind die von den Haushalten gezahlten Stromendkundenpreise tendenziell höher als die von der Industrie gezahlten Preise ([4]): Sie liegen im Durchschnitt um 0,04-0,05 EUR/kWh höher, je nachdem, ob Steuern enthalten sind oder nicht. Die Preisunterschiede sind in der Regel darauf zurückzuführen, dass die Industrie niedrigere Netzentgelte und niedrigere Steuern/Zuschläge zahlt.

3. Obwohl bereits Fortschritte gemacht wurden, was größere Wahlmöglichkeiten für die Verbraucher, das Eindämmen der Großhandelsenergiepreise und die Sicherung einer jederzeit ausreichenden Energieversorgung betrifft, muss noch mehr getan werden, um das Potenzial eines integrierten europäischen Markts auszuschöpfen ([5]). In ihrer vor kurzem veröffentlichten Mitteilung zum Energiebinnenmarkt hat die Kommission mehrere Maßnahmen benannt, die diesem Zweck dienen.

([1]) Die Statistiken über die Endkundenpreise umfassen Daten aus Norwegen, der Türkei, der ehemaligen jugoslawischen Republik Mazedonien (FYROM), Albanien, Bosnien-Herzegowina, Montenegro und Island.
([2]) Siehe: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/energy/data/database
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/137197.pdf
([4]) Daten für die zweite Jahreshälfte 2012. Die Daten beziehen sich auf Haushalte mit einem jährlichen Verbrauch zwischen 2 500 kWh und 5 000 kWh und auf Unternehmen mit einem jährlichen Verbrauch zwischen 500 MWh und 2 000 MWh.
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012DC0663:DE:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006479/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Transparency of industry electricity prices in the EU

Media reports regarding the energy transition currently underway in Germany frequently claim that energy-intensive industrial enterprises are exempted from paying the renewable energy levy, known as the EEG levy, from which the energy transition project is funded.

1. Would the Commission give an overview of industry electricity prices in the individual Member States of the EU?

2. To what extent do these prices deviate from household electricity prices?

3. What action is being taken by the Commission to promote a single market for energy and balance out the price differences between Member States?

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

1. Eurostat provides statistics of retail prices for electricity and natural gas for households and industry twice a year, per Member State ([1]). For industry, electricity prices are divided in seven bands according to annual consumption. Three prices are reported: including all taxes, excluding all taxes, and excluding value added taxes (and other recoverable taxes for industry) ([2]). In response to the request of the European Council ([3]), by the end of 2013 the Commission will present an analysis of the composition and drivers of energy prices and energy costs in Member States, with a particular focus on households, SMEs and energy intensive industries, and more widely at the EU's competitiveness vis-à-vis its global economic counterparts.

2. At EU level the electricity retail prices paid by households tend to be higher than those paid by industry ([4]): on average 0.04-0.05 EUR/kWh, depending whether taxes are excluded. Price differences are generally attributable to lower network tariffs and taxes/surcharges paid by industry.

3. While progress has already been made in terms of offering more choice for consumers, keeping wholesale energy prices in check and securing sufficient supplies at all times, more needs to be done to exploit the potential of an integrated European market ([5]). In its recently published internal energy market communication the Commission has identified several actions to this end.

([1]) The retail price statistics include data from Norway, Turkey, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Iceland.
([2]) See http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/energy/data/database
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/137197.pdf
([4]) Data for the second half of 2012. The data refers to households with annual consumption between 2500 kWh and 5000 kWh and for industries with annual consumption between 500 MWh and 2000 MWh.
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012DC0663:EN:NOT

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006481/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πώληση υποκαταστημάτων κυπριακών τραπεζών στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς

Σύμφωνα με επίσημη ανακοίνωση της Τράπεζας Πειραιώς, η εξαγορά των υποκαταστημάτων των Κυπριακών Τραπεζών στην Ελλάδα έχει, σε διάστημα μερικών μόνο ημερών, αποφέρει στην Τράπεζα καθαρό κέρδος 3,4 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ. Παρόμοια στοιχεία παρουσιάστηκαν και συζητήθηκαν επίσης στην Κυπριακή Βουλή. Επειδή το θέμα δημιουργεί εύλογα ερωτηματικά που ενέχουν σοβαρές οικονομικές και πολιτικές προεκτάσεις για δύο τουλάχιστον κράτη μέλη (Κύπρο και Ελλάδα), καλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στα πιο κάτω ερωτήματα:

— Πώς και με ποια κριτήρια αποφασίστηκε η εσπευσμένη πώληση των υποκαταστημάτων των Κυπριακών Τραπεζών στην Ελλάδα και μάλιστα χωρίς τη σύμφωνη γνώμη των Διοικητικών Συμβουλίων των επηρεαζόμενων τραπεζών;

— Από ποιους ελήφθη η πολιτική απόφαση για αποξένωση των υποκαταστημάτων; Μήπως αυτό αποτελούσε όρο για έγκριση του λεγόμενου πακέτου διάσωσης της κυπριακής οικονομίας από την Τρόικα;

— Σε ποιο βαθμό εμπλέκονται στην υπόθεση αξιωματούχοι ή θεσμικά όργανα της ΕΕ, και ποια;

— Ποιοι έκαναν τις σχετικές διαπραγματεύσεις από πλευράς ΕΕ και με ποια κριτήρια αποφάσισαν την υλοποίηση της πώλησης;

— Από πλευράς Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας, ποιοι διαπραγματεύτηκαν και ποιοι πήραν την τελική απόφαση;

— Έγινε η αναγκαία έρευνα (Due Diligence) για καθορισμό της πραγματικής και δίκαιης αξίας των υποκαταστημάτων των Κυπριακών Τραπεζών;

— Γιατί το κούρεμα καταθέσεων που έγινε στους καταθέτες στην Κύπρο δεν επεκτάθηκε και στους καταθέτες των υποκαταστημάτων των Κυπριακών Τραπεζών στην Ελλάδα; Είναι αυτό δίκαιη και ισότιμη μεταχείριση ευρωπαίων πολιτών;

— Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή για αποκατάσταση των ζημιών και της αδικίας που έγινε σε βάρος της κυπριακής οικονομίας, καθώς και των καταθετών και μετόχων των Κυπριακών Τραπεζών, από το χειρισμό του όλου ζητήματος;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η πώληση των κυπριακών υποκαταστημάτων στην Ελλάδα ήταν προς το συμφέρον τόσο της Κύπρου, όσο και της Ελλάδας, για λόγους χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας. Η συναλλαγή αυτή μειώνει τις ενδεχόμενες υποχρεώσεις όσον αφορά το κυπριακό σύστημα εγγύησης των καταθέσεων που προέρχονται από τις καταθέσεις στα υποκαταστήματα που βρίσκονται στην Ελλάδα. Αυτό είναι επίσης σημαντικό για λόγους χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας στην Ελλάδα, όπου τα κυπριακά υποκαταστήματα ήταν σημαντικά σε συστηματική βάση.

Για τους ανωτέρω λόγους, η Τρόικα ενθάρρυνε την ελληνική και την κυπριακή πλευρά να διαπραγματευθούν την πώληση των εν λόγω υποκαταστημάτων, σε εύλογη τιμή που να αντικατοπτρίζει την αξία των δανείων τους, λαμβανομένων υπόψη των μελλοντικών ζημιών που είχαν εντοπιστεί από τον σύμβουλο Pimco.

Η πώληση των ελληνικών δραστηριοτήτων της Τράπεζας Κύπρου και της Λαϊκής Τράπεζας Κύπρου στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς αποτελεί ιδιωτική πράξη που έχει εγκριθεί από τις εποπτικές αρχές του ελληνικού και κυπριακού τραπεζικού τομέα. Ως μέρος της Τρόικας, οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής (ΓΔ COMP και ΓΔ ECFIN) παρακολούθησαν αυτή τη διαδικασία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006481/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Sale of Cypriot bank branches to Piraeus Bank

According to an official statement by Piraeus Bank, the takeover of branches of the Bank of Cyprus by Greece has, in just a few days, generated a net profit of EUR 3.4 billion for the bank. Similar figures have also been presented and discussed in the Cypriot Parliament. Given that the issue raises legitimate questions with serious economic and political repercussions for at least two Member States (Cyprus and Greece), will the Commission answer the following:

— How and on the basis of what criteria was the hasty decision to sell branches of the Bank of Cyprus to Greece made and why was it made without the agreement of the Boards of Directors of the banks concerned?

— Who made the political decision to sell off the branches? Was this perhaps a condition for the Troika's approval of the so-called rescue package for the Cypriot economy?

— To what extent are EU officials or institutions involved in the case and which officials and institutions are involved?

— Who carried out the relevant negotiations on the part of the EU and on what criteria did they decide to make the sale?

— With regards to the Republic of Cyprus, who were the parties involved in negotiations and who made the final decision?

— Were the necessary due diligence investigations carried out to establish the actual and fair value of the Cyprus Bank branches?

— Why were the haircuts to the savings of depositors in Cyprus not applied to depositors in branches of the Bank of Cyprus in Greece? Does this constitute the fair and equal treatment of European citizens?

— What does the Commission intend to do to compensate for the damage caused and the injustice done to the Cypriot economy and to Bank of Cyprus depositors and shareholders due to the way this whole issue has been handled?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

The sale of the Cypriot branches in Greece was in the interest of both Cyprus and Greece for financial stability reasons. The transaction lowers the contingent liabilities relating to the Cyprus Deposit Guarantee Scheme emanating from the deposits in the branches in Greece. It is also important for financial stability reasons in Greece, where the Cypriot branches were systemically important.

For the above reasons, the Troika encouraged the Greek side and the Cypriot side to negotiate a sale of these branches, at a fair price reflecting the value of their loans, taking into account the future losses which had been identified by the consultant Pimco.

The sale of the Greek operations of Bank of Cyprus and Cyprus Popular Bank to Piraeus Bank is a private transaction that was approved by the Greek and Cypriot banking sector supervisors. As part of the Troika, Commission services (DG COMP and DG ECFIN) followed this process.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006483/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Φοροδιαφυγή και φορολογικοί παράδεισοι

Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία έρευνας που δόθηκαν πρόσφατα στη δημοσιότητα από το Tax Justice Network, τουλάχιστον 21 τρισεκατομμύρια δολάρια αδήλωτου ιδιωτικού πλούτου βρίσκονται κατατεθειμένα σε φορολογικούς παραδείσους σε διάφορες περιοχές του πλανήτη. Σε μια περίοδο οικονομικής και δημοσιονομικής κρίσης η ανεπάρκεια πόρων για επενδύσεις, κοινωνικές δαπάνες και ανάπτυξη είναι προφανής σε ολόκληρη την Ευρώπη. Ασφαλώς η φοροδιαφυγή και η φυγάδευση κεφαλαίων σε φορολογικούς παραδείσους επιτείνουν τα οικονομικά προβλήματα και την ανεργία στην Ευρώπη και θα πρέπει να καταπολεμηθούν αποτελεσματικά.

Παρακαλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στα πιο κάτω ερωτήματα:

— Πόσα από τα πιο πάνω κεφάλαια βρίσκονται σε κράτη μέλη της Ένωσης ή σε άλλους προορισμούς που, άμεσα ή έμμεσα, βρίσκονται υπό τη δικαιοδοσία κρατών μελών της ΕΕ;

— Πόσα από τα πιο πάνω κεφάλαια έχουν ως πηγή προέλευσης κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ ή ανήκουν σε ευρωπαίους κροίσους;

— Πώς και σε ποιο βαθμό η διαφυγή κεφαλαίων σε φορολογικούς παραδείσους σχετίζεται με το φαινόμενο της παραοικονομίας και της φοροδιαφυγής που προσλαμβάνει μεγάλες διαστάσεις σε πολλά κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ;

— Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή για την αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου και τον εντοπισμό/επαναπατρισμό φυγαδευμένων κεφαλαίων καθώς και για την είσπραξη των αναλογούντων φόρων;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Ιουλίου 2013)

Λόγω της φύσης της φοροδιαφυγής, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή δεν έχει στοιχεία σχετικά με το ακριβές ποσό των αδήλωτων κεφαλαίων που βρίσκονται σε φορολογικούς παραδείσους. Στην επικείμενη έκθεσή της του 2013 για τη φορολογική μεταρρύθμιση, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή θα καταγράψει τις υφιστάμενες μελέτες και τους δείκτες σχετικά με το θέμα της παραοικονομίας.

Στο σχέδιο δράσης για την ενίσχυση της καταπολέμησης της φορολογικής απάτης και της φοροδιαφυγής ([1]), η Επιτροπή υπογράμμισε τη σημασία της προώθησης της αυτόματης ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών σε ενωσιακό και διεθνές επίπεδο. Μετά από τα συμπεράσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου της 22ας Μαΐου 2013, η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε πρόταση για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας σχετικά με τη διοικητική συνεργασία στον τομέα της φορολογίας (οδηγία 2011/16/ΕΕ) ([2]) προκειμένου να επεκταθεί το πεδίο εφαρμογής της αυτόματης ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών ώστε να καλύπτει ένα ευρύτερο φάσμα θεμάτων.

([1]) COM(2012)722 τελικό της 6.12.2012.
([2]) Πρόταση οδηγίας του Συμβουλίου για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας 2011/16/ΕΕ σχετικά με την υποχρεωτική ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών στον τομέα της φορολογίας. COM(2013)348 τελικό, 12.6.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006483/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Tax evasion and tax havens

According to research data recently published by the Tax Justice Network, at least USD 21 trillion of undeclared private wealth is being held in tax havens in various regions of the world. At a period of economic and financial crisis, there is a clear lack of resources for investments, social expenditure and development throughout Europe. It is certain that tax evasion and capital flight to tax havens intensify economic problems and unemployment in Europe and we should be combating this effectively.

Will the Commission answer the following:

— How much of the aforementioned capital is being held in EU Member States or other destinations which, directly or indirectly, are under the jurisdiction of the EU Member States?

— How much of the aforementioned capital originates in the Member States or belongs to wealthy Europeans?

— How and to what extent is capital flight to tax havens related to the informal economy and tax evasion which are becoming big problems in many Member States?

— What does the Commission intend to do to deal with the problem, to identify/repatriate this capital and collect the relative taxes?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

Due to the nature of tax evasion, the European Commission has no information on the exact amount of undisclosed funds held in tax havens. In its forthcoming Tax Reform Report 2013, the European Commission will take stock of existing studies and indicators on the topic of shadow economy.

In its Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion ([1]), the Commission stressed the importance of promoting automatic exchange of information at EU and international level. Following the 22 May 2013 European Council conclusions, the Commission adopted a proposal amending the directive on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation (Directive 2011/16/EU) ([2]) in order to extend the scope of automatic exchange of information to a wider range of items.

([1]) COM(2012) 722 final, 6.12.2012.
([2]) Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 2011/16/EU as regards mandatory automatic exchange of information in the field of taxation. COM(2013) 348 final, 12.6.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006484/13
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Greek 'special import tax' on cars

It has been brought to my attention that Britons who own property on the Greek island of Lefkada (Lefkas) are being told by officials at the Greek customs office that they must pay a 'special import tax' before registering their British-bought vehicles in order to obtain Greek number plates.

Is the Commission aware that individuals are being asked to pay an illegal fee of EUR 20 000 to register a car worth EUR 12 000 (or less)? If so, what is being done to stop this?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

At the outset it should be noted that there is no harmonisation at European Union level in the field of vehicle taxation. Therefore, the Member States remain at liberty to levy such taxes. Even very high taxes, according to the Court of Justice of the European Union, are not contrary to EC law. For this reason, the Commission presented a car tax proposal for a Council Directive in 2005 in order to improve the functioning of the internal market and to promote sustainability. That proposal did not receive enough support from the Member States. Greece is therefore allowed to levy a tax upon the registration of a vehicle to be used on its territory in a permanent manner. It must be noted also that the tax described by the Honourable Member is an internal tax, and not an 'import duty' as often erroneously believed.

Such internal taxes must be in compliance with the relevant EU provisions, in particular with the principle of non-discrimination against products from other Member States as prescribed by Article 110 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ('TFEU').

With respect to Article 110 TFEU, the Commission has started an infringement procedure against Greece on the way such registration tax is levied; *inter alia* on the rates of depreciation applicable to second-hand vehicles transferred from another Member State for free circulation on Greek territory.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-006485/13
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2013 m. birželio 6 d.)

Tema: Ignalinos atominės elektrinės laikinojo panaudoto branduolinio kuro saugyklos projekto B1 įgyvendinimo vėlavimas

2012 m. gruodžio 13 d. Tarptautinio Ignalinos eksploatavimo nutraukimo fondo donorų asamblėjos sprendimu buvo laikinai sustabdytas laikinojo panaudoto branduolinio kuro saugyklos projekto B1 finansavimas, siekiant išspręsti jau keletą metų besitęsiančius Ignalinos atominės elektrinės ir projekto rangovo NUKEM-GNS ginčus dėl rangovo pagamintų konteinerių, kurių techniniai parametrai neatitiko projekto B1 techninių sąlygų, kurias patvirtino Valstybinė atominės saugos inspekcija (VATESI). Noriu priminti, kad rangovas buvo pasirinktas konkurso būdu, o į konkurso sąlygų nustatymo bei rangovo pasirinkimo procesą nuo pat pradžių buvo įtraukta Europos Komisija ir ERPB, siekiant suteikti pagalbą Lietuvai, neturinčiai patirties atominių elektrinių uždarymo srityje. Rangovo pagaminti techninių reikalavimų neatitinkantys konteineriai sukėlė visą virtinę kitų su projekto B1 įgyvendinimu susijusių problemų, nes Ignalinos AE esanti įranga, amortizatoriai ir kranai, kaip jau pripažino ir pats rangovas, be rekonstrukcijos negali būti naudojami rangovo pagamintiems konteineriams pakelti ir kurui iš 2-ojo reaktoriaus iškrauti. Dėl šių priežasčių projekto įgyvendinimas jau 2011 m. vėlavo 32 mėn., o tai kainuoja papildomas lėšas ES ir Lietuvos mokesčių mokėtojams, daro žalą Lietuvos valstybei ir jos prestižui bei neleidžia užtikrinti saugaus Ignalinos AE eksploatavimo nutraukimo proceso.

Dar 2011 m. donorų asamblėja buvo nustačiusi rangovui konkrečią datą (2011 m. liepos 15 d.), iki kurios jis turėjo pateikti techninių standartų neatitinkančių talpyklų pagrindimą bei pasiekti susitarimą. Nepateikus duomenų buvo nustatyta kita data – 2012 m. spalio 5 d., tačiau šios problemos sprendimas nepasistūmėjo. Remiantis Lietuvos Respublikos Energetikos ministerijos duomenimis 2013 m. balandžio 29 d. rangovas ir vėl įsipareigojo per 3-5 mėn. pateikti patikslintus konteinerių techninius duomenis, tačiau ir vėl kyla abejonės, ar tai bus padaryta, ir iškyla reali grėsmė, jog rangovas ir toliau vilkins reikalaujamų duomenų pateikimą, kaip rodo precedentas.

Gerbiamas Komisare, ar nemanote, kad iškilo reali grėsmė branduolinės saugos užtikrinimui vykdant Ignalinos AE eksploatavimo nutraukimo procesą?

Ar Komisija nemano, kad tokia situacija yra netoleruotina ir kad ji turėtų imtis aktyvaus arbitro vaidmens sprendžiant minėtus klausimus, ypač atsižvelgiant į tai, jog rangovas jau pirminiame projekto etape nukrypo nuo patvirtinto projekto techninių sąlygų ir iki šiol nevykdo teisėtų ir sutartinių Ignalinos AE reikalavimų, o tai neleidžia Lietuvai įgyvendinti Stojimo sutartyje numatyto reikalavimo saugiai ir tinkamai atlikti eksploatavimo nutraukimo darbus ir daro neigiamą įtaką Lietuvos ir ES prestižui?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. liepos 9 d.)

1. Jei ir toliau bus vėluojama įgyvendinti sauso panaudoto branduolinio kuro saugyklos projektą B1, bus vėluojama šalinti kurą iš Ignalinos AE antrojo reaktoriaus aktyviosios zonos, taip pat iš abiejų blokų kuro baseinų, kurie šiuo metu visiškai pripildyti panaudoto branduolinio kuro.

Pagal Tarybos direktyvas 2009/71/Euratomas ([1]) ir 2011/70/Euratomas ([2]) galutinė atsakomybė už branduolinę saugą ir saugų panaudoto kuro bei radioaktyviųjų atliekų tvarkymą, įskaitant eksploatavimo nutraukimą, tenka valstybėms narėms. Šiose direktyvose taip pat nustatyta, kad licencijos turėtojas turi reguliariai atlikti atitinkamų įrenginių ir objektų saugos vertinimą ir gerinti saugą, prižiūrint nacionalinei kompetentingai reguliavimo institucijai (šiuo atveju VATESI).

2. Komisija žino apie Ignalinos AE operatoriaus sunkumus, susijusius su projekto B1 įgyvendinimu ir rangovo *Nukem-GNS* veiksmais.

Nors Komisija nėra projekto B1 sutarties šalis ir negali imtis arbitro vaidmens tokiuose komerciniuose ginčuose, pastaruosius trejus metus ji aktyviai stengėsi skatinti projekto pažangą.

([1]) OL L 172.
([2]) OL L 199.

Dėl besitęsiančių sunkumų 2012 m. gruodžio mėn. buvo sustabdytas ES projekto finansavimas iš Europos rekonstrukcijos ir plėtros banko (ERPB) valdomo Tarptautinio Ignalinos AE eksploatavimo nutraukimo rėmimo fondo. Nuo tada abi šalys padarė pažangą spręsdamos problemiškus klausimus ir, kai bus išspręstas paskutinis klausimas (reaktoriaus blokuose esančių kranų atnaujinimas), ERPB galėtų svarstyti sustabdymo atšaukimą.

Komisija toliau skatins abiejų šalių dialogą.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006485/13
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Delayed implementation of the B1 Interim Spent Fuel Storage Facility Project at the Ignalina nuclear power plant

On 13 December 2012, the funding of the B1 Interim Spent Fuel Storage Facility Project was temporarily suspended following a decision by the Donor Assembly of the Ignalina International Decommissioning Support Fund in order to address certain disputes arising between the Ignalina nuclear power plant and the project contractor NUKEM-GNS regarding containers manufactured by the contractor whose technical parameters failed to meet the technical conditions of the B1 project, which had been approved by the State Nuclear Power Safety Inspectorate (VATESI). I would like to remind you that the contractor was selected by tender, and that the European Commission and the EBRD were involved in setting the tender conditions and the procedure for selecting the contractor from the very outset in order to provide assistance to Lithuania, which has no experience in the field of decommissioning nuclear power plants. The containers manufactured by the contractor which fail to meet the technical requirements have triggered a whole series of other problems regarding the implementation of the B1 project because the equipment, shock absorbers and cranes located at the Ignalina nuclear power plant, as the contractor himself has already recognised, cannot be used to lift containers manufactured by the contractor or empty fuel from the second reactor unless they are rebuilt. For these reasons, in 2011, the implementation of the project was already 32 months late and represents an additional cost to both EU and Lithuanian taxpayers, is damaging the Lithuanian state and its prestige, and means that the safe decommissioning of the Ignalina nuclear power plant cannot be guaranteed.

Back in 2011, the Donor Assembly had set a specific date for the contractor (15 July 2011), by which time he had to provide a justification for the containers failing to meet the technical standards and reach an agreement. When he failed to provide the documents, another date was set — 5 October 2012 — but a solution to this problem has still to be found. According to information from the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, on 29 April 2013, the contractor once again made a commitment to provide revised container technical data within 3-5 months but yet again, it is doubtful whether this will be done and there is a real risk that the contractor will continue to delay providing the required information, as has already been demonstrated.

Commissioner, do you not feel that there is a real threat to nuclear safety in the implementation of the Ignalina nuclear power plant decommissioning process?

Does the Commission not feel that such a situation is unacceptable and that it should play an active role as an arbiter in addressing the issues mentioned, particularly given that the contractor already deviated from the approved technical conditions in the initial phase of the project and has yet to meet the legal and contractual requirements of the Ignalina nuclear power plant, and that this is preventing Lithuania from carrying out decommissioning work safely and appropriately, which was a requirement provided for in the Treaty of Accession and which is having a negative impact on the prestige of both Lithuania and the EU?

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

1. Further delays in the completion of project B1 (Dry Spent Fuel Storage Facility) will delay the defueling of the second reactor core at the Ignalina nuclear power plant, as well as the defueling of the fuel ponds of both units that are currently fully loaded with spent nuclear fuel.

In accordance with Council Directives 2009/71/Euratom ([1]) and 2011/70/Euratom ([2]), Member States are ultimately responsible for nuclear safety as well as for the safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste, including decommissioning. These directives also provide for the regular assessment by the license holder of the safety of the installations and facilities concerned, as well as improving the safety, under the supervision of the national competent regulatory authority (in this case VATESI).

2. The Commission is aware of the difficult situation that the operator of the Ignalina nuclear power plant is facing with regard to the implementation of project B1 and the involvement of the contractor Nukem-GNS.

([1]) OJ L 172.
([2]) OJ L 199.

Although the Commission is a not a contracting party to project B1 and does not have the role to be an arbiter in such commercial disputes, the Commission has made major efforts over the last 3 years, to encourage progress of the project.

In fact, due to the ongoing problems, the EU project funding from the Ignalina International Decommissioning Support Fund (administrated by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, EBRD) was suspended in December 2012. Since then, both parties have made progress in addressing the outstanding issues and upon resolution of the last remaining issue (upgrade of cranes in the reactor units) the EBRD could consider lifting of the suspension.

The Commission will continue to facilitate the dialogue between both parties.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006486/13
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Commission progress on developing an EU legal framework for the protection of pets and stray animals

Parliament's resolution of 4 July 2012 on the establishment of an EU legal framework for the protection of pets and stray animals (P7_TA(2012)021) called on the Commission to put forward an EU legal framework for the protection of pets and stray animals, including:

— rules for the identification and registration of animals;

— stray animal management strategies, including vaccination and sterilisation programmes;

— measures to promote responsible ownership;

— the prohibition of unlicensed kennels and shelters;

— the prohibition of the killing of stray animals without medical indication;

— information and educational programmes in schools on animal welfare;

— severe sanctions to be imposed on any Member State which fails to comply with the rules.

Can you update me on what progress the Commission has made in terms of putting forward a legal framework for the protection of pets and stray animals (i.e. timeframe envisaged) and on the individual elements listed above?

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

European Union institutions must stay within the competences conferred on them by the Treaties. Their power to improve animal welfare by law making and enforcement is limited to the policies mentioned in Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, i.e. agriculture, fisheries, transport, internal market, research and technological development and space. As a result, the Commission has no mandate to put forward a legal framework for the protection of pets and stray animals.

Regarding the identification and registration of dogs and cats, Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 on the animal health requirements applicable to the non-commercial movement of pet animals and amending Council Directive 92/65/EEC ([1]) provides a framework for the identification of pet animals that may also be used by Member States for the identification of such animals within their territory. ([2])

That said, the Commission envisages performing a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices ([3]). The study is expected to be completed by the end of 2014.

([1]) OJ L 146, 13.6.2003, pp. 1-9.
([2]) As confirmed by the Court of Justice o the European Union in Joined Cases C-42/10, C-45/10 and C-57/10. Judgment available at: http://curia.europa.eu.
([3]) EU Strategy on the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015; COM(2012) 6 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006487/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 juin 2013)

Objet: Des implants sécurisés à 100 %

Dans la médecine, à l'avenir, nous aurons de plus en plus recours aux implants. Tout cela se développe à une allure inimaginable. Nous voulons donc que les implants soient de bonne qualité, et ce dans le souci du patient.

Dans certains pays dont la Belgique, ces derniers mois, la ministre a fait contrôler 71 % des distributeurs d'implants. Elle a découvert des cas où l'hygiène était problématique, d'autres où les produits étaient périmés. Elle a donc déjà doublé le nombre de contrôleurs. Dans un avenir proche, 100 % des distributeurs auront été contrôlés.

1. Avec l'ouverture des frontières à ce type de service, la Commission compte-t-elle pousser les États membres à également contrôler drastiquement tous les distributeurs d'implants?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle également exhorter les États membres à tenir un vrai registre des implants? L'objectif serait d'instaurer une véritable traçabilité de l'implant. À l'avenir, nous devons savoir à chaque moment quel implant existe dans tel ou tel État membre, qui est le fournisseur, qui est le pharmacien, qui est le médecin qui l'a placé et, évidemment, qui est le patient concerné. Pour que la chaîne soit totalement sécurisée, les distributeurs devront s'enregistrer auprès de leur Agence nationale.

3. La Commission va-t-elle appuyer à travers l'Europe la carte d'implants, telle que déjà établie en Belgique? Il s'agira d'une carte qui comprendra tout le dispositif qui a été implanté et toutes les informations sur l'implant.

Réponse donnée par M. Mimica au nom de la Commission
(16 juillet 2013)

Des contrôles sont effectués par les autorités nationales dans le cadre de l'ensemble des mesures d'application de la législation prévues par la directive sur les dispositifs médicaux ([1]) et relevant de la responsabilité des États membres. La coordination de ces mesures et l'échange d'informations sont l'affaire du groupe de travail COEN (*Compliance and Enforcement Group* — Mise en conformité et application), composé d'experts des États membres et de la Commission.

À la suite de l'incident des implants mammaires PIP, la Commission a demandé aux États membres de renforcer leurs activités de surveillance du marché. Elle a également engagé, au travers de groupes de travail d'experts sur les dispositifs médicaux, un dialogue avec les États membres et les professionnels de la santé sur la mise en place d'un système d'enregistrement des implants. Le projet PARENT ([2]) est un autre exemple des travaux entrepris dans ce sens.

Pour ce qui est de l'enregistrement des implants, les propositions de règlement relatives aux dispositifs médicaux ([3]) et aux dispositifs médicaux de diagnostic *in vitro* ([4]), adoptées le 26 septembre 2012, exigent que la Commission et les États membres prennent toutes les mesures appropriées pour encourager la mise en place de registres pour des types spécifiques de dispositifs, afin de recueillir les enseignements tirés de l'utilisation de ceux-ci. Les règlements proposés prévoient également l'obligation pour les fabricants d'apposer sur leurs dispositifs un numéro d'identification unique (IUD) afin d'en améliorer la traçabilité.

En ce qui concerne la cartographie des implants, les règlements proposés prévoient la remise aux patients à qui un dispositif a été implanté d'une carte contenant des informations essentielles sur ce dispositif, les mises en garde requises et les précautions à prendre.

([1]) Directive 90/385/CEE du Conseil du 20 juin 1990 concernant le rapprochement des législations des États membres relatives aux dispositifs médicaux implantables actifs (JO L 189 du 20.7.1990, p. 17); directive 93/42/CEE du Conseil relative aux dispositifs médicaux (JO L 169 du 12.7.1993, p. 1); Directive 98/79/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative aux dispositifs médicaux de diagnostic in vitro (JO L 331 du 7.12.1998, p. 1).

([2]) De plus amples informations sont disponibles à l'adresse http://www.patientregistries.eu/

([3]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative aux dispositifs médicaux, et modifiant la directive 2001/83/CE, le règlement (CE) nº 178/2002 et le règlement (CE) nº 1223/2009, COM(2012)542 final, Bruxelles, le 26.9.2012.

([4]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative aux dispositifs médicaux de diagnostic in vitro, COM,(2012)541 final, Bruxelles, le 26.9.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006487/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: 100% safe implants

The use of implants will be increasingly commonplace in medicine in the future and their use is growing at an unimaginable pace. Implants therefore need to be of good quality, in the interest of patients.

In Belgium, as in several countries, the minister has had 71% of implant distributors inspected in recent months. This has uncovered instances in which hygiene was an issue and others in which the products were out of date. The number of inspectors has therefore already been doubled. In the near future, all distributors will have been inspected.

1. With the opening of borders to this type of service, does the Commission intend to urge Member States also to conduct rigorous inspections of all implant distributors?

2. Does the Commission also intend to urge Member States to keep a register of implants? The aim would be to establish real traceability of implants. In future, we must be able to know at any given moment and in any given Member State, who the supplier is, who the pharmacist is, who the doctor is who implanted it and, obviously, who the patient concerned is. In order for the chain to be completely safe, distributors must be registered with their national agency.

3. Will the Commission support the mapping of implants throughout Europe, as already happens in Belgium? This map will include any device that has been implanted and all information about the implant.

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

Inspections are conducted by national authorities as part of the overall enforcement activities provided for by the legislation on medical devices ([1]) and falling within the responsibility of the Member States. Coordination of these activities and exchange of information takes place in the Compliance and Enforcement Group, comprising experts from the Member States and the Commission.

In the context of the measures adopted following the PIP breast implants incident, the Commission asked the Member States to reinforce their market surveillance activities. The Commission is also engaged in a dialogue with Member States and healthcare professionals about implantation registers within Expert Working Groups on Medical Devices. Another example of work undertaken in this direction is the PARENT project ([2]).

Concerning the registers for devices, the proposals for a regulation on medical devices ([3]) and for a regulation on '*in vitro*' diagnostic medical devices ([4]) adopted on 26.9.2012 require the Commission and the Member States to take all appropriate measures to encourage the establishment of registers for specific types of devices to gather post-market experience related to their use. The proposed Regulations also include a requirement that manufacturers fit their devices with a Unique Device Identification (UDI) to improve device traceability.

Regarding mapping of implants, the aforementioned proposals foresee that patients who are implanted with a device should be given an implant card containing essential information on the implanted device and any necessary warnings or precautions to be taken.

([1]) Council Directive 90/385/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to active implantable medical devices (OJ L 189, 20.7.1990, p. 17-36); Council Directive 93/42/EEC concerning medical devices (OJ L 169, 12.7.1993, p. 1-43); Directive 98/79/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices (OJ L 331, 7.12.1998, p. 1-37).

([2]) More information available at http://www.patientregistries.eu/.

([3]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on medical devices, and amending Directive 2001/83/EC, Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 and Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009, COM(2012) 542 final, Brussels, 26.9.2012.

([4]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices, COM(2012) 541 final, Brussels, 26.9.2012.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006489/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 juin 2013)

Objet: Trafic de chiens: préjudice pour les animaux

Le marché de l'animal génère beaucoup d'argent. Tant et si bien que de nombreuses personnes se sont emparées de cette nouvelle source de profit au détriment des animaux et de leurs futurs propriétaires. Ainsi, ces «importateurs» font venir des chiens et des chats des pays de l'Est pour les vendre à des animaleries. Le but est simple: gagner un maximum d'argent. Le principe est lui aussi aisé à mettre en œuvre: dans les pays d'Europe centrale se trouvent des élevages de toutes races de chiens, proposés à des prix dérisoires. Les chiots sont enlevés à leur mère très tôt, avant l'âge de deux mois. Arrivés dans l'Union européenne, ils reçoivent de faux papiers et carnets de vaccination. Puis ils sont distribués en France, avec de nouveaux documents, attestant frauduleusement que les animaux sont français. Ils sont ensuite vendus dans des animaleries ou chez des pseudo-éleveurs au prix fort. À toutes les étapes, le trafic est rentable.

Pour les chiots, le fait d'être sevré trop tôt, de n'être pas suffisamment socialisé, de subir des transports de plusieurs milliers de kilomètres sans eau ni nourriture est lourd de conséquences physiques et psychologiques.

Les propriétaires se retrouvent trop souvent avec un animal malade ou perturbé. Ils doivent alors faire face à des difficultés financières et morales.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle mettre en place un support psychologique, juridique ou financier pour aider les victimes face à cette fraude européenne?

2. La Commission estime-t-elle que les textes législatifs protègent suffisamment les victimes?

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

L'Union européenne n'est pas compétente pour fournir un soutien psychologique, juridique ou financier aux victimes du trafic de chiens.

Hormis en matière de transport ([1]) effectué dans le cadre d'une activité économique, il n'existe pas de réglementation européenne concernant le bien-être des chiens. Toutefois, de nombreux États membres, comme la France, ont adopté des dispositions nationales sur l'élevage et la vente de chiens sur leur territoire.

Que les règles soient européennes ou nationales, leur application relève des autorités nationales compétentes.

Il existe également des dispositions de l'UE visant à protéger les consommateurs contre les allégations trompeuses des commerçants. En particulier, le fait que ceux-ci ne donnent pas d'informations sur l'origine de l'animal pourrait être considéré comme une omission trompeuse au sens des dispositions de la directive sur les pratiques commerciales déloyales ([2]).

Dans le cadre de la stratégie de l'UE pour le bien-être des animaux au cours de la période 2012-2015 ([3]), la Commission prévoit de réaliser une étude sur le bien-être des chiens et des chats faisant l'objet de pratiques commerciales. À la lumière des résultats de cette étude, qui devrait avoir lieu d'ici à 2014, la Commission estimera si de nouvelles mesures sont nécessaires.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport (JO L 3 du 5.1.2005, p. 1).
([2]) Directive 2005/29/CE.
([3]) COM(2012)6 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006489/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Dog trafficking and animal welfare

The market in imported animals is highly lucrative, so lucrative, indeed, that many people have seized on it as a way to make money at the expense of the animals themselves and their prospective owners. To give just one example, 'importers' bring dogs and cats over from eastern European countries and sell them to pet shops. The aim is simple, to make as much money as possible, and the method used is just as simple: pedigree dogs of all kinds can be bought extremely cheaply from breeders in central Europe. Puppies are separated from their mothers before they are even two months old, and the importers have forged paperwork and vaccination cards ready for when they arrive in the European Union. The animals are then transported to all parts of France with new documents which fraudulently claim that they were bred in France. At this point they are sold to pet shops or 'fake breeders' for considerable sums of money. The traffickers turn a profit at every stage.

Weaning puppies at such a young age, depriving them of contact with other dogs and transporting them thousands of miles without food or water is physically and psychologically scarring.

Far too often, owners are left with ill or traumatised animals. Many are faced with tough financial and ethical choices as a result.

1. Does the Commission plan to introduce psychological, legal or financial support for victims of this kind of fraud in Europe?

2. Does the Commission believe that the victims are adequately protected under EC law?

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

The EU has no competence in providing psychological, legal or financial support to the victims of illegal traffic of dogs.

Besides transport ([1]) made in connection with an economic activity, there is no EU rule regarding the welfare of dogs. However, many Member States like France have adopted national rules regarding the breeding and the selling of dogs in their territory.

For both EU and national rules, implementation remains under the competence of the national competent authorities.

There are also EU provisions to protect consumers against misleading claims from traders. In particular, the fact that a trader does not inform the consumer of the animal's origin could be considered as a misleading omission under the provisions of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([2]).

In the context of the EU animal welfare strategy 2012-2015 ([3]) the Commission plans to make a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices. In the light of the results of the study, expected by 2014, the Commission will consider if further measures are necessary.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport (OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1).
([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC.
([3]) COM(2012)6 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006491/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 juin 2013)

Objet: Mariage entre deux personnes de même sexe: propos calomnieux sous la bannière européenne

Voici les propos calomnieux et homophobes tirés de la parution «L'Observatoire de l'Europe»:

«C'est l'abolition progressiste de toutes les limites, de toutes les frontières, qui nous ramène tranquillement à la guerre de tous contre tous, celle-là même que l'Union européenne, récemment titrée, à sa grande surprise, du Prix Nobel de la Paix, devait rendre impossible, du moins dans les rêves de ses lointains fondateurs. Le régime postmoderne de l'Europe intégrée est l'émanation institutionnelle du règne de l'illimitation. Il n'était donc pas étonnant que ce fût de ce côté-là, une fois de plus, que viendrait la grande rupture anthropologique du droit civil, du mariage et de la filiation. En réalité, voilà plus de vingt ans que le Conseil de l'Europe et l'Union européenne œuvrent patiemment, sans en avoir reçu la compétence d'ailleurs, pour faire avancer la "reconnaissance" légale de la famille homosexuelle par les États membres… ».

1. Comment se positionne la Commission à la lecture de tels propos?

2. Comment les autorités européennes peuvent-elles accepter que ce type de propos soient tenus dans une parution dont le titre pourrait faire penser qu'elle provient des institutions européennes et sous la bannière étoilée de l'Europe? L'amalgame n'est-il pas dangereux et le fait que le citoyen puisse croire qu'il s'agisse d'une parution écrite par l'Europe pour l'image de nos institutions?

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

La Commission européenne est déterminée à lutter contre l'homophobie et la transphobie en exerçant pleinement les pouvoirs qui lui ont été conférés par les traités.

Toutefois, la Commission ne dispose pas de compétences générales lui permettant d'intervenir auprès des États membres dans le domaine du droit de la famille. Par ailleurs, le cas particulier de la reconnaissance des mariages et des partenariats enregistrés, que ce soit entre personnes du même sexe ou de sexe différent, n'est pas régi par la législation de l'Union et relève de la compétence juridique de chaque État membre.

Les principes de liberté et de pluralisme des médias, qui sont consacrés dans le traité, à l'article 11 de la charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne, ainsi qu'à l'article 10 de la convention européenne des Droits de l'homme, constituent deux piliers essentiels de nos sociétés démocratiques. La Commission est fermement résolue à garantir la liberté d'expression dans les limites de ses compétences. Comme l'Honorable Parlementaire l'a souligné, L'Observatoire de l'Europe est un périodique indépendant, et la Commission européenne n'intervient pas dans la politique éditoriale de la presse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006491/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Same-sex marriage: slanderous comments under the European banner

Below are some slanderous and homophobic comments taken from the publication *L'Observatoire de l'Europe*:

'It is the progressive abolition of all limits, of all boundaries, that is steadily leading us back to the war of "all against all", which the European Union, recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize much to its surprise, was supposed to make impossible, at least in the dreams of its distant founders. The postmodern regime of an integrated Europe is the institutional product of an approach whereby the overriding concern is having no limits. It therefore came as no surprise that it was from this side, once again, that the great anthropological breakdown of civil law, marriage and parentage originated. In fact, the Council of Europe and the European Union have been patiently working for more than 20 years, without any authority to do so, to promote the legal "recognition" of the homosexual family by Member States …'

1. What is the Commission's position upon reading such comments?

2. How can the European authorities accept comments like these appearing in a publication whose title could suggest that it originates from the European institutions and under the starry banner of Europe? Is the confusion not dangerous for the reputation of our institutions as well as the fact that citizens may believe that it is an EU-produced publication?

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

The European Commission is determined to combat homophobia and transphobia to the full extent of the powers conferred on it by the Treaties.

The European Commission has however no general powers to intervene with the Member States in the area of family law and the specific case of recognition of marriages and registered partnerships, be it same-sex or different-sex, is not covered under Union law and remains within the legal competence of each Member State.

Freedom and pluralism of media constitute essential foundations of our democratic societies, enshrined in the Treaty, in Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union as well as Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Commission is strongly committed towards ensuring freedom of expression within its competences. As the Honourable Member has pointed out, L'Observatoire de l'Europe, is an independent periodical and the European Commission does not interfere in the editorial policy of the press.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006492/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 juin 2013)

Objet: Libération de la FEMEN tunisienne

Amina Sboui — également connue sous le nom d'Amina Tyler — a été placée en détention provisoire jeudi 30 mai après avoir été accusée de profanation de cimetière, d'appartenance à une organisation criminelle et d'atteinte aux bonnes mœurs, infractions passibles de plusieurs années de prison en vertu du code pénal tunisien. Les charges retenues contre elle seraient en rapport avec le fait qu'elle ait écrit le mot «FEMEN» sur un mur d'enceinte du cimetière de Kairouan le 19 mai, jour où Ansar al Charia, un groupe salafiste opposé à l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes, avait appelé ses sympathisants à se rassembler dans cette ville. Amina Sboui a été arrêtée devant le cimetière et inculpée pour port d'aérosol lacrymogène — infraction dont elle a été reconnue coupable, ce qui lui a valu une condamnation à une amende d'un montant de 300 dinars tunisiens (environ 140 euros).

1. La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas disproportionné de punir son comportement d'une peine de prison? Rappelons par exemple qu'à l'inverse, plusieurs tombeaux soufis ont été dégradés sans que les autorités ne fassent grand chose.

2. La Commission trouve-t-elle cette démarche compatible avec les obligations internationales de la Tunisie en matière de droits humains, en vertu desquelles ce pays est tenu de respecter et de protéger la liberté d'expression?

3. La Commission trouve-t-elle normal que ces accusations soient motivées par des considérations politiques et que cette jeune femme soit prise pour cible en raison de son action en faveur des droits de la femme?

4. La Commission n'est-elle pas inquiète que cette jeune femme soit accusée d'appartenir à une organisation criminelle, ce qui n'est pas sans rappeler le type d'accusation invoqué lors de la présence de régimes totalitaires?

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

L'Union européenne suit de près le cas de M^me^ Amina Sboui. La délégation de l'UE a rencontré son avocat pour examiner et évaluer les principaux enjeux de cette affaire.

Comme lors d'autres événements récents ayant fait l'objet de jugements restreignant la liberté d'expression, l'UE a porté ces questions à l'attention des autorités tunisiennes, demandant la révision des lois héritées du régime de Ben Ali. Dans ce contexte, il convient de noter que des procureurs tunisiens ont utilisé plusieurs articles du code pénal pour instruire des affaires à l'encontre de leurs concitoyens.

D'une manière plus générale et au-delà de ce cas particulier, l'UE réitère constamment, dans le cadre de son dialogue politique avec les autorités tunisiennes, ses plaidoyers en faveur du renforcement de la liberté d'expression, conformément aux aspirations de la révolution tunisienne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006492/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Release of a Tunisian FEMEN activist

Amina Sboui — also known as Amina Tyler — was remanded in custody on Thursday 30 May 2013 after being accused of graveyard desecration, membership of a criminal organisation and public indecency. Such offences are punishable by several years' imprisonment under the Tunisian criminal code. The charges against Ms Sboui are thought to be linked to the fact that she wrote the word 'FEMEN' on a wall surrounding the cemetery in Kairouan on 19 May 2013, the day on which Salafist group Ansar al-Sharia, which is opposed to equality between men and women, had called on its supporters to gather in the city. Amina Sboui was arrested in front of the cemetery and accused of carrying a tear gas canister — an offence for which she was found guilty and for which she was ordered to pay a fine of 300 Tunisian dinars (about EUR 140).

1. Does the Commission not think punishing her behaviour with a prison sentence is disproportionate? It should be remembered, for example, that several Sufi tombstones were vandalised without the authorities taking much action.

2. Does the Commission find this reaction to be compatible with Tunisia's international human rights obligations, under which the country is required to respect and protect freedom of expression?

3. Does the Commission think it is right that these accusations are politically motivated and that this young women is being targeted for her action in support of women's rights?

4. Does the Commission not find it worrying that this young woman is accused of belonging to a criminal organisation, which is reminiscent of the type of accusation made under totalitarian regimes?

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

The EU is closely monitoring Ms Amina Sboui's case. The EU Delegation has met her lawyer to enquire and assess the issues at stake in this case.

As in other recent events where freedom of expression has been curtailed by judgments, the EU has brought this issues under the attention of Tunisian authorities, calling for the revision of laws inherited from the Ben Ali regime. In that framework, it is worth noting that several articles of the penal code have been used by Tunisian prosecutors to instruct cases against Tunisian citizens.

More generally and beyond this specific case, in its political dialogue with the Tunisian authorities, the EU repeatedly reiterates its pleas for the consolidation of freedom of expression, in line with the aspirations of the Tunisian revolution.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006493/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(6 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Violazioni della libertà religiosa in Vietnam — il caso dei Montagnard cristiani

Negli ultimi giorni di maggio otto membri della minoranza etnica Montagnard sono stati condannati, in Vietnam, a undici anni di reclusione perché cattolici. Nel paese, infatti, essere cristiano significa mettere a rischio l'unità nazionale e incitare all'odio religioso, secondo quanto previsto dall'articolo 87 del codice penale. I condannati hanno un'età compresa tra i 32 e i 73 anni e la Montagnard Foundation, associazione che promuove i diritti di questa minoranza, afferma che la condanna è un pretesto per impedirle di ribellarsi al governo centrale.

Ai sensi dell'art. 10 della CEDU «ogni persona ha diritto alla libertà d'espressione. Tale diritto include la libertà di opinione e la libertà di ricevere o di comunicare informazioni o idee senza che vi possa essere ingerenza da parte delle autorità pubbliche e senza limiti di frontiera».

Inoltre, ai sensi dell'articolo 18 del Patto internazionale sui diritti civili e politici, ogni individuo ha diritto, oltre che alla libertà di pensiero e di coscienza, anche alla libertà di religione.

Infine, l'articolo 3 della risoluzione P7_TA(2011)0021 sulla situazione dei cristiani nel contesto della libertà religiosa «condanna fermamente ogni atto di violenza contro cristiani e altre comunità religiose, come pure tutti i tipi di discriminazione e intolleranza basati sulla religione e la fede contro chi pratica una religione, gli apostati e i non credenti».

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se sia a conoscenza dei recenti sviluppi sulla repressione religiosa in Vietnam;

2. quali provvedimenti intenda adottare al riguardo?

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

L'Unione europea è preoccupata per i chiari segni di un approccio più restrittivo adottato dal Vietnam nell'ambito dei diritti umani, in particolare la libertà di espressione, di religione e di credo, e solleva regolarmente la questione nei suoi incontri con il governo vietnamita. Sono state ripetutamente intraprese iniziative sui diritti umani. Per quanto riguarda il caso specifico a cui si riferisce l'onorevole deputato, il capo della delegazione UE di Hanoi ha reagito postando un messaggio sul sito web della delegazione e ha espresso pubblicamente la preoccupazione dell'UE per il recente arresto e le condanne nei confronti di attivisti, blogger e studenti, chiedendo un riesame immediato di tali gravi pene.

La libertà di espressione, di religione e di credo è stata al centro della seconda sessione del dialogo intensificato UE-Vietnam sui diritti umani tenutasi a ottobre, durante la quale l'UE ha ribadito le sue preoccupazioni, sollevato casi specifici e esortato il Vietnam a riprendere il dialogo con il relatore speciale delle Nazioni Unite sulla libertà di religione e di credo. La terza sessione del dialogo, prevista indicativamente a settembre 2013, sarà un'ulteriore occasione di discutere tali questioni con il governo vietnamita.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006493/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Violations of religious freedom in Vietnam — the case of Montagnard Christians

At the end of May in Vietnam, 8 members of the Montagnard ethnic minority were sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment for being Catholic. Being Christian in this country equates to undermining national unity and inciting religious hatred, according to Article 87 of the Vietnamese Penal Code. Those convicted are aged between 32 and 73 years old, and the Montagnard Foundation, the association which promotes the rights of this minority, says that the conviction is an excuse to prevent them rebelling against the central government.

In accordance with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, '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'.

Furthermore, in accordance with Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, everyone has the right not only to freedom of thought and conscience, but also to freedom of religion.

Lastly, Article 3 of resolution P7_TA(2011)0021 on the situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion 'strongly condemns all acts of violence against Christians and other religious communities as well as all kinds of discrimination and intolerance based on religion and belief against religious people, apostates and non-believers'.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the recent developments regarding religious repression in Vietnam;

2. what steps it plans to take in this regard?

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

The EU is aware and concerned about signs of a more restrictive approach to human rights in Vietnam, in particular freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief. The EU raises human rights concerns in regular meetings with the Vietnamese Government. Demarches on human rights have been carried out repeatedly. As regards the specific case mentioned by the Honourable Member, the EU Head of Delegation in Hanoi carried out a démarche in a message posted on the Delegation's website and expressed publicly the concern of the EU about the recent arrest and sentencing of activists, bloggers and students, calling for an immediate review of these severe sentences.

Freedom of expression or religion and belief were key elements of the 2nd session of the enhanced EU-VN Human Rights Dialogue held last October, where the EU reiterated its concerns, addressed specific cases and encouraged Vietnam to re-engage with the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. The third session of the dialogue, tentatively scheduled to take place in September 2013 will be a further occasion to discuss these issues with the government.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006494/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(6 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Condanne in Egitto nei confronti di 43 operatori di ONG straniere

All'inizio di giugno 43 attivisti di organizzazioni non governative operanti in Egitto e impegnate nel processo di transizione democratica della società civile sono stati condannati a scontare pene detentive che vanno da un minimo di un anno a un massimo di cinque. Tra questi risultano esservi anche cittadini europei. L'accusa riguardava l'accettazione di valuta estera «ricevuta illegalmente». In realtà si tratta di un pretesto per continuare l'attività repressiva intrapresa nei confronti delle ONG già a fine 2011, durante le manifestazioni contro il Consiglio Superiore dell'Esercito. Da allora, diverse organizzazioni internazionali sono state costrette a lasciare il paese, a causa della crescente oppressione attuata dai Fratelli Musulmani.

All'articolo 4 della decisione n. 779/2007/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, l'Unione europea si prefigge di sostenere le ONG impegnate a combattere la violenza nei confronti dei bambini, adolescenti, donne e altri gruppi a rischio.

Inoltre, il primo comma dell'articolo 6 della CEDU sul diritto a un equo processo, stabilisce in particolare che «ogni persona ha diritto a che la sua causa sia esaminata equamente, pubblicamente ed entro un termine ragionevole da un tribunale indipendente e imparziale» e il terzo comma del medesimo articolo riguarda i diritti processuali dell'imputato.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se sia a conoscenza delle ultime vicende che hanno travolto le organizzazioni non governative in Egitto;

2. quali azioni intende attuare per ottenere una revisione del processo che ha coinvolto gli attivisti europei?

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

L'UE è a conoscenza degli eventi preoccupanti a cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato. In una dichiarazione congiunta rilasciata il 5 giugno 2013, l'AR/VP e il commissario responsabile per l'allargamento e la politica europea di vicinato hanno espresso la loro preoccupazione per la recente sentenza del tribunale egiziano che ha condannato i 43 dipendenti di organizzazioni non governative straniere, considerandola un segnale negativo nei confronti dell'azione della società civile. L'UE continuerà a seguire da vicino il caso e a monitorare la situazione sul posto tramite la propria delegazione in Egitto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006494/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Forty-three employees of foreign NGOs sentenced in Egypt

At the start of June, 43 activists from non-governmental organisations operating in Egypt which are involved in the democratic transition of civil society, received custodial sentences ranging from a minimum of one year to a maximum of five. Some of these activists are European citizens. The charge concerned the receipt of 'illicit' foreign funds. In reality, this is a pretext to continue the crackdown on NGOs which already started at the end of 2011 during protests against the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces. Since then, various international organisations have been forced to leave the country because of growing oppression by the Muslim Brotherhood.

In Article 4 of Decision No 779/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, the European Union aims to support NGOs working to combat violence against children, young people, women and other groups at risk.

Moreover, Article 6(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights on the right to a fair trial lays down in particular that 'everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal', and Article 6(3) concerns the procedural rights of accused persons.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the latest events involving non-governmental organisations in Egypt;

2. what action it will take to secure a review of the trial of the European activists?

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

The EU is aware and concerned about the events referred to. In a joint statement issued on 5 June 2013, the HR/VP and the Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy expressed their concern at the recent Court ruling in Egypt sentencing the 43 employees of foreign non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The verdict was condemned as a negative signal regarding the work of civil society. The EU will continue to follow closely the case and monitor the situation on the ground through its Delegation in Egypt.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006495/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(6 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Otto arresti di operai durante le manifestazioni di protesta in Cambogia

All'inizio del mese di giugno, otto operai cambogiani sono stati arrestati per la loro partecipazione a manifestazioni di protesta durante le quali si sono chiesti maggiori diritti e garanzie a tutela dei lavoratori. Secondo il Cambodian Centre for Human Rights il governo teme soprattutto l'impatto delle rivolte sulle prossime elezioni.

Milioni di operai, non solo cambogiani, sono vittime di un sistema con il quale le imprese cercano di contenere sempre più i costi, riducendo i salari al punto di costringere i lavoratori a vivere sotto la soglia di povertà.

Gli articoli 6 e 10 della CEDU tutelano, rispettivamente, il diritto a un equo processo e la libertà di espressione, ribadendo che l'arrestato deve «essere informato, nel più breve tempo possibile (…) della natura e dei motivi dell'accusa formulata a suo carico», informazione che non si è avuta nei confronti degli otto arrestati cambogiani.

Inoltre, nel caso Enerji Yapi del 2009, la Corte europea dei Diritti dell'Uomo riconosce, seppur indirettamente, il diritto allo sciopero quale diritto di tutelare i propri interessi ex articolo 11 della CEDU.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Se sia in possesso di dati relativi allo sfruttamento della manodopera nei paesi extra-europei;

2. Se ha valutato l'impatto del fenomeno sul settore manifatturiero comunitario;

3. Quali misure intenda adottare per promuovere la tutela dei diritti dei lavoratori in Europa e nei paesi terzi?

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

L'UE sostiene la ratifica e l'applicazione concreta delle norme internazionali del lavoro sancite nelle convenzioni dell'OIL da parte della Cambogia e di altri paesi terzi. L'OIL è l'organizzazione più qualificata per promuovere il progresso in materia di norme del lavoro, tra cui la libertà di associazione e il diritto di negoziazione collettiva, nonché la salute e la sicurezza sul luogo di lavoro.

La Commissione non può raccogliere informazioni dettagliate sullo sfruttamento dei lavoratori nei paesi non europei; tuttavia, il piano d'azione dell'UE sui diritti umani e la democrazia contiene un impegno specifico per quanto riguarda «Promuovere la ratifica universale e l'attuazione delle quattro norme fondamentali del lavoro dell'OIL: divieto del lavoro minorile, divieto del lavoro forzato, non discriminazione e libertà di associazione e contrattazione collettiva».

L'UE non ha condotto valutazioni specifiche del fenomeno dello sfruttamento dei lavoratori del settore manifatturiero nell'UE.

La Commissione e il SEAE incoraggiano le imprese con sede nell'UE a promuovere i diritti dei lavoratori nelle loro filiere di produzione nell'UE e nei paesi terzi, compreso il rispetto delle convenzioni fondamentali dell'OIL in materia di libertà di associazione e diritto di negoziazione collettiva, ma anche le norme di sanità e sicurezza e il dialogo con i rappresentanti dei lavoratori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006495/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Eight workers arrested during protests in Cambodia

At the start of June, eight Cambodian workers were arrested for taking part in protests calling for greater rights and guarantees aimed at protecting workers. According to the Cambodian Centre for Human Rights, the government fears, in particular, the impact that the uprisings could have on the upcoming elections.

Millions of workers, not just Cambodians, are victims of a system where businesses try to increasingly contain their costs, cutting wages to the point where workers are forced to live below the poverty line.

Articles 6 and 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) respectively protect the right to a fair trial and freedom of expression, affirming that everyone who is arrested must be 'informed promptly (…) of the reasons for his arrest and of any charge against him', information which was not provided to the eight arrested Cambodians.

Furthermore, in the case of Enerji Yapi-Yol Sen of 2009, the European Court of Human Rights recognised, albeit indirectly, the right to strike as a right to protect one's interests in accordance with Article 11 of the ECHR.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it has any information on the exploitation of workers in non-European countries;

2. Whether it has assessed the impact of the phenomenon on the manufacturing sector in the EU;

3. What action it intends to take to promote the protection of workers' rights in Europe and in third countries?

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

The EU supports ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards, as enshrined in the ILO conventions, by Cambodia and other third countries. The ILO is best placed to promote progress on labour standards, including on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, as well as health and safety at work.

The Commission is not in a position to collect detailed information on the exploitation of workers in non-European countries, but the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy contains a specific commitment for 'Promotion of universal ratification and implementation of the four ILO core labour standards: the ban on child labour, the ban on forced labour, non-discrimination and freedom of association and collective bargaining'.

The EU has not conducted any specific assessment of the phenomenon of worker exploitation on the manufacturing sector in the EU.

The Commission and the EEAS encourages EU-based companies to promote workers' rights in their supply chains in the EU and in third countries. This includes respect for the ILO fundamental conventions on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, but also health and safety standards and dialogue with workers' representatives.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-006496/13
aan de Commissie
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(6 juni 2013)

Betreft: Verkeersveiligheid — hoogte bumpers

De Europese Commissie onderneemt grote inspanningen voor het verbeteren van de verkeersveiligheid in de Unie en dat met een combinatie van Europese en nationale initiatieven.

Ook wat betreft het veiliger maken van bumpers speelde Europa een voortrekkersrol, onder meer met de verplichte invoering van energieabsorberende bumpers.

Er worden mij evenwel tragische verkeersongevallen onder de aandacht gebracht, waarbij de voorkant van een wagen botst met de achterkant van een vrachtwagen. De foto's van de autowrakken tonen duidelijk aan dat de bumper van de wagens niet heeft gediend om het voertuig af te remmen, maar dat daarentegen de motor en de cabine de impact hebben opgevangen. En dit vanwege de grote afstand van de bumper van de vrachtwagen tot het wegdek en dus het belangrijke hoogteverschil tussen de bumpers van beide voertuigen.

Graag had ik van de Commissie vernomen of reeds de mogelijkheden werden onderzocht tot aanpassing van de bumperhoogte van vrachtwagens tot op het niveau van een personenwagen? En zo neen, of de Commissie bereid is hiertoe een initiatief te nemen? Zijn andere initiatieven in het vooruitzicht gesteld om voor deze pijnlijke kwestie een oplossing te bieden?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(2 juli 2013)

Om te voorkomen dat auto's bij een botsing aan de achterzijde onder een vrachtwagen/aanhangwagen terechtkomen, vereist Richtlijn 70/221/EEG ([1]) dat vrachtwagens/aanhangwagens aan de achterzijde van een beschermingsinrichting tegen klemrijden zijn voorzien die nergens meer dan 55 cm boven de grond uitkomt. Deze richtlijn is laatstelijk gewijzigd in 2006 en sindsdien moet de inrichting tegen grotere krachten bestand zijn.

Met Verordening (EG) nr. 661/2009 betreffende de algemene veiligheid van motorvoertuigen ([2]) heeft de wetgever Richtlijn 70/221/EEG vervangen door Reglement nr. 58 van de VN/ECE (reglement van de Economische Commissie voor Europa van de Verenigde Naties). Daarom worden sinds 1 november 2012 nieuwe voertuigmodellen enkel overeenkomstig VN/ECE-Reglement nr. 58 goedgekeurd en niet langer overeenkomstig Richtlijn 70/221/EEG. Bijgevolg is de Commissie niet van plan om een voorstel tot wijziging van Richtlijn 70/221/EEG in te dienen.

De VN/ECE-werkgroep voor de algemene veiligheid van voertuigen, waaraan de Commissie en de lidstaten actief deelnemen, behandelt op dit moment echter een wijziging van Reglement nr. 58 ter verbetering van het beschermingsniveau van beschermingsinrichtingen aan de achterzijde tegen klemrijden. Met name wordt voorgesteld om de hoogte van dergelijke inrichtingen verder te verlagen en de krachten waartegen dergelijke inrichtingen bestand moeten zijn, te vergroten. De verlaging van de hoogte leidt echter tot praktische problemen voor sommige vrachtwagens (bv. wendbaarheid op steile hellingen, terreinvoertuigen) en de deskundigen zijn verdeeld over de grootte van de krachten waartegen de inrichtingen bestand moeten zijn. Het overleg op deskundigenniveau om overeenstemming over een definitief ontwerp te bereiken, is daarom nog niet afgerond.

Wanneer op het niveau van de VN/ECE overeenstemming over de wijziging wordt bereikt, zal deze worden meegewogen bij de EU-typegoedkeuring van volledige voertuigen.

([1]) PB L 76 van 6.4.1970, blz. 23.
([2]) PB L 200 van 31.7.2009, blz. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006496/13
to the Commission
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Road safety — height of bumpers

The Commission makes considerable efforts to improve road safety in the Union, by means of a combination of European and national initiatives.

Europe has also played a pioneering role in making bumpers safer, *inter alia* through the mandatory introduction of energy-absorbing bumpers.

However, I have been receiving reports of tragic road accidents in which a car collides frontally with the rear of a truck. Photographs of the wrecked cars clearly show that their bumpers have failed to slow them down and that instead the car's engine and cabin have borne the impact. This is because trucks' bumpers are so high above the road surface, creating a significant height difference between the bumpers of the two vehicles.

Has the Commission investigated the scope for altering the height of trucks' bumpers to bring it into line with that of the bumpers on private cars? If not, will the Commission take such an initiative? Have any other initiatives been promised with the aim of resolving this issue, which causes distress?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

To avoid that cars go under a truck/trailer in case of a rear collision, Directive 70/221/EEC ([1]) requires that trucks/trailers be fitted with a rear under-run protection device, which shall at no point be more than 55 cm above the ground. This directive was lastly amended in 2006 to require the device to withstand increased force levels.

With Regulation (EC) 661/2009 on the general safety of motor vehicles ([2]), the legislator replaced Directive 70/221/EEC by UNECE Regulation No 58 (Regulation from the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations). Therefore, since 1 November 2012, new models of vehicles shall only be approved according to UNECE Regulation No 58 and no more according to Directive 70/221/EEC. Consequently, the Commission does not intend to make a proposal for amendment to Directive 70/221/EEC.

However, the UNECE working group on Vehicle General Safety, where the Commission and Member States participate actively, is currently discussing an amendment to Regulation No 58 to increase the safety level of rear under-run protection devices. It is in particular proposed to further decrease the height of such devices and to increase the force level that can withstand such devices. However, the height reduction raises practical problems for some heavy goods vehicles (e.g. manoeuvrability in big slopes, off road vehicles) and the position of the experts is split on the forces to be applied. Therefore the discussion is still going on at expert level to agree on a final draft.

When an agreement is found at UNECE level, the amendment will be taken on board for the purpose of EU whole-vehicle type-approval.

([1]) OJ L 76, 6.4.1970, p. 23.
([2]) OJ L 200, 31.7.2009, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006497/13
a la Comisión
Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) y María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Destino de los 82 000 millones de euros de los Fondos Estructurales que iban a ser reprogramados para luchar contra el desempleo, especialmente el juvenil

En enero del pasado año, el Presidente Barroso anunció la reprogramación de 82 000 millones de euros de los Fondos Estructurales para luchar contra el desempleo y especialmente contra el desempleo juvenil.

¿Puede informar la Comisión del resultado de esa iniciativa por países, especificando las cantidades reprogramadas, de qué programas se descontaron esas cantidades, cuál ha sido la implementación y los resultados de dicha reprogramación?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión quisiera señalar a Su Señoría que se ha publicado recientemente información detallada sobre el trabajo de los Equipos de Acción para la Juventud en cada uno de los ocho Estados miembros afectados, así como sobre sus resultados, en una ficha informativa específica sobre las medidas de la UE para reducir el desempleo juvenil ([1]). En dicha información constan el número de jóvenes que pueden beneficiarse de las medidas y los recursos procedentes de los Fondos Estructurales que los Estados miembros han reasignado al efecto.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006497/13
to the Commission
Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) and María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Fate of the EUR 82 billion in structural funds reallocated to help tackle unemployment, particularly youth unemployment

In January 2012, President Barroso announced that EUR 82 billion in structural funds would be reallocated to help tackle unemployment, particularly among young people.

Could the Commission provide information on the results of this initiative for each Member State, specifying the amounts reallocated, which programmes these amounts were deducted from, how the reallocation was implemented and the results?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Members that detailed information regarding the work of the Youth Action Teams in each of the eight Member States concerned and the results of this work have recently been published in a dedicated Factsheet on EU measures to tackle youth unemployment ([1]). This information includes the number of young persons likely to benefit and the Structural Funds resources reallocated by the Member States for this purpose.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006498/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Turismo de calidad

En la Comunicación de la Comisión Europea al Parlamento Europeo titulada «Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo: un nuevo marco político para el turismo europeo», la decimotercera de las acciones previstas era la de crear una marca europea «Turismo de Calidad» para aumentar la seguridad y la confianza de los consumidores en los productos turísticos y recompensar las gestiones rigurosas realizadas por los profesionales del turismo que tienen como objetivo alcanzar una calidad que satisfaga a los clientes.

¿De qué resultados disponemos hasta la fecha sobre este proyecto «Turismo de calidad»?

¿Qué evaluación realiza la Comisión de lo realizado hasta el momento?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión lleva trabajando en la acción decimotercera desde finales de 2010, en estrecha cooperación con las partes interesadas públicas y privadas. En 2011-2012, se celebraron varias consultas abiertas o dirigidas a un público específico, incluido un congreso abierto, para recabar los puntos de vista e ideas de las partes interesadas y los Estados miembros sobre una posible marca europea. En el programa de trabajo de la Comisión de 2012 se incluyó una propuesta de marca turística de la UE.

Desde principios de 2012, la Comisión trabaja en las fases de procedimiento de la propuesta legislativa. En un informe de evaluación de impacto ([1]) se examinan los posibles efectos económicos, sociales y medioambientales, así como la eficacia y la eficiencia de las distintas opciones de regulación y de instrumentos jurídicos.

La Comisión se propone establecer un marco voluntario, la marca europea de sistemas de calidad del turismo (marca ETQ), para garantizar a los consumidores que, independientemente del Estado miembro que visiten, disfrutarán de un determinado nivel de calidad en los establecimientos o servicios turísticos que lleven la marca. Esto debería ayudar a las empresas a ganarse la confianza de los consumidores, de manera que aumenten sus beneficios a fin de seguir invirtiendo en la calidad del servicio. La marca también proporcionaría visibilidad a gran escala frente a los visitantes de la UE y de terceros países, lo que es especialmente importante para las microempresas y las pequeñas empresas que no tienen la oportunidad de ampliar el alcance de su márketing.

También se ruega a Su Señoría que visite la página web de la Comisión para más información:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/quality-label/index_es.htm

([1]) El informe se publicará en el momento de la adopción de la propuesta por la Comisión.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006498/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Qualité Tourisme

In the communication from the Commission to Parliament entitled 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe', the 13th planned action was to develop a European Qualité Tourisme brand to increase consumer security and confidence in tourism products and reward rigorous efforts by tourism professionals whose aim is quality of tourism service for customer satisfaction.

What results has this *Qualité Tourisme* project produced to date?

What is the Commission's assessment of what has been done to date?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission has been working on Action 13 since late 2010, in close cooperation with public and private stakeholders. Over 2011-12, several targeted and open consultations, including an open conference, were held to gather the views and ideas of stakeholders and Member States on a possible European label. A proposal for an EU tourism label was included in the Commission Legislative Work Programme of 2012.

Since early 2012, the Commission has been working on the procedural steps of the legislative proposal. An Impact Assessment Report ([1]) examines the potential economic, social and environmental impacts, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of various policy options and legal instruments.

The Commission intends to establish a voluntary umbrella European Label for Tourism Quality Schemes (ETQ Label), to ensure consumers that in a tourism facility bearing the EU Label a certain level of quality will be met, no matter which Member State they visit. This should help businesses gain the trust of consumers, thus enhancing their benefits to further invest in service quality. The label would also provide large-scale visibility vis-à-vis intra-EU and third-country visitors. This is particularly important for micro and small enterprises that do not have the opportunity to extend their marketing reach.

The Honourable Member is also invited to visit the Commission's website for further information:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/quality-label/index_en.htm

([1]) The report will be published on adoption of the proposal by the Commission.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006499/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Seguimiento de la aplicación de la Convención de Naciones Unidas

El 23 de diciembre de 2010, la UE ratificó la Convención de Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad, convirtiéndose así en la primera entidad supranacional que ha llegado a ser parte oficial de la Convención, asumiendo por tanto los deberes y obligaciones impuestos por la misma.

La Estrategia 2010-2020 se centra en potenciar los derechos de las personas con discapacidad y ayuda a cumplir las disposiciones de la Convención de Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad.

Considerando que el artículo 35 de la Convención de Naciones Unidas establece que los Estados Partes presentarán al Comité de las Naciones Unidas encargado de su implementación, un informe exhaustivo sobre las medidas que hayan adoptado para cumplir sus obligaciones conforme a la Convención y sobre los progresos realizados al respecto en el plazo de dos años contando a partir de la entrada en vigor de la Convención en el Estado Parte de que se trate;

Considerando que, en la propia Estrategia 2010-2020, se menciona que, a finales de 2012, la Comisión Europea informará de los avances de la Estrategia, concretamente sobre la puesta en práctica de medidas, los progresos nacionales y el informe que remite la UE al Comité de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad;

¿En qué estado se encuentran los informes que la UE, como parte a la Convención, debe presentar al Comité de Naciones Unidas para cumplir con lo dispuesto en el artículo 35?

¿Considera la Comisión que las medidas adoptadas desde la entrada en vigor de la Convención de Naciones Unidas, cumplen con los objetivos proclamados por la misma?

La UE ratificó dicha Convención como entidad supranacional pero ¿en qué estado se encuentra la ratificación de la misma por parte de cada Estado miembro?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión remitiría a Su Señoría a su respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-4973/2013 y E-2893/2013.

Además, a fecha de junio de 2013, veinticuatro Estados miembros han ratificado la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad, mientras que tres Estados miembros (Irlanda, Finlandia y los Países Bajos) la han firmado y están completando el proceso para su ratificación. Croacia ha ratificado tanto la Convención como su Protocolo Facultativo ([1]).

([1]) Veintidós Estados miembros han firmado el Protocolo Facultativo de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad y diecinueve lo han ratificado (Austria, Bélgica, Chipre, Estonia, Francia, Alemania, Grecia, Hungría, Italia, Lituania, Luxemburgo, Letonia, Malta, Portugal, Eslovaquia, Eslovenia, España, Suecia y el Reino Unido).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006499/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to application of UN Convention

On 23 December 2010, the EU ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, becoming thereby the first supranational body to be an official party to the Convention and thus assuming the duties and obligation laid down therein.

The 10-year Europe 2020 strategy focuses on promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and contributes to compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Article 35 of the UN Convention stipulates that each State Party shall submit a comprehensive report to the UN Committee responsible for the Convention's implementation on the measures taken to give effect to its obligations under the Convention and on the progress made in that regard, within two years of the Convention entering into force in the State Party concerned.

The Commission states in the Europe 2020 strategy that it will report at the end of 2012 on progress made under the strategy; specifically, on the implementation of measures, progress made by Member States and the report the EU will send to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

What is the current status of the reports the EU, as a Party to the Convention, must submit to the UN Committee in compliance with Article 35?

Does the Commission believe that measures taken since the UN Convention came into force comply with the objectives of the Convention?

The EU ratified the Convention as a supranational entity: what progress however have individual Member States made towards ratifying the Convention themselves?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-4973/2013 and E-2893/2013.

In addition, as of June 2013 24 Member States have ratified the UNCRPD, while 3 Member States (Ireland, Finland and the Netherlands) signed it and are completing the process towards ratification. Croatia ratified both the UNCRPD and its Optional Protocol ([1]).

([1]) 22 Member States signed the Optional Protocol to the UNCRPD and 19 of them ratified it (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006500/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Datos sobre género del sector pesquero

De acuerdo con las normas comunitarias que establezcan el principio de igualdad de trato entre hombres y mujeres que ejercen una actividad autónoma o asalariada, como es el caso en el sector de la pesca y la acuicultura, ¿podría informarnos la Comisión de qué datos dispone, desglosados por Estados miembros de la Unión y año correspondiente sobre cuántas mujeres se han beneficiado de medidas de apoyo a la maternidad, seguros de desempleo, formación y mejora retributiva, pensión, etc. desde la anterior reforma de la Política Pesquera Común?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

Eurostat mantiene una base de datos sobre el empleo en general, sector marítimo incluido, desglosados por Estados miembros ([1]). La base de datos de Eurostat también distingue por género o entre diferentes formas de empleo, es decir, trabajo a tiempo completo, a tiempo parcial y trabajo ocasional o por cuenta propia ([2]).

Por lo que respecta a los datos específicos a que se refiere Su Señoría, la Comisión se basa actualmente en la información recogida a partir de los datos facilitados por los Estados miembros. En el marco de la recopilación de datos actual, la Comisión solicita de forma periódica datos económicos, en particular sobre el empleo por género. No obstante dicho marco no incluye las variables del porcentaje de mujeres en el sector que se han beneficiado de medidas de apoyo a la maternidad, seguros de desempleo, formación y mejora retributiva o pensión.

([1]) La publicación más reciente figura en http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-13-005/EN/KS-SF-13-005-EN.PDF
([2]) Los cuadros sobre las diferentes composiciones de datos figuran en http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_social_policy_equality/equality/indicators_gender

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006500/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Gender statistics on the fishing industry

In line with Community rules establishing the principle of equal treatment for men and women who are employed or self-employed, such as those working in the fisheries and aquaculture sector, can the Commission say what statistics it has, broken down by Member State and year, showing how many women have benefited from maternity support measures, unemployment benefit, training, pay rises, pensions etc. since the last reform of the common fisheries policy?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

Eurostat maintains a database generally on employment including in the maritime sector that has a breakdown by Member States ([1]). The database of Eurostat also distinguishes by gender or between different forms of employment, i.e. full-time, part-time and occasional employment or self-employment ([2]).

Concerning the specific data referred to by the Honorable Member, the Commission currently relies on information gathered by the data provision of Member States. Within the current Data Collection Framework (DCF), the Commission regularly requests economic data including employment by gender. However, the current Data Collection Framework does not include the variables of percentage of women in the sector benefiting from maternity support measures, unemployment benefit, training, pay rises, or pensions.

([1]) For the latest publication see http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-13-005/EN/KS-SF-13-005-EN.PDF
([2]) For tables on different composition of data see http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_social_policy_equality/equality/indicators_gender

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006501/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Controles de la pesca ilegal en la EU

¿Puede indicar la Comisión el número de controles que se realizan, desglosados por Estados miembros, en los puertos comunitarios para luchar contra la pesca ilegal y no reglamentada, incluyendo el porcentaje de desembarcos de productos pesqueros ilegales que se sancionan?

¿Puede detallar asimismo la Comisión Europea las medidas que implementa para conocer el control de las importaciones que puedan suponer competencia desleal para el sector pesquero de los países de la UE?

¿Puede indicar, por último, si existe un control unificado de las importaciones pesqueras para hacer un seguimiento de las cuotas que van gastando otros países no comunitarios?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

La UE ha establecido un sistema completo de normas para controlar las actividades pesqueras y luchar contra la pesca INDNR ([1]) en el marco de los Reglamentos sobre control ([2]) y sobre pesca INDNR ([3]). Los Estados miembros son responsables del control de las importaciones de productos pesqueros y están autorizados a rechazar cualquier importación si no se cumplen las disposiciones del Reglamento sobre la pesca INDNR.

Los Estados miembros son responsables ([4]) de verificar las importaciones sobre la base de criterios establecidos a nivel nacional o de la Unión en el marco de la gestión de riesgos. En 2009 se implantaron los criterios básicos de la Unión ([5]), y algunos Estados miembros han desarrollado sus propios sistemas nacionales de gestión de riesgos.

A examinar la información en poder de los Estados miembros, la Comisión ha observado un aumento de las importaciones rechazadas (33 en 2010, 27 en 2011, 50 en 2012 y aproximadamente 50, por el momento, en 2013).

Las importaciones de productos pesqueros deben estar amparadas, entre otras cosas, por certificados de captura que acrediten que se han respetado la legislación y la normativa aplicables, así como las medidas internacionales de gestión y conservación. En virtud de la legislación de la UE, los Estados miembros son responsables de la verificación de las importaciones y evitar así la discriminación y la competencia desleal para los pescadores de la Unión.

La pesca en aguas internacionales está regulada por las organizaciones regionales de ordenación pesquera (OROP), que fijan cuotas, gestionadas por las Partes contratantes del Estado del pabellón y por las OROP en los comités de cumplimiento; en algunos casos (atún rojo del Atlántico), la gestión corre a cargo de las secretarías de las OROP. La introducción y aplicación por la UE del régimen de certificación de capturas en el marco del Reglamento sobre la pesca INDNR ha ofrecido a los Estados miembros la posibilidad de reforzar el control sobre la utilización de las cuotas y de garantizar la legalidad de las capturas.

([1]) Pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada.
([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1224/2009 del Consejo, de 20 de noviembre de 2009, por el que se establece un régimen comunitario de control para garantizar el cumplimiento de las normas de la política pesquera común (DO L 343 de 22.12.2009, p. 1).
([3]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1005/2008 del Consejo, de 29 de septiembre de 2008, por el que se establece un sistema comunitario para prevenir, desalentar y eliminar la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (DO L 286 de 29.10.2008, p. 1).
([4]) Véase el artículo 17 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1005/2008 del Consejo.
([5]) Véase el artículo 31 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1010/2009 de la Comisión, de 22 de octubre de 2009, que establece normas de desarrollo del Reglamento (CE) n° 1005/2008 del Consejo, por el que se establece un sistema comunitario para prevenir, desalentar y eliminar la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (DO L 280 de 27.10.2009, p. 5).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006501/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Monitoring of illegal fishing in the EU

Can the Commission say how many inspections are carried out, broken down by Member State, in Community ports to combat illegal and unregulated fishing? Can it also state the percentage of illegal landings of fishery products that are actually punished?

Can the Commission detail the measures it is implementing to control imports that could create unfair competition for the fisheries sector in EU countries?

Lastly, can it say whether there is a unified control of fisheries imports to monitor the quotas being spent by other, non-EU countries?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The EU has put in place a comprehensive system of rules dealing with the control of fishing activities and the combat of IUU fishing ([1]) as set out in the Control ([2]) and IUU Regulations ([3]). Member States are responsible for controlling importations of fisheries products and are entrusted to refuse any importation if the provisions of the IUU Regulation are not fulfilled.

Member States are responsible ([4]) for verification of imports on the basis of criteria developed at national or Union level under risk management. Basic Union criteria have been established in 2009 ([5]) while certain Member States have developed their own national risk management systems.

On the basis of information kept by Member States, the Commission observed an increase on refusal of importations (33 in 2010, 27 in 2011, 50 in 2012 and approximately 50 till now in 2013).

Imports of fisheries products have to be accompanied, *inter alia*, by catch certificate, certifying that catches have been made in accordance with applicable laws, regulations and international conservation and management measures. Member States are by EC law responsible for verification of importations thus preventing any discrimination or unfair competition for EU fishermen.

The fisheries in international waters are governed by Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) which fix quotas, managed by the flag State Contracting Parties as well as by the RFMOs in the context of Compliance Committees; in certain cases (e.g. bluefin tuna) they are managed by RFMO Secretariats. The introduction and implementation by the EU of the catch certification scheme under IUU Regulation has offered Member States the possibility to increase their level of control on the use of quotas and ensure legality of catches.

([1]) Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy, OJ L343/1, 22.12.2009.
([3]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, OJ L 286/1, 29.10.2008.
([4]) See Article 17 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008.
([5]) See Article 31 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1010/2009 of 22 October 2009 laying down detailed rules for implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, OJ L 280/5, 27.10.2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006502/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Regulierung von Schattenbanken

Medienberichten zufolge hat das Mitglied der Kommission mit Zuständigkeit für den Binnenmarkt, Michel Barnier, Anfang Mai 2013 einen bereits fertigen Vorschlag zur Regulierung von Schattenbanken zurückgezogen. Am 27. Mai 2013 kündigte Michel Barnier bei einer Anhörung im ECON-Ausschuss des Europäischen Parlaments einen neuen Vorschlag der Kommission an, der im Juni 2013 veröffentlicht werden soll.

1. Kann die Kommission erklären, wie es zu dieser Verzögerung gekommen ist?

2. Welche Änderungen wurden in den neuen Vorschlag eingearbeitet, der im Juni veröffentlicht werden soll, die der Anfang Mai zurückgezogene Vorschlag noch nicht enthielt?

3. Welche Personen, Interessengruppen, Organisationen, Behörden oder Regierungsvertreter traten nach der Veröffentlichung des ersten Vorschlags zur Regulierung von Schattenbanken mit der Kommission in Kontakt?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(31. Juli 2013)

Die Risiken im Zusammenhang mit Schattenbanken sind Gegenstand mehrerer Aufgabenbereiche der Kommission. Im Jahr 2012 wurde ein Grünbuch zur Einleitung einer öffentlichen Konsultation veröffentlicht. Auch an den Arbeiten auf internationaler Ebene ist die Kommission aktiv beteiligt. Nach aktueller Planung wird sie im Herbst 2013 eine Mitteilung und einen Vorschlag für eine Verordnung über Geldmarktfonds vorlegen.

In der Mitteilung werden die im Auftrag der G20 erstellten Empfehlungen des Rates für Finanzstabilität (FSB) berücksichtigt. Der Kommission ist bewusst, dass nicht nur den Risiken für die Finanzmarktstabilität, sondern auch der Rolle, die das Schattenbankwesen für die Finanzierung der Wirtschaft spielt, Rechnung zu tragen ist. Jede politische Initiative zu den Schattenbanken wird diese beiden Aspekte im Auge behalten.

Die Mitteilung wird erst nach ihrer Annahme durch das Kollegium veröffentlicht. Die Kommission hat bisher keine vorläufige Fassung veröffentlicht. Ergänzend zu der breit angelegten Konsultation der Öffentlichkeit im Anschluss an das Grünbuch vom März 2012 steht die Kommission in regelmäßigem Kontakt mit allen wichtigen Akteuren und Institutionen, einschließlich des Europäischen Parlaments, das im November 2012 im Rahmen seiner Arbeiten im Bereich der Schattenbanken einen Initiativbericht verabschiedete.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006502/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Regulation of shadow banking entities

According to media reports, in early May 2013 the Member of the Commission responsible for the internal market, Michel Barnier, withdrew a proposal on the regulation of shadow banking entities that had already been completed. On 27 May 2013, Mr Barnier announced to a hearing of the European Parliament's ECON Committee that a new Commission proposal was to be published in June 2013.

1. Can the Commission explain the reason for this delay?

2. What changes have been included in the new proposal, which is to be published in June, that were not contained in the proposal withdrawn at the beginning of May?

3. Which individuals, interest groups, organisations, authorities or government representatives were in contact with the Commission following the publication of the initial proposal on the regulation of shadow banking?

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

Several Commission workstreams are addressing the risks posed by the shadow banking system. A public consultation was issued in 2012 by means of a Green Paper. The Commission has also actively contributed to the work carried out at the international level. According to current planning, the Commission envisages to present a communication and a regulation on Money Market Funds in the autumn of 2013.

The communication will take into account the policy recommendations produced by the Financial Stability Board (FSB), mandated by G20. The Commission is aware of the need to take into account on the one hand the risks to financial stability, and on the other hand the role that shadow banking plays in financing the economy. Any policy initiative on shadow banking will take into account both these objectives.

The communication will only be published once it is adopted by the College. At no point in time has the Commission published a preliminary version. In addition to the broad public consultation following the green paper in March 2012, the Commission has been in regular contact with all key stakeholders and key institutions, including the European Parliament, which adopted an initiative report in November 2012 when developing its policy responses in the area of shadow banking.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006503/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Hohe Dispozinsen trotz Leitzinssenkungen

Verschiedenen Medienberichten zufolge haben nach der erneuten Senkung des Leitzinses im Euroraum am 2. Mai 2013 durch die Europäische Zentralbank nur sehr wenige Banken die Dispozinsen für ihre Kunden gesenkt. Im Vergleich zum sehr niedrigen Leitzins blieben die Dispozinsen damit auf einem vergleichsweise hohen Niveau.

1. Liegen der Kommission Daten vor, inwiefern sich das Verhältnis von Leitzins zu Dispozinsen in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten der EU seit 2008 entwickelt hat?

2. Unternimmt die Kommission konkrete Maßnahmen, um Verbraucher vor hohen Dispozinsen zu schützen? Wenn ja, um welche Maßnahmen handelt es sich? Wenn nicht, warum nicht, und sind derartige Maßnahmen zukünftig geplant?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(23. Juli 2013)

1. Die Europäische Zentralbank und Eurostat stellen auf ihren Internet-Seiten nach Mitgliedstaaten aufgeschlüsselte Daten zu Überziehungen und revolvierenden Krediten zur Verfügung. Die Kommission nimmt jedoch keinen Einfluss darauf, wie die Banken über eine etwaige Weitergabe von EZB-Leitzinsänderungen an ihre Kunden entscheiden.

2. Ebensowenig nimmt die Kommission Einfluss auf die Vertragsbeziehungen zwischen Banken und ihren Kunden. Allerdings hat sie vor kurzem einen Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über die Vergleichbarkeit von Zahlungskontogebühren, den Wechsel von Zahlungskonten und den Zugang zu Zahlungskonten vorgelegt, um bei den Bankgebühren mehr Transparenz zu schaffen ([1]).

Dieses Ziel soll durch klarere und teilweise standardisierte Angaben zu den Dienstleistungen der Geldinstitute und den hierfür erhobenen Gebühren einschließlich der Belastungen bei einer Kontoüberziehung verwirklicht werden. Dank transparenterer Informationen werden sich die Kunden ein besseres Bild von den verschiedenen Bankendienstleistungen und zugehörigen Gebühren machen, die unterschiedlichen verfügbaren Angebote vergleichen und das für sie günstigste Angebot auswählen können. Bei Eröffnung eines Kontos erhalten sie anschließend mindestens einmal jährlich ausführliche Informationen über die tatsächlich erhobenen Gebühren.

Ferner soll der Kontowechsel-Service für die Kunden mittels eines raschen und verlässlichen Verfahrens verbessert werden. Das soll den Verbrauchern den Wechsel des Bankkontos und die Nutzung günstigerer Angebote erleichtern. Die Kommission erwartet hierdurch einen verschärften Wettbewerb zwischen den Banken, der sich auch auf die Gebühren auswirken dürfte.

([1]) KOM(2013)266 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006503/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: High interest rates on overdrafts despite reductions in the base rate

According to numerous reports in the media, very few banks have reduced the interest rates they charge on overdrafts, despite the fact that the European Central Bank reduced the Eurozone base rate once again on 2 May 2013. Compared with the very low base rate, the rates of interest charged on overdrafts are thus still relatively high.

1. Does the Commission have access to data concerning the extent to which interest rates on overdrafts in individual Member States have tracked the base rate since 2008?

2. Is the Commission taking specific action to protect consumers from high overdraft rates? If so, what kind of action is it taking? If not, why not, and are there plans for any future action of this type?

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

1. The European Central Bank and Eurostat make data available on their websites regarding overdrafts and revolving loans per Member State. The Commission however does not intervene in the way banks decide to pass on or not to their clients the changes in base rate decided by ECB.

2. The Commission does not intervene in the contractual relations between banks and customers. However, in order to improve the transparency on bank fees, the Commission recently adopted a proposal on the comparability of fees, payment account switching and access to payment accounts ([1]).

This new proposal aims at improving the transparency of bank fees by giving clearer and partly standardised information regarding the bank services and the corresponding fees, including charges for overdrafts. Thanks to more transparent information, the consumers will be able to get a better understanding of the different bank services and fees, to compare the different offers available and consequently to choose the most suitable offer on the market. Then, becoming client of a bank, the customer will receive detailed information regarding the actual fees charged at least annually.

In addition, this proposal foresees that the switching service will be improved for consumers through a quick and reliable process. As a consequence, consumers will be able to switch bank accounts more easily and take profit of better offers in the market. The competition between banks will therefore be strengthened with potential impact on fees.

([1]) (COM(2013) 266.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006505/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Nahrungsmittelspekulation

Medienberichten zufolge hat der Handel mit Agrarrohstoffen an den Warenterminbörsen in den letzten Jahren zugenommen. Verschiedene Banken haben angekündigt, sich aus der Spekulation mit Nahrungsmitteln zurückzuziehen. Allerdings halten verschiedene Großbanken nach wie vor an dieser Praxis fest. Rohstoff-Spekulationen stehen in der Kritik, weil sie nach Ansicht von Kritikern zu einer Steigerung der Lebensmittelpreise beitragen und damit direkte Auswirkungen auf Hungerkatastrophen in Entwicklungsländern haben.

1. Liegen der Kommission Daten dazu vor, welche Finanzinstitute in der EU in welchem Umfang mit Nahrungsmitteln spekulieren?

2. Teilt die Kommission die Ansicht von Kritikern, dass Spekulationen mit Lebensmitteln zu Hungerkatastrophen in Entwicklungsländern führen?

3. Wenn ja, was unternimmt die Kommission, um diese Art der Spekulation einzudämmen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juli 2013)

Die Kommission sieht die Eindämmung der exzessiven Preisvolatilität auf den weltweiten Rohstoffmärkten als wichtige Priorität. In ihrer Mitteilung vom Februar 2011 ([1]) äußerte sie ihre Bedenken hinsichtlich der Finanzialisierung der Märkte für Rohstoffderivate und stellte fest, dass es zwar keinen schlüssigen Beweis für einen Kausalzusammenhang zwischen Spekulationen und überhöhten Nahrungsmittelpreisen gebe. Allerdings müssten diese Märkte auch weiterhin im Dienste der Realwirtschaft stehen, indem sie die Preisbildung unterstützen und die Absicherung gegen Marktrisiken ermöglichen. Die Finanzialisierung der Rohstoffmärkte muss den Zugang zu Grund- und Rohstoffen erleichtern und nicht erschweren. Dies und die Vermeidung jeglicher Destabilisierung der europäischen Wirtschaft oder der Volkswirtschaften der Entwicklungsländer sind daher zentrale Anliegen der europäischen und internationalen Politik.

Es gibt keine ausreichenden Informationen über die Kreise, die an Nahrungsmittelspekulationen beteiligt sind. Im Einklang mit den G20-Zusagen und im Anschluss an ihre Mitteilung vom Februar 2011 hat die Kommission mehrere Initiativen zur Stärkung der Integrität und Transparenz der Märkte für Grundstoffderivate ergriffen. Dazu gehören gesetzgeberische Vorschläge, die eindeutig festlegen sollen, welche Arten von Handelsaktivitäten auf den Rohstoffmärkten als Marktmissbrauch einzustufen sind ([2]), sowie Vorschläge, durch die sichergestellt werden soll, dass Rohstoffderivate ausschließlich an regulierten Handelsplätzen gehandelt werden, dass diese Handelstätigkeiten transparent sind und dass eine umfassende Kontrolle über Rohstoffderivate-Positionen, einschließlich der Einführung von Positionsobergrenzen nach Marktteilnehmer, gegeben ist ([3]). Diese Vorschläge werden gegenwärtig im Europäischen Parlament und im Rat verhandelt.

([1]) Grundstoffmärkte und Rohstoffe: Herausforderungen und Lösungsansätze (KOM(2011)25 endg. vom Februar 2011).
([2]) Verordnung über Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulation (Marktmissbrauch) (KOM(2011)651 endg.) und Richtlinie über strafrechtliche Sanktionen für Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulationen (KOM(2011)654 endg. vom 20.10.2011).
([3]) Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über Märkte für Finanzinstrumente zur Aufhebung der Richtlinie 2004/39/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates (Neufassung), KOM(2011)656 endg., und Verordnung über Märkte für Finanzinstrumente und zur Änderung der Verordnung [EMIR] über OTC-Derivate, zentrale Gegenparteien und Transaktionsregister, KOM(2011)652 endg. vom 20.10.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006505/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Food speculation

The media have been reporting an increase in agricultural commodity futures trading over the last few years. While a number of banks have announced their intention of ceasing food speculation, certain of the larger ones are continuing to engage in this practice, which, according to critics, is driving up food prices and having a direct impact on the starving populations of developing countries.

1. Does the Commission have information indicating which EU financial institutions engage in food speculation and to what extent?

2. Does the Commission agree with critics that such activities are causing large-scale starvation in developing countries?

3. If so, what action is being taken by the Commission to contain the problem?

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

The Commission considers the need to address excessive price volatility on the world's commodity markets a priority. In its communication of February 2011 ([1]), the Commission expressed its concerns about the financialisation of commodity derivatives markets, and noted that while there was no conclusive evidence for a causal link between speculation and excessive food prices, these markets must continue to serve the real economy by helping price formation and allowing the hedging of market risk. Ensuring that the financialisation of commodity markets supports and does not undermine access to commodities and raw materials or destabilise the European economy or the economies of developing countries is therefore a key policy concern at European level and international level.

There is a lack of information about who could be engaged in food speculation. In line with G20 commitments and following-up on its communication of February 2011, the Commission has launched a number of regulatory initiatives to increase the integrity and transparency of commodity derivatives markets. This includes legislative proposals to clarify the types of trading in commodity markets that constitute market abuse ([2]), as well as legislative proposals to require that commodity derivative products are traded exclusively on regulated trading venues, that these trading activities are transparent and a comprehensive oversight of commodity derivative positions, including the imposition of position limits by market participants ([3]). These proposals are currently under negotiation in the European Parliament and the Council.

([1]) Tackling the challenges in commodity markets and on raw Materials, February 2011, COM(2011) 25 final.
([2]) Regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation (market abuse), COM(2011) 651 final, and Directive on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation, COM(2011) 654 final, 20.10.2011.
([3]) Proposal for a directive on markets in financial instruments repealing Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (Recast) COM(2011) 656 final, and a regulation on markets in financial instruments and amending Regulation [EMIR] on OTC derivatives, central counterparties and trade repositories, COM(2011) 652 final, 20.10.2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006506/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Informationen über die Kreditsicherheit von Banken

Medienberichten zufolge ist ein Ausschuss der Bank für Internationalen Zahlungsausgleich (BIZ) zu dem Schluss gekommen, dass Banken ihre Investoren sorgfältiger über ihre Kreditsicherheiten informieren sollen. So könne eine bessere Risikoeinschätzung ermöglicht werden.

Plant die Kommission, Maßnahmen zu ergreifen, um die Banken aufzufordern, dafür Sorge zu tragen, dass alle ihre Anspruchsgruppen, insbesondere ihre Kunden, zu jeder Zeit über die Sicherheit und Qualität der Kredite der Bank informiert werden können?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(23. Juli 2013)

Um das Gesamtkreditrisiko einer Bank einschätzen zu können, bedarf es angemessener Angaben zu den als notleidend oder nicht notleidend eingestuften Krediten, den Rückstellungen für wertgeminderte Kreditforderungen und den Belastungen von Vermögenswerten.

Das Europäische Parlament und der Rat haben vor kurzem das aus einer Richtlinie und einer Verordnung bestehende Gesetzgebungspaket zu den Eigenkapitalanforderungen angenommen, das ab dem1. Januar 2014 zur Anwendung gelangt. Dort werden zum einen die bereits bestehenden Anforderungen an die Offenlegung von überfälligen und ausfallgefährdeten Forderungen sowie von spezifischen und allgemeinen Rückstellungen für Kreditausfälle, aufgeschlüsselt nach Wirtschaftszweigen oder Gegenparteien und darüber hinaus nach wesentlichen geografischen Gebieten, fortgeschrieben. Zum anderen werden die bestehenden Regeln im Einklang mit den Empfehlungen der BIZ ausgeweitet, indem die Europäische Bankenaufsichtsbehörde aufgefordert wird, bis Juli 2014 Leitlinien für die Offenlegung belasteter Vermögenswerte und bis 1. Januar 2016 eine verbindliche Norm für die Offenlegung belasteter Vermögenswerte auszuarbeiten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006506/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Information on the security of bank loans

According to reports in the media, a committee of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) has come to the conclusion that banks should inform investors more carefully about the security of their loans. This would make it easier to assess risk.

Is the Commission planning measures that will require banks to ensure that all their stakeholder groups, especially their customers, can be kept aware of the security and quality of their loans at all times?

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

Adequate disclosure on the classification of loans into performing and non-performing, the provisions for impaired loans, as well as the encumbrance of assets are essential for understanding the overall credit risk to which a bank is exposed.

The European Parliament and Council have recently adopted the Capital Requirements (CRD IV/CRR) package, which will be applicable as of 1 January 2014. On the one hand, it carries forward the existing *acquis* on disclosures of (1) past due and impaired exposures and (2) the specific and general loan loss provisions, detailed per industry or counterparty and further broken down by significant geographical areas. On the other hand and in line with the BIS recommendations, the CRD IV/CRR extends the existing *acquis* by requiring the European Banking Authority to develop guidelines on the disclosure of encumbered assets by July 2014 and a mandatory disclosure standard on encumbered assets by 1 January 2016.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006508/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Λειτουργία της ΜΟΔ ΑΕ

Η Μονάδα Οργάνωσης και Διαχείρισης (ΜΟΔ ΑΕ) ανήκει στο Ελληνικό Δημόσιο, διαχειρίζεται τα κονδύλια των Κοινοτικών Πλαισίων Στήριξης παλαιότερα, του ΕΣΠΑ σήμερα κ.λπ., αλλά η ωφέλεια για την ελληνική οικονομία και κοινωνία παραμένει μικρότερη αυτής που θα μπορούσε να είχε υπάρξει.

Βραδυκίνητες διαδικασίες, γραφειοκρατία και προκηρύξεις για χρηματοδότηση οι οποίες δεν αντιστοιχούν στις πραγματικές ανάγκες της οικονομίας δημιουργούν συνεχή εμπόδια σε έλληνες επαγγελματίες που θέλουν να αναπτύξουν την επιχείρησή τους. Σε όλα αυτά προστίθενται και οι πληροφορίες των ΜΜΕ για δαπάνη εκ μέρους της ΜΟΔ πολλών εκατομμυρίων ευρώ για ενοίκια επί χρόνια. Μέχρι το 2010 το κόστος των ενοικίων είχε ξεπεράσει τα 60 εκατομμύρια ευρώ, ενώ το Ελληνικό Δημόσιο έχει 71 000 ακίνητα ανεκμετάλλευτα. Σημειώνεται, επίσης, ότι ο αριθμός των εργαζομένων στην ΜΟΔ ΑΕ ξεπερνά τα 1 000 άτομα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ασχολείται με τη λειτουργία και την αποτίμηση της αποτελεσματικότητας της ΜΟΔ ΑΕ;

— Θα παρέμβει με τρόπο γρήγορο και αποτελεσματικό ώστε να επιταχυνθεί η διαδικασία χρηματοδότησης των ελληνικών επιχειρήσεων που σήμερα δεν έχουν τρόπο να βρουν ούτε καν στοιχειώδη ρευστότητα;

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

Η επιλογή των φορέων που διαχειρίζονται προγράμματα για την πολιτική συνοχής εναπόκειται στην αρμοδιότητα του κάθε κράτους μέλους. Ανεξάρτητα από αυτό, η εκ μέρους της Επιτροπής αξιολόγηση των εργασιών της μονάδας για την οργάνωση της διαχείρισης των διαρθρωτικών παρεμβάσεων στην Ελλάδα (ΜΟΔ) και των δημοσίων υπαλλήλων στους οποίους έχει ανατεθεί η διαχείριση και εκτέλεση των διαρθρωτικών παρεμβάσεων είναι γενικώς θετική. Η ΜΟΔ χρησιμοποιεί υψηλής κατάρτισης προσωπικό που συμβάλλει θετικά στην εφαρμογή της πολιτικής συνοχής στην Ελλάδα. Αν η ΜΟΔ θα πρέπει να μισθώνει ή να χρησιμοποιεί εγκαταστάσεις που ανήκουν στο ελληνικό κράτος, αυτό είναι πρωτίστως θέμα των εθνικών αρχών. Όταν χρησιμοποιούνται κονδύλια της ΕΕ για την κάλυψη των εν λόγω εξόδων, η Επιτροπή είναι της γνώμης ότι τούτο θα πρέπει να γίνεται σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της υγιούς και αποτελεσματικής διαχείρισης.

Προκειμένου να διευκολυνθεί η ρευστότητα στην Ελλάδα και σε άλλα κράτη μέλη που αντιμετωπίζουν παρόμοια προβλήματα, η Επιτροπή έχει λάβει μια σειρά σημαντικών μέτρων, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της τροποποίησης του νομικού πλαισίου, καθώς και της αναθεώρησης των ελληνικών προγραμμάτων (αύξηση του συντελεστή συνεισφοράς της ΕΕ έως 85%, διευκόλυνση των πληρωμών συμπληρωματικής κάλυψης 10%, χρηματοδότηση κεφαλαίων κίνησης με χρήση μέσων χρηματοοικονομικής τεχνικής, δυνατότητες χρηματοδότησης από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία και την ΕΤΕπ με καινοτόμα χρηματοπιστωτικά προϊόντα, όπως το Ταμείο Εγγυήσεων για τις ΜΜΕ, κ.λπ.). Παρά τη σημαντική διάθεση πόρων για μέσα χρηματοοικονομικής τεχνικής στην Ελλάδα, δεν παρήχθησαν ακόμη τα αναμενόμενα αποτελέσματα. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί στενά την κατάσταση μαζί με τις αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές, προκειμένου να αναληφθούν οι απαραίτητες ενέργειες. Ωστόσο, η αντιμετώπιση της ρευστότητας δεν αποτελεί καθήκον μόνο της Επιτροπής αλλά και όλων των ενδιαφερομένων μερών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006508/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Operation of Community support framework Management Body (MOD-AE)

The economic and social benefits to Greece of the Community support framework, now the NSRF, administered by a Greek Government body, the MOD-AE, are proving to be less than might be expected.

Greek entrepreneurs seeking to develop their businesses are constantly encountering obstacles in the form of cumbersome and bureaucratic procedures, while announced funding falls short of real economic needs. As if this were not enough, media reports on annual rent costs for this body now reveal that, since 2010 for example, it has paid over EUR 60 million for this purpose, although the Greek Government has 71 000 unused premises, while the number of staff employed by the MOD-AE exceeds 1 000.

In view of this:

— Is the Commission monitoring the operation of this body and assessing its effectiveness?

— Will it take quick and effective action to speed up funding for Greek businesses currently beset by serious cash-flow problems?

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

The choice of structures managing cohesion policy programmes is the responsibility of each Member State. Having said this, the Commission's assessment of the work delivered by the Unit for the Organisation of the Management of the structural interventions in Greece (MOD) and the public servants entrusted with the management and implementation of structural interventions is generally positive. The MOD employs a number of highly-qualified staff who make a positive contribution to the implementation of cohesion policy in Greece. Whether MOD should rent premises or use premises owned by the Greek State is primarily a question for the national authorities. If EU funds are used to cover these costs, the Commission is of the opinion this should be done in line with the principles of sound and efficient management.

In order to facilitate liquidity in Greece and in other Member States facing similar problems, the Commission has taken a number of important actions, including the modification of the legal framework and the revision of Greek programmes (increase of the rate of the EU contribution up to 85%, payment facility of a top-up 10%, allow the financing of working capital through financial engineering instruments, blend the possibilities of financing by the Structural Funds and the EIB with innovative financial products, such as the Guarantee Fund for SMEs, etc.). Despite the important allocation to Financial Engineering Instruments in Greece did not produce yet the expected results. The Commission follows the situation closely together with the relevant Greek authorities in order to take the necessary actions. However, tackling the liquidity issue is not a task for the Commission alone but for all the various stakeholders involved.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006509/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άθλιες συνθήκες διαβίωσης σε καταυλισμό Ρομά στο Χαλάνδρι Αττικής

Εφιαλτική είναι η κατάσταση για τους κατοίκους του Χαλανδρίου Αττικής, αλλά και για τους Ρομά που μένουν στον παράνομο καταυλισμό που βρίσκεται στο σταθμό μετρό «ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΚΟΠΕΙΟ» στο Χαλάνδρι. Χρόνια έρχεται και ξαναέρχεται το θέμα στην Βουλή των Ελλήνων από το κόμμα του ΛΑ.Ο.Σ., αλλά οι ελληνικές κυβερνήσεις απολύτως τίποτε δεν κάνουν για την μετεγκατάσταση των Ρομά. Ο εμπαιγμός που υφίστανται οι πολίτες και οι Ρομά ξεπερνά κάθε όριο και απασχολεί συνεχώς τα ΜΜΕ. Ούτε ο Δήμος Χαλανδρίου, ούτε η Γενική Γραμματεία της Αποκεντρωμένης Περιφέρειας Αττικής κινητοποιούνται ώστε να λυθεί αμέσως το θέμα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Πώς μπορεί να παρέμβει η Επιτροπή για να αντιληφθεί η ελληνική πολιτεία ότι θα πρέπει να ασχοληθεί επιτέλους σοβαρά με αυτή η «υγειονομική βόμβα», όπως έχει χαρακτηρισθεί από τα ΜΜΕ;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή αναμένει από όλα τα κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Ελλάδας, να εφαρμόσουν τα μέτρα που δεσμεύτηκαν να λάβουν έτσι ώστε να διευκολυνθεί η ένταξη των Ρομά και, με τον τρόπο αυτό, να καλυφθούν τα κενά που επεσήμανε η Επιτροπή, όσον αφορά τις στρατηγικές τους, στην έκθεση αξιολόγησής της του Μαΐου 2012.

Στις 26 Ιουνίου 2013 η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε τη δεύτερη έκθεση αξιολόγησής της με τίτλο «*Βήματα προόδου στην εφαρμογή των εθνικών στρατηγικών για την ένταξη των Ρομά*» όπου αξιολογείται η πρόοδος που έχουν επιτελέσει τα κράτη μέλη όσον αφορά τον καθορισμό των αναγκαίων προϋποθέσεων για την επιτυχή εφαρμογή των στρατηγικών.

Η έκθεση κατέληξε στο συμπέρασμα ότι ελάχιστη πρόοδος έχει επιτευχθεί στο εν λόγω θέμα. Τα κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Ελλάδας, θα πρέπει να καταβάλουν περαιτέρω προσπάθειες για να δημιουργήσουν τις προϋποθέσεις ώστε να επιτευχθεί πρόοδος στους ακόλουθους 4 τομείς — εκπαίδευση, απασχόληση, υγεία και στέγαση — για τους οποίους η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή θα αρχίσει να υποβάλλει έκθεση από το επόμενο έτος.

Παράλληλα με την έκθεση αυτή, η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε επίσης πρόταση για σύσταση του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με τα μέτρα επιτυχούς ένταξης των Ρομά στα κράτη μέλη, εστιάζοντας σε μια σειρά συγκεκριμένων μέτρων, τα οποία είναι ζωτικής σημασίας για την εφαρμογή των στρατηγικών τους. Τα κράτη μέλη θα πρέπει να λάβουν στοχοθετημένα μέτρα ώστε να διασφαλίζεται η ίση μεταχείριση και ο σεβασμός των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ισότιμης πρόσβασης των Ρομά στην εκπαίδευση, την απασχόληση, την ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη, τη στέγαση και τις υπηρεσίες κοινής ωφελείας.

Η Επιτροπή θα εξακολουθήσει να παρακολουθεί την πορεία υλοποίησης των στρατηγικών και να υποστηρίζει τα κράτη μέλη στις προσπάθειές τους.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006509/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Appalling conditions at the Halandri Roma encampment in Attiki

Although the LAOS Party has for years constantly been seeking to bring to the attention of the Greek Parliament the nightmarish situation facing the residents of Halandri in Attiki and in particular the inmates of an illegal Roma encampment situated near the 'NOMISMATOKOPEIO' metro station, successive Greek governments have failed to take any action to relocate the Roma. The shameful treatment of the Roma and the local residents is also the subject of constant media reports, while neither the Halandri municipal council nor the Attiki regional authorities are taking any immediate action to resolve the problem.

In view of this:

— How can the Commission convince the Greek Government of the need finally to take seriously a health issue described by the media as a ticking bomb?

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

The European Commission expects all Member States, including Greece, to implement the measures they committed to take, so as to support Roma integration, and, in doing so, address the gaps the Commission identified in their strategies in it assessment report of May 2012.

On 26 June 2013, the Commission adopted its second assessment report '*Steps forward in implementing national Roma integration strategies*' assessing progress made by the Member States in setting the necessary preconditions for a successful implementation of the strategies.

The report concluded that the progress on the ground remains very slow. Member States, including Greece, will need to put further efforts in putting the preconditions into place to make a progress in the 4 pillars — education, employment, health and housing — on which the European Commission will report as of next year.

Jointly with this report, the Commission also adopted a Proposal for a Council Recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States with a focus on a number of concrete measures that are crucial for implementing their strategies. The Member States should take targeted measures to ensure equal treatment and respect of fundamental rights, including equal access of Roma to education, employment, healthcare, housing and public utilities.

The Commission will continue to monitor the progress in the implementation of the strategies and support Member States in their efforts.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006510/13
an die Kommission
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Quellen und Auslegung von Statistiken über die Speicherung von Fluggastdatensätzen

Die Speicherung von Fluggastdatensätzen (PNR) als Maßnahme zur Strafverfolgung ist ein vielfach diskutierter Eingriff in das Recht auf Privatsphäre. Nachdem im LIBE-Ausschuss gegen eine Speicherungspflicht solcher Daten durch europäische Fluggesellschaften abgestimmt wurde, haben die Befürworter dieses Vorschlags angekündigt, die Einführung dieser Maßnahme in naher Zukunft erneut zu versuchen. Allerdings fehlt weiterhin ein glaubwürdiger Nachweis darüber, dass diese Maßnahme tatsächlich erforderlich ist.

Vor zwei Jahren veröffentlichte die britische Zeitung „The Guardian" einen Artikel mit der Information, dass es in Großbritannien aufgrund der Anwendung der PNR im Rahmen des Programms „e-Borders" zu Fällen von Einreiseverweigerung und Festnahmen vieler Menschen kam, einschließlich 57 Festnahmen wegen Mordes, 175 wegen Vergewaltigung/Sexualdelikte, 25 wegen Entführung, 441 wegen Betrugs, 397 wegen Drogendelikte und 920 wegen Gewaltstraftaten ([1]). Die Zeitschrift „Der Tagesspiegel" zitierte vor kurzem die gleichen Zahlen mit Ausnahme der Kategorie „Betrug" ([2]). In beiden Fällen wurde keine Zeitspanne erwähnt. Zur bloßen Zitierung der Fälle von Einreiseverweigerung und Festnahmen kommt hinzu, dass die festgenommenen Personen als Mörder, Vergewaltiger etc. betitelt wurden, was eine Verurteilung impliziert.

1. Kennt die Kommission diese Zahlen?

2. Wenn ja, welcher Quelle wurden diese Zahlen entnommen?

3. Wie interpretiert die Kommission diese Zahlen?

4. Weiß die Kommission, wie viele der aufgrund des Programms „e-Borders" festgenommenen Personen aus den oben genannten Kategorien danach auch verurteilt wurden?

5. Wenn ja, wie viele Menschen wurden im Rahmen des Programms „e-Borders" festgenommen, aber danach nicht verurteilt?

6. Wie viele Daten von Fluggästen werden in Großbritannien jährlich überprüft?

7. Wie ist die hier angedeutete „Erfolgsquote" mit der eines Mitgliedstaates vergleichbar, der mit weniger strengen Überprüfungsmethoden arbeitet, als Großbritannien dies tut?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juli 2013)

1.-3. Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen über die Quelle der vom Herrn Abgeordneten genannten Zahlen vor.

4.-7. Der Kommission liegen keine detaillierten statistischen Angaben zum „e-Borders"-System vor.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jun/10/us-national-security-air-transport
([2]) http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/fluggastdaten-eu-parlament-blockt-speicherung/8117382.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006510/13
to the Commission
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Sources and interpretation of statistics on the retention of passenger name records

The retention of passenger name records (PNR) as a law enforcement measure is a much-discussed interference with the right to privacy. After the LIBE committee voted against mandatory retention of such data by European airlines, supporters of the proposal announced that they would try again to introduce the measure in the near future. What is still missing is reliable evidence that such a measure is needed in any way.

Two years ago, the British newspaper *The Guardian* published an article claiming that the use of PNR through the e-borders scheme in the United Kingdom had 'led to the refusal of entry and detention of many people, including 57 for murder, 175 for rape/sexual assault, 25 for kidnapping, 441 for fraud, 397 for drugs offences and 920 for violence' ([1]). Recently, the German newspaper *Tagesspiegel* cited the same numbers, other than that it did not mention the 'fraud' category ([2]). In both cases, no time period was mentioned. What is more, instead of mere citations of cases of refusal of entry and detention, the people who were detained were said to be murderers, rapists, etc., implying a conviction.

1. Is the Commission familiar with these numbers?

2. If so, what is the source of these numbers?

3. What is the Commission's interpretation of these numbers?

4. For each of the categories mentioned, does the Commission know how many of those detained under the e-borders scheme were subsequently convicted?

5. If so, how many people were detained under the e-borders scheme and not convicted afterwards?

6. How many passengers' details are screened in the UK per year?

7. How does the implied 'success rate' compare with that of Member States operating less stringent screening methods than the UK?

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

1-3. The Commission has no information on the source of the numbers the Honourable Member is referring to.

4-7. The Commission does not possess detailed statistics on the e-Borders system.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jun/10/us-national-security-air-transport
([2]) http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/fluggastdaten-eu-parlament-blockt-speicherung/8117382.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006511/13
to the Commission
Marta Andreasen (ECR)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Commission's referral of the United Kingdom to the ECJ regarding its 'right to reside' test for social security benefits

The Commission states in a press release of 30 May 2013 that its decision to refer the United Kingdom to the European Court of Justice regarding its 'right to reside' test for social security benefits was taken after 'several formal and informal contacts between the European Commission and the UK authorities'.

The press release also states that 'the Commission has received several complaints from EU nationals that are habitually resident in the UK but have been denied access to the UK social security benefits in question because they do not meet the "right to reside" condition in UK law'.

1. Could the Commission please list the 'formal and informal contacts' that occurred between the Commission and the UK authorities, with dates?

2. How many complaints has it received regarding this matter, and over what time scale?

3. Are discussions under way with any other Member States regarding the 'habitual residence' test and social security benefits? If so, with how many?

4. What representations on this matter has the Commission received from the AIRE (Advice on Individual Rights in Europe) Centre, a British NGO which is active in this area and has received funding from the Commission?

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

In 2004, the UK introduced in its legislation a so-called 'habitual residence test' including a 'right to reside test' regarding access to some tax-financed benefits. Since that date, the Commision has received information about, and also at least four complaints from EU-citizens who did not pass the test and whose claim for the benefits concerned had been refused for this reason. As these citizens are entitled to expect the Commission to guarantee confidentiality during investigations which might lead to infringement procedures, no further information can be provided in their respect.

In the context of this procedure, the Commission services had many contacts both informal and in written with the UK authorities.

An ad hoc-group of the Administrative Commission on social security had been mandated to clarify the content of the notion of the habitual residence within the meaning of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004. But there are no bilateral discussions under way on this notion between the Commission and any other Member State.

While the AIRE Centre was useful in providing some background information on the British law and case law on this matter, it did not trigger the infringement procedure.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006512/13
au Conseil
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 juin 2013)

Objet: Importations de véhicules dans un nouvel État de résidence

Les démarches administratives pour faire circuler et assurer un véhicule neuf ou d'occasion importé d'un autre État membre peuvent être particulièrement contraignantes et sont un frein à la libre circulation des biens et des personnes au sein de l'Union.

Alors que les citoyens européens sont de plus en plus mobiles et que l'Union européenne encourage notamment les travailleurs à se déplacer au sein de l'Union, les règles pour faire immatriculer et assurer un véhicule pénalisent les citoyens européens motorisés résidant dans un autre État membre. En effet, beaucoup d'Européens se retrouvent dans des situations difficiles car ils ne sont pas autorisés à conduire un véhicule immatriculé dans un autre État membre que leur pays de résidence, et ils doivent entamer de longues démarches incertaines auprès de l'administration publique, en passant parfois plusieurs contrôles techniques et en fournissant un dossier détaillé auprès de l'administration ainsi qu'auprès des assureurs. Avec cette situation, le bon sens conduirait les usagers à acheter une voiture dans le pays de résidence plutôt que d'y faire immatriculer leur véhicule.

Les États membres travaillent-ils afin de faire converger leurs systèmes nationaux de contrôle des véhicules et de faciliter les déplacements des citoyens européens entre leur pays de résidence et leur pays d'origine?

Réponse
(11 septembre 2013)

Dans son rapport 2010 sur la citoyenneté de l'Union intitulé «Lever les obstacles à l'exercice des droits des citoyens de l'Union», la Commission citait les difficultés rencontrées pour immatriculer les véhicules parmi les principaux obstacles auxquels sont confrontés les citoyens dans leur vie quotidienne lorsqu'ils déménagent dans un autre État membre.

Dans le prolongement de ce rapport, la Commission a présenté, en avril 2012, une proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif à la simplification du transfert des véhicules à moteur immatriculés dans un autre État membre à l'intérieur du marché unique ([1]).

L'examen du texte a déjà commencé au sein du Conseil et les travaux sur ce dossier se poursuivront activement au cours des prochains mois en vue de mise au point de ce règlement par la procédure législative ordinaire avec le Parlement européen dans les meilleurs délais.

([1]) Doc. ST 8794/12 ENT 93 MI 251 CODEC 991.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006512/13
to the Council
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Importing vehicles into a new Member State of residence

The administrative steps required in order to be able to drive and insure a new or second-hand car imported from one Member State to another can be particularly burdensome and are an impediment to the free movement of goods and persons in the Union.

At a time when Europe's citizens are becoming ever more mobile and the EU is encouraging workers, in particular, to move around within the Union, the vehicle registration and insurance rules penalise drivers whose place of residence is in a Member State other than their country of origin. Many Europeans find themselves in problematic situations because they are not allowed to drive a vehicle registered in a Member State other than their country of residence, and they have to embark on long and uncertain dealings with administrative bodies, in some cases putting their vehicles through repeated roadworthiness tests and submitting detailed documents to administrative bodies and insurers. The common-sense response to such a situation is for drivers to buy cars in their country of residence rather than having vehicles they already own registered there.

Are the Member States working towards harmonising their national vehicle testing systems and making it easier for European citizens to move between their countries of residence and origin?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

The Commission, in its 2010 Citizenship Report 'Dismantling the obstacles to EU citizens' rights', identified vehicle registration problems as one of the main obstacles faced by citizens in their daily lives when moving to another Member State.

As a follow-up to this report, the Commission in April 2012 submitted a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles registered in another Member State within the Single Market ([1]).

The examination of this proposal has already started in the Council and work on it will continue actively in the coming months with a view to the finalisation of this regulation through the ordinary legislative procedure with the European Parliament, as soon as possible.

([1]) ST 8794/12 ENT 93 MI 251 CODEC 991

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006514/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(6 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: La Commissione riveda la sua posizione sull'estrazione del gas di scisto

La produzione di gas di scisto sembra essere, secondo la Commissione europea, la soluzione al problema dell'approvvigionamento energetico dell'UE, in particolar modo per quei paesi dell'Est e per gli Stati baltici vincolati ancora al colosso russo Gazprom.

Eppure non solo la tecnica di frantumazione necessaria per l'estrazione di tale gas, il cosiddetto «fracking», presenta notevoli rischi ambientali, con un elevato consumo di acqua, come sostiene con veemenza il commissario europeo per l'Azione per il clima Connie Hedegaard, ma incentivare tale produzione non risulterebbe nemmeno economico, come rivelato dagli studi condotti dalle compagnie statunitensi che si sono prontamente insediate in Europa per sfruttare l'opportunità di utilizzare una tecnologia da loro già da tempo sfruttata. Infatti in Polonia, dove si riteneva esistessero i depositi di scisto più accessibili e prosperi, le compagnie petrolifere americane, dopo aver effettuato una serie di prospezioni, hanno determinato che i costi sarebbero troppo elevati rispetto ai risultati.

Intende la Commissione perseguire la proposta di avviare l'estrazione di gas di scisto, nonostante le avverse condizioni economiche e i rischi ambientali che comporta?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(26 luglio 2013)

La Commissione non propone di avviare l'estrazione del gas di scisto. Spetta agli Stati membri decidere in merito al proprio mix energetico e concedere le licenze per lo sfruttamento delle risorse energetiche. La Commissione sta studiando attentamente i possibili rischi e vantaggi di queste nuove fonti di gas naturale, nonché le possibili implicazioni per la politica europea. In questo contesto, ha incluso nel suo programma di lavoro per il 2013 un «quadro di valutazione ambientale climatica ed energetica ai fini dell'estrazione sicura di idrocarburi non convenzionali», allo scopo di studiare come diversificare le fonti di approvvigionamento energetico e migliorare la nostra competitività assicurando al contempo che lo sviluppo degli idrocarburi non convenzionali, in particolare del gas di scisto, sia accompagnato da opportune misure di salvaguardia del clima e dell'ambiente che garantiscano a cittadini, autorità competenti e operatori la massima chiarezza sul piano giuridico e della prevedibilità.

Nel concedere licenze per lo sfruttamento e l'esplorazione delle possibilità offerte dagli idrocarburi non convenzionali, gli Stati membri devono garantire il rispetto della normativa dell'UE, anche per quanto riguarda la tutela dell'ambiente e della salute umana.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006514/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Call for the Commission to review its position on the extraction of shale gas

According to the European Commission, the production of shale gas appears to be the solution to the problem of energy supply in the EU, particularly for those Eastern European countries and Baltic States still tied to the Russian giant, Gazprom.

However, not only does the fracturing technique necessary to extract this gas, so-called 'fracking', entail considerable environmental risks and high water consumption, as Connie Hedegaard, EU Commissioner for Climate Action, strongly insists, but encouraging this production would not even prove cost-effective, as determined by studies carried out by the US companies which immediately established themselves in Europe to take advantage of the opportunity to use a technology which they have been using for some time. In fact in Poland, where there were believed to be more accessible and high-yield shale deposits, US oil companies undertook a series of prospecting operations and determined that the costs would be too high compared with the results.

Will the Commission go ahead with the proposal to begin extracting shale gas despite the unfavourable economic conditions and environmental risk that this entails?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

The Commission is not proposing to begin extracting shale gas. It is left to Member States to decide on their energy mix and to grant licenses for exploitation of energy resources. The Commission is carefully studying the possible risk and benefits of such new sources of natural gas as well as their possible implications 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' with the aim to investigate how possibilities to diversify our energy supply and to improve our competitiveness can be utilised while ensuring that unconventional hydrocarbon developments, notably shale gas, are carried out with proper climate and environmental safeguards and under maximum legal clarity and predictability for citizens, competent authorities and operators.

When granting licenses for the exploitation and exploration of unconventional hydrocarbon, Member States should ensure that EU legislation is complied with, including regarding the protection of the environment and human health.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-006515/13
a la Comisión
Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Ordenación de la pesca de especies de aguas profundas

La Comisión Europea ha adoptado una propuesta de Reglamento para la ordenación de la pesca de especies de aguas profundas y la protección de los ecosistemas marinos vulnerables (EMV), cuya medida más destacada es la prohibición del uso del arrastre y redes de enmalle de fondo.

La prohibición de estas artes de pesca se justifica con el objetivo de proteger los ecosistemas marinos vulnerables. Sin embargo, la propuesta no es una transposición de las resoluciones de la ONU, ni sigue la guía de la FAO sobre la ordenación pesquera de especies de aguas profundas, ni siquiera estas artes están prohibidas en otros países. Prueba de ello es que el arrastre de fondo seguirá utilizándose en aguas internacionales de NAFO y NEAFC, y por países como Noruega, Islandia, Islas Faroe y Rusia.

— ¿Ha estudiado la Comisión europea la posibilidad de adoptar otras medidas alternativas menos restrictivas para la industria que protejan adecuadamente los EMV?

— Otros países pesqueros con intereses en la pesca de especies de aguas profundas no han prohibido el arrastre ni el enmalle de fondo. ¿Considera la Comisión que esta medida prohibitiva será efectiva si no se aplica de manera uniforme por todas las flotas y en todas las zonas donde haya especies de fondo como las que se pretende proteger?

— ¿No cree la Comisión que, en lugar de proteger los EMV, lo que se va a conseguir es causar un perjuicio innecesario a la industria europea, mientras que estas mismas especies se seguirán consumiendo en la EU, quien tendrá que importarlas de países como Rusia, Islandia y las Islas Faroe?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de julio de 2013)

La propuesta no prohíbe ningún arte de pesca. Lo que prevé es una eliminación progresiva, en dos años a partir de la entrada en vigor del acto de la pesca dirigida a especies de aguas profundas con redes de arrastre o redes de enmalle bentónicas. Los buques arrastreros de fondo y los que utilizan redes de enmalle de fondo podrán seguir pescando, desembarcando y vendiendo las capturas accesorias de especies de aguas profundas. Los demás artes podrán seguir operando como ahora.

Esta medida tendrá pocas repercusiones económicas y sociales y ayudará a preservar los ecosistemas marinos vulnerables, en los que un simple pase de una red de arrastre puede destruirlos.

Se ha examinado la posibilidad de medidas alternativas como la salida de los buques de la zona cuando se encuentran con corales de aguas profundas u otros hábitats vulnerables, pero se ha llegado a la conclusión de que no son eficaces para proteger los ecosistemas marinos vulnerables. Por ello, la evaluación de impacto de la Comisión determinó que la fórmula propuesta era la preferible.

El impacto humano que esta propuesta pretende solucionar se produce en aguas de la UE y lo que está en juego son entornos frágiles de aguas profundas en los que la UE es la única responsable. La UE propugna la sostenibilidad en las pesquerías internacionales y, por lo tanto, no puede eludir su responsabilidad en sus propias aguas.

La UE seguirá defendiendo la toma de decisiones con sus socios internacionales para que los caladeros de aguas internacionales sean sostenibles y resistentes medioambientalmente. Hemos hecho enormes progresos en ese sentido y aún podemos hacer más si demostramos que adoptamos el mismo planteamiento en nuestras aguas.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006515/13
to the Commission
Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Regulating fishing for deep-sea stocks

The Commission has adopted a proposal for a regulation to regulate fishing for deep-sea stocks and protect vulnerable marine ecosystems. The main feature of this proposal is a ban on the use of bottom trawls and bottom-set gillnets.

The justification given for banning this gear is the need to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems. However, the proposal does not transpose UN resolutions and does not follow FAO guidelines on the regulation of fishing for deep-sea species, and these types of gear are not banned in other countries. Bottom trawls will continue to be used in international waters governed by NAFO and NEAFC and by countries such as Norway, Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Russia.

— Has the Commission looked into the possibility of taking alternative measures that will be less restrictive for the industry but still provide adequate protection for vulnerable marine ecosystems?

— Other fishing countries with deep-sea fishing interests have not banned either bottom trawls or bottom-set gillnets. Does the Commission believe that this ban will be effective if it is not applied across the board, by all fleets and in all areas where the deep-sea species to be protected are found?

— Does the Commission not believe that, rather than protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems, this regulation will merely cause unnecessary harm to the European industry, while these same species will continue to be consumed in the EU but will have to be imported from countries such as Russia, Iceland and the Faroe Islands?

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

The proposal does not ban any fishing gear. It foresees that targeted fishing for deep sea species with bottom trawls or gillnets will be phased out two years after entry into force. Bottom trawlers and gillnetters will still be able to fish, land and sell by-catches of deep sea species. Other gears will continue to operate as at present.

This measure is expected to have low economic and social impact while preserving vulnerable marine ecosystems, since these can be destroyed with just one trawl passage when encountered.

Alternative measures, such as vessels moving out of the area where an encounter with deep sea corals or other vulnerable habitats takes place have been examined and found to be not effective to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems. For this reason, the Commission's Impact Assessment concluded that the proposed way forward was the preferable option.

The human impacts this proposal seeks to address take place in EU waters and the risk at stake is for fragile deep sea environments in areas where the EU is sole responsible. While the EU continues to promote sustainability in international fisheries, it must also take its responsibility for EU waters.

The EU will continue to push for decisions with partner countries that ensure fisheries in international waters are sustainable and environmentally robust. We have made enormous progress in that regard and can achieve more if we can show that we adapt the same approach in EU waters.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006516/13
al Consejo
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Homofobia y discriminación — Estudio de la Agencia Europea de Derechos Fundamentales

El pasado 17 de mayo se dieron a conocer los resultados de la encuesta lanzada por la Agencia Europea de Derechos Fundamentales (FRA) en abril de 2012, en la que participaron 93 000 residentes de la Unión Europea, y que nos permite conocer mejor en qué situación se encuentra el colectivo de lesbianas, gays, bisexuales y transexuales (LGTB) de la Unión y qué tipo de estrategia debe elaborarse para garantizar una lucha más eficaz contra la homofobia y la discriminación.

Los resultados de este estudio ponen de manifiesto que, de media, un 47 % del colectivo LGTB se siente discriminado o acosado, porcentaje que se eleva al 61 % en Lituania situándolo tristemente a la cabeza de Europa. Basta hacer una lectura rápida de estos datos para iniciar una reflexión sobre la igualdad como derecho y principio fundamental de nuestra democracia, muy debilitada cuando millones de personas en la Unión se sienten discriminados sobre la base de su orientación sexual o identidad de género. Uno de los ámbitos explorados a través de esta gran encuesta ha sido el educativo, de cuyos datos se desprende que el acoso homofóbico y transfóbico en centros escolares está generalizado. Más del 90 % de los encuestados aseguran haber sido testigos de burlas o comentarios negativos referidos a un compañero percibido como LGTB.

El Parlamento Europeo se ha pronunciado en varias ocasiones sobre cuestiones de igualdad, orientación sexual e identidad de género; conviene destacar la Resolución aprobada por el Pleno del Parlamento Europeo el 24 de mayo del pasado año sobre la lucha contra la homofobia en Europa ([1]) por la relación que tiene con las conclusiones extraídas del estudio de la FRA; tanto la resolución como los resultados de la encuesta ponen de manifiesto que la sociedad europea no acepta por igual la aplicación del principio de igualdad en cuestiones de orientación sexual e identidad de género. Este panorama es inaceptable, el Consejo debe priorizar el tema y dar un nuevo impulso a la tramitación de la Directiva sobre la aplicación del principio de igualdad de trato entre las personas, independientemente de su religión o convicciones, discapacidad, edad u orientación sexual, bloqueada debido a las objeciones de ciertos Estados miembros.

¿Qué medidas va a adoptar el Consejo para desbloquear, de una vez por todas, la tramitación de la Directiva sobre la aplicación del principio de igualdad de trato entre las personas, independientemente de su religión o convicciones, discapacidad, edad u orientación sexual?

Respuesta
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

La propuesta de Directiva del Consejo por la que se aplica el principio de igualdad de trato entre las personas independientemente de su religión o convicciones, discapacidad, edad u orientación sexual ([2]) viene siendo debatida por el Consejo desde 2008.

El Consejo avanzó significativamente los trabajos sobre diversos temas de la propuesta y recibió un informe el 20 de junio de 2013 ([3]).

Las negociaciones continuarán durante la Presidencia lituana, y se presentará un informe al Consejo el 9 de diciembre de 2013.

Para que la Directiva pueda adoptarse, será necesaria la unanimidad de los miembros del Consejo. El Consejo no está en condiciones de prever el resultado o la duración de las negociaciones en curso.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0222+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES&language=ES
([2]) 11531/08.
([3]) 10039/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006516/13
to the Council
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Homophobia and discrimination — study by the European Fundamental Rights Agency

The results of the survey launched by the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) in April 2012 were announced on 17 May 2013. The survey, in which 93 000 European Union residents took part, provides a more accurate picture of the situation for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals (LGBT) in the Union and what type of strategy should be drawn up to combat homophobia and discrimination more effectively.

The results of this study show that, on average, 47% of LGBT people felt that they had been discriminated against or harassed, with the percentage rising to 61% in Lithuania, which is sadly placed at the top of the list of European countries in this regard. A quick glance at these figures is enough to prompt a reflection on equality as a fundamental right and principle in our democracy, but one which is severely weakened when millions of people in the Union feel that they have suffered discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. One of the areas explored in this large-scale survey is education, where the figures show that homophobic and transphobic harassment in educational settings is widespread. More than 90% of respondents said that they had witnessed jeers or negative comments against a schoolmate who was perceived to be LGBT.

The European Parliament has spoken out on issues of equality, sexual orientation and gender identity on several occasions, one prominent example being the resolution of 24 May 2012 on the fight against homophobia in Europe ([1]), given its close links to the findings of the FRA study. Both the resolution and the results of the survey highlight the fact that European society does not fully accept the application of the principle of equality in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. This is unacceptable, and the Council should prioritise the issue and relaunch work on the directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, which is currently blocked owing to the objections of certain Member States.

What steps will the Council take finally to unblock work on the directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

The proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation ([2]) has been discussed by the Council since 2008.

The Council significantly advanced the work on various issues of the proposal and a progress report was presented to the Council on 20 June 2013 ([3]).

The negotiations will continue under the Lithuanian Presidency, and a progress report will be presented to the Council on 9 December 2013.

Unanimity between the Council members will be required before the directive can be adopted. The Council is not in a position to anticipate the outcome or the duration of the ongoing negotiations.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0222+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.
([2]) 11531/08.
([3]) 10039/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006517/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Homofobia y discriminación — Estudio de la Agencia Europea de Derechos Fundamentales

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¿Cuál va a ser la estrategia que seguirá la Comisión para cumplir con las peticiones realizadas por el Parlamento Europeo a la vista de los resultados de la encuesta de la FRA?

¿Va a adoptar la Comisión un papel más activo con relación a la Directiva del Consejo sobre la aplicación del principio de igualdad de trato entre las personas independientemente de su religión o convicciones, discapacidad, edad u orientación sexual, bloqueada debido a las objeciones de ciertos Estados miembros?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de julio de 2013)

Los resultados recientes de la encuesta de la FRA sobre la discriminación que sufren las personas LGBT demuestran niveles preocupantes de discriminación, victimización y violencia. Esto sugiere que el tipo de acción necesaria ahora debe ser simple y centrarse en proporcionar protección jurídica y ayuda especial a las víctimas de discriminación y delitos de carácter homófobo y tránsfobo, lo que tendrá un efecto positivo directo en ese colectivo.

Una correcta ejecución y supervisión de la Directiva sobre las víctimas de delitos y la adopción de la propuesta de Directiva relativa a la aplicación del principio de igualdad de trato entre las personas, independientemente de su religión o convicciones, discapacidad, edad u orientación sexual, fuera del contexto laboral, tendría una incidencia real y aportaría beneficios genuinos a las personas LGBT.

La Comisión insiste en la necesidad de que esta Directiva complete el marco jurídico vigente. Es, ante todo, el papel de las instituciones legislativas y, en este caso, de la Presidencia del Consejo, superar el actual punto muerto político y alcanzar un consenso. La Comisión seguirá prestando un apoyo activo y colaborando con cada Presidencia para avanzar en el texto.

La Comisión reitera su compromiso de combatir la homofobia y de promover la igualdad de las personas LGBT en la Unión Europea.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0222+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES&language=ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006517/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Homophobia and discrimination — study by the European Fundamental Rights Agency

The results of the survey launched by the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) in April 2012 were announced on 17 May 2013. The survey, in which 93 000 European Union residents took part, provides a more accurate picture of the situation for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals (LGBT) in the Union and what type of strategy should be drawn up to combat homophobia and discrimination more effectively.

The results of this study show that, on average, 47% of LGBT people felt that they had been discriminated against or harassed, with the percentage rising to 61% in Lithuania, which is sadly placed at the top of the list of European countries in this regard. A quick glance at these figures is enough to prompt a reflection on equality as a fundamental right and principle in our democracy, but one which is severely weakened when millions of people in the Union feel that they have suffered discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. One of the areas explored in this large-scale survey is education, where the figures show that homophobic and transphobic harassment in educational settings is widespread. More than 90% of respondents said that they had witnessed jeers or negative comments against a schoolmate who was perceived to be LGBT.

The European Parliament has spoken out on issues of equality, sexual orientation and gender identity on several occasions, one prominent example being the resolution of 24 May 2012 on the fight against homophobia in Europe ([1]), given its close links to the findings of the FRA study. In paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of its resolution, Parliament calls on the Commission to carefully examine the results of this survey, to provide full and comprehensive information on the incidence of homophobia and the solutions and actions proposed to overcome it, and to produce a comprehensive roadmap for equality without discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.

What strategy will the Commission follow to meet Parliament's requests in the light of the findings of the FRA survey?

Will the Commission play a more active role in relation to the Council directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, which is currently blocked owing to the objections of certain Member States?

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

The recent results of the FRA survey on discrimination experienced by LGBT people have shown worrying levels of discrimination, victimisation and violence. This suggests that the type of action required now should be outright and focused in providing legal protection and special assistance to victims of homophobic and transphobic discrimination and crime, which will have a direct positive impact on the LGBT community.

Proper implementation and monitoring of the Victims Crime Directive and the adoption of the proposed Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation outside the labour market would make a difference and bring real benefits to LGBT persons.

The Commission insists on the need for this directive to complete the existing legal framework. It is primarily the role of the legislative institutions, and in this case of the Council Presidency, to overcome the current political deadlock and to find a consensus. The Commission will continue actively supporting and working with each Presidency to make progress on the text.

The Commission reiterates its commitment to fight homophobia and promote equality for LGBT people in the European Union.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0222+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006518/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Nuevas drogas sintéticas y la necesaria mejora del Sistema de Alerta Temprana en Europa

El Observatorio Europeo de las Drogas y las Toxicomanías (OEDT) presentó el pasado 28 de mayo el nuevo Informe Europeo sobre Drogas 2013: Tendencias y novedades, profundizando en cuestiones ya planteadas en el informe conjunto con Europol sobre los mercados de la droga en la EU, presentado a principios de año. Ambos informes destacan la rapidez de la evolución en el ámbito de las drogas de síntesis, lo que exige que Europa mejore su sistema de alerta temprana en relación con las nuevas sustancias presentes en el mercado.

El Sistema de Alerta Temprana fue creado por el OEDT y Europol en el año 1997, en colaboración con los Estados miembros de la UE; la Decisión 2005/387/JAI del Consejo de la UE precisó el marco en el que se debía realizar el intercambio de información, la evaluación del riesgo y el control de las nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas, si bien el tiempo ha demostrado que los resultados de su aplicación podrían optimizarse si se redujera, por ejemplo, la excesiva duración de los plazos entre la evaluación y la toma de decisiones o se pudiera abordar el estudio de varias sustancias al mismo tiempo.

El problema real es que las nuevas drogas sintéticas se multiplican y su composición siempre es diferente; el hecho de que una determinada sustancia psicotrópica entre a formar parte de una lista de sustancias fiscalizadas al culminarse la aplicación del Sistema de Alerta Temprana no significa acabar con el problema, basta con que se modifique un átomo de la molécula de la sustancia declarada ilegal para que nazca otra de efectos similares, pero oficinalmente distinta; el tiempo que se necesita para que esa sustancia se declare también ilegal puede superar el año, período durante el cual se comercializa, causando enormes daños a la salud pública y generando una absoluta inseguridad.

El Consejo Europeo adoptó en Diciembre de 2011 sus conclusiones en materia de nuevas sustancias psicoactivas, en las que invitaba a la Comisión Europea a elaborar y presentar en 2012 una propuesta legislativa que revisara y mejorara la Decisión 2005/387/JAI. Viendo que la propuesta no había sido presentada, el Consejo insistió el pasado 6 de febrero en la necesidad de hacerlo tan rápido como fuera posible, todo ello en el marco de las discusiones sobre la política antidroga de la Unión.

¿Podría indicar la Comisión si se ha procedido ya a la presentación de dicha propuesta legislativa? En caso afirmativo, ¿contribuye la nueva regulación a agilizar el procedimiento de evaluación y decisión de sustancias objeto del Sistema de Alerta Temprana en Europa? En caso negativo, ¿cuándo tiene previsto la Comisión presentar la necesaria propuesta?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de agosto de 2013)

Abordar la frecuente aparición y la rápida difusión en toda la UE de nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas constituye una prioridad de la Comisión.

El informe de evaluación ([1]) de la Comisión, publicado en julio de 2011, llegó a la conclusión de que el instrumento legislativo de la UE, la Decisión 2005/387/JAI del Consejo ([2]), relativa al intercambio de información, la evaluación del riesgo y el control de las nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas, era insuficiente para abordar este problema y de que precisaba una revisión. La Comunicación de la Comisión «Para una respuesta más firme frente a las drogas» ([3]), adoptada en octubre de 2011, señaló que la propagación de las nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas es uno de los retos principales para la política en materia de drogas, que exige una respuesta firme de la UE.

La Comisión está formulando actualmente nuevas propuestas legislativas sobre las nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas, al efecto de de reforzar la reacción de la UE mediante el refuerzo de la supervisión y la evaluación del riesgo de las sustancias y respuestas más rápidas, eficaces y proporcionadas para reducir la disponibilidad de sustancias peligrosas para la salud y la seguridad. La Comisión tiene previsto presentar las nuevas propuestas en breve.

([1]) COM(2011) 430 final y SEC(2011) 912 final.
([2]) DO L 127 de 20.5.2005, pp. 32-37.
([3]) COM(2011) 689 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006518/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: New synthetic drugs and the need to improve the Early Warning System in Europe

On 28 May, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) presented the new European Drug Report for 2013: Trends and developments. The report delves further into issues previously raised in the Centre's joint report with Europol on EU drug markets, presented early this year. Both reports underscore the rapid changes in the area of synthetic drugs. The pace of these changes demands that Europe improve its early warning system for new substances on the market.

The Early Warning System was created by the EMCDDA and Europol in 1997, in collaboration with the EU Member States, and Council Decision 2005/387/JHA defined the framework for the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances. Experience has shown that the results of its implementation could be improved if, for example, the excessive length of time between assessment and decision-making were shortened, or if studies of several substances could be undertaken at the same time.

However, the true problem is that new synthetic drugs are multiplying, and their composition is always different; even if a specific psychoactive substance is added to a list of controlled substances as a result of the Early Warning System, this does not mean that the problem is solved. Changing a single atom of one molecule of the illegal substance is enough to create another substance with similar effects, but which officially is different. The time required in order for this new substance to be declared illegal as well can exceed one year. During this period, the substance is marketed, causing enormous damage to public health and giving rise to complete insecurity.

In December 2011, the Council adopted conclusions on new psychoactive substances, in which it invited the European Commission to draft and present, in 2012, a legislative proposal that would revise and improve Decision 2005/387/JAI. On 6 February of this year, during discussions of the EU anti-drug policy, the Council, seeing that the proposal had not been presented, reiterated the need to take this step as quickly as possible.

Could the Commission indicate whether it has presented the aforementioned legislative proposal? If so, does the new regulation help to expedite the assessment and decision-making process for substances subject to the Early Warning System in Europe? If not, when does the Commission plan to present the necessary proposal?

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

Addressing the frequent emergence and rapid spread across the EU of new psychoactive substances is a priority for the Commission.

The Commission's assessment report ([1]), published in July 2011, concluded that the EU instrument, Council Decision 2005/387/JHA ([2]) on the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances, is inadequate for addressing this challenge, and that it requires revision. The Commission Communication 'Towards a stronger European response to drugs' ([3]), adopted in October 2011, identified the spread of new psychoactive substances as one of the most challenging developments in drugs policy, requiring a firmer EU response.

The Commission is currently working on new legislative proposals on new psychoactive substances, aimed at strengthening the EU response, through enhanced monitoring and risk assessment of substances, and swifter, more effective and more proportionate answers to reduce the availability of substances posing health and security risks. It is planning to present the new proposals soon.

([1]) COM(2011) 430 final and SEC(2011) 912 final.
([2]) OJ L 127, 20.5.2005, pp. 32-37.
([3]) COM(2011) 689 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006519/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: El rechazo injustificado de los ajustes razonables en el lugar de trabajo

La UE ha proclamado en diferentes disposiciones que la observancia del principio de igualdad de trato en relación con las personas con discapacidad implica la adopción de ajustes razonables. Esto significa que los empresarios tomarán las medidas adecuadas, en función de las necesidades de cada situación concreta, para permitir a las personas con discapacidad acceder al empleo, tomar parte en el mismo o progresar profesionalmente, o para que se les ofrezca formación, salvo que esas medidas supongan una carga excesiva para el empresario. La carga no se considerará excesiva cuando sea paliada en grado suficiente mediante medidas existentes en la política del Estado miembro sobre discapacidades.

Considerando que el rechazo de ajustes razonables es una forma de discriminación;

Considerando el artículo 15 de la Carta Europea de Derechos Fundamentales;

Considerando la Directiva 2000/78/CE del Consejo, de 27 de noviembre de 2000, relativa al establecimiento de un marco general para la igualdad de trato en el empleo y la ocupación;

Considerando el artículo 2 de la Convención de Naciones Unidas de los derechos de las personas con discapacidad;

Considerando que el artículo 27 de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas de los derechos de las personas con discapacidad reconoce el derecho de las personas con discapacidad a trabajar, en igualdad de condiciones que las demás;

¿Cómo piensa la Comisión forzar a los Estados miembros a que adopten los necesarios ajustes razonables en el lugar de trabajo para fomentar el empleo entre las personas con discapacidad?

¿Que medidas adoptará la Comisión con arreglo a lo contemplado en el artículo 27, apartado 1, letra i), de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión apoya los esfuerzos nacionales por mejorar la situación del empleo de las personas con discapacidad conforme a la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 ([1]) y la Estrategia Europa 2020. El Fondo Social Europeo presta apoyo financiero para la integración de las personas con discapacidad.

Como guardiana del Tratado, la Comisión ha examinado si todos los Estados miembros han incorporado correctamente a su ordenamiento jurídico el artículo 5 de la Directiva 2000/78/CE ([2]), por la que se establece la obligación de los empleadores de proporcionar «ajustes razonables» para las personas con discapacidad. Como resultado, se ha incoado un procedimiento de infracción contra Italia ([3]) en relación con la incorporación de esta disposición a su ordenamiento jurídico. El Tribunal de Justicia de la UE dictaminó en julio de 2013 que la República Italiana no había incorporado plena y correctamente el artículo 5 de la Directiva. En consecuencia, Italia tendrá que ajustar su legislación nacional a la Directiva.

Se está elaborando un informe de la Comisión sobre su aplicación para su publicación en 2013.

Las disposiciones relativas a los «ajustes razonables» contempladas en el artículo 27, apartado 1, letra i), de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad, en la que la UE es parte desde 2011, son sustancialmente idénticas a las del artículo 5 de la Directiva. La Directiva se incluyó en la declaración de competencias de la Unión Europea hecha al celebrarse la Convención ([4]). Por consiguiente, la UE está aplicando efectivamente esa disposición de la Convención en el marco de sus competencias al garantizar la aplicación del artículo 5 de la Directiva. Asimismo, el Tribunal de Justicia de la UE interpreta en la sentencia citada el concepto de ajustes razonables con arreglo a la definición que figura en el artículo 2 de la Convención.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:es:NOT
([2]) La Directiva 2000/78/CE prohíbe la discriminación en el empleo y la formación profesional, entre otras cosas por motivos de discapacidad, y dispone la obligación de que el empresario efectúe «ajustes razonables» (DO L 180 de 19.7.2000, pp. 22-26).
([3]) Ref. C-312/11, sentencia de 4 de julio de 2013, aún sin notificar.
([4]) DO L 23 de 27.1.2010, p. 35.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006519/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: The unjustified refusal to make reasonable accommodations in the workplace

On multiple occasions, the EU has stated that observance of the principle of equal treatment in relation to people with disabilities includes making reasonable accommodations. This means that employers must take appropriate measures in each particular case to enable people with disabilities to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment, or to undergo training, unless such measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer. This burden is not considered disproportionate when it is sufficiently remedied by measures existing within the framework of the disability policy of the Member State concerned.

Considering that the refusal to make reasonable accommodations is a form of discrimination;

Considering Article 15 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;

Considering Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation;

Considering Article 2 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

Considering that Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognises the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others;

How does the Commission plan to force Member States to make the necessary reasonable accommodations in the workplace in order to promote employment among people with disabilities?

What measures will the Commission adopt in accordance with the provisions of Article 27(1)(i) of the United Nations Convention?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The Commission supports national efforts to improve the employment situation of people with disabilities under the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) and the Europe 2020 strategy. The European Social Fund provides financial support for the integration of people with disabilities.

As guardian of the Treaty, the Commission has examined whether all Member States transposed correctly Art. 5 of Directive 2000/78/EC ([2]), establishing the obligation of employers to provide Reasonable Accommodation to persons with disabilities. As a result infringement procedures were opened, including against Italy ([3]), concerning transposition of this provision. The Court of the EU ruled in July 2013 that the Italian Republic had failed to implement, fully and correctly, Art. 5 of the directive. Accordingly, Italy will have to conform the national legislation to the directive.

A Commission report on its implementation is under preparation for publication in 2013.

The provisions related to Reasonable Accommodation contained in Art. 27(1)(i) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which the EU is a party since 2011, are substantially identical to Art. 5 of the directive. The directive was included in the declaration of EU competences made on the conclusion of the Convention ([4]). Therefore, the EU is effectively implementing that provision of the Convention within the remit of its competences by ensuring the implementation of Art. 5 of the directive. Likewise, in the abovementioned judgment, the EU Court interpreted the concept of Reasonable Accommodation according to the definition given in Article 2 of the Convention.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT .
([2]) Directive 2000/78/EC prohibits discrimination in employment and vocational training *inter alia* on disability, and contains a duty for the employer to provide reasonable accommodation, OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, p. 22-26.
([3]) Ref. C-312/11, judgment of 4 July 2013, not yet reported.
([4]) OJ L 23/35 of 27/1/2010.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006520/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Plataforma «TIC y turismo»

En la Comunicación de la Comisión Europea al Parlamento Europeo titulada «Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo: un nuevo marco político para el turismo europeo», en la tercera de las acciones previstas se preveía la creación de una plataforma denominada «TIC y turismo» cuya finalidad era la adaptación del sector turístico y sus empresas a la evolución del mercado de las nuevas tecnologías de la información y aumentar su competividad.

¿Cuándo tiene previsto la Comisión poner en marcha la plataforma «TIC y turismo»?

¿Qué servicios en particular estarán disponibles a través de esta plataforma?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

La acción 3 de la Comunicación de la Comisión de 2010 sobre el turismo se realiza principalmente a través de dos iniciativas, estrechamente vinculadas entre sí:

— Un proyecto de demostración (Tourismlink) para promover un uso inteligente de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC) y la integración de las PYME de la UE en las cadenas de valor de la industria a escala mundial. «Fomento de la innovación en las TIC para las PYME del sector turístico» comprende el período que va desde enero de 2012 hasta junio de 2014. Los objetivos son: impulsar la competitividad a través de la utilización de las TIC; interconectar las PYME del sector turístico en los países de destino con las agencias de viajes, los operadores turísticos y los distribuidores de los mercados de origen mediante el desarrollo de soluciones sencillas, baratas, fáciles de utilizar e interoperables; facilitar la entrada en el mercado de nuevos agentes dinámicos; ayudar a las PYME a convertirse en socios comerciales internacionales plenamente integrados, y aumentar la capacidad de innovación de las grandes empresas a través de la cooperación con las PYME ([1]).

— Un portal de apoyo a las empresas turísticas (Tourismit), que está desarrollando un contratista. Proporcionará herramientas, tutoriales, formación y recursos de información de interés para el uso de las empresas de turismo. El objetivo del portal es aprovechar las TIC como motor para apoyar a las empresas (principalmente PYME) a crear, gestionar y promover su actividad turística. El portal estará listo a principios de 2014 ([2]).

([1]) Información en: http://www.tourismlink.eu/
([2]) Se pide a los interesados que faciliten aportaciones y comentarios sobre temas útiles y contenidos a través de: http://bluevista.ceros.com/segittur/tourismiting

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006520/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: 'ICT and tourism' platform

In the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament entitled 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe', the third planned action is to launch an 'ICT and tourism' platform to facilitate the adaptation of the tourism sector and its businesses to market developments in new information technologies and improve their competitiveness.

When does the Commission expect to launch the 'ITC and tourism' platform?

What services, specifically, will be available through this platform?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

Action 3 of the Commission's 2010 Communication on tourism, is implemented mainly through two initiatives, closely linked together:

— a demonstration project (TOURISMlink) to promote the smart use of ICT and the integration of EU SMEs in global industrial value chains. 'Stimulating ICT innovation for SMEs in the tourism sector' is running from January 2012 till June 2014. The aims are to boost competitiveness through the use of ICT — interconnect Tourism SMEs in destination countries with Travel Agencies, Tour Operators and distributors in source markets through the development of simple, low-cost, easy to use and interoperable solutions — facilitate entry into the market of new dynamic players — help SMEs become fully integrated international business partners and increase innovation capacity of big companies through cooperation with SMEs ([1]);

— a Tourism business support portal (TOURISMIT), which is being developed by a contractor. It will provide tools, tutorials, training and information packages of use and interest to tourism companies. The objective of the portal is to use ICT as an enabler to assist businesses (mainly SMEs) to set-up, manage and promote their tourism business. The portal will be delivered in early 2014 ([2]).

([1]) Info on http://www.tourismlink.eu/
([2]) Stakeholders are invited to provide input and feedback on useful topics and content through: http://bluevista.ceros.com/segittur/tourismiting

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006521/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Proyecto piloto de una red común de instituciones relacionadas con el turismo

En la Comunicación de la Comisión Europea al Parlamento Europeo titulada «Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo: un nuevo marco político para el turismo europeo», la novena de sus acciones previstas anunciaba el desarrollo de un proyecto piloto destinado a poner en red a los institutos de investigación, las universidades, los observatorios públicos y privados, las autoridades regionales y nacionales y las oficinas de turismo nacionales.

¿Cuándo cree la Comisión que se llevará a cabo el proyecto piloto?

¿Cuál será la duración del mismo?

¿Qué Estados miembros participarán en el proyecto piloto?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión ha cofinanciado tres proyectos en el marco de una convocatoria de propuestas titulada «Redes de conocimientos»: Service Design in Tourism (Diseño de servicios turísticos) (1), Knownet (2) y Fast-Lain (3). Estos tres proyectos ya han finalizado. Sus socios principales eran, respectivamente: Management Center Innsbruck, Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers y Ecotrans e.V. Los beneficiarios que participaron en estas actividades procedían de los países siguientes:

(1) Alemania, Austria (socio principal), Finlandia, Francia, Noruega, Países Bajos y Suecia;

(2) Austria, Bélgica, Eslovenia, Francia (socio principal), Hungría, Italia, Rumanía y Turquía;

(3) Alemania (socio principal), Croacia, España, Francia, Noruega, Portugal y Suecia.

Los resultados de estos proyectos son propiedad de los beneficiarios. Puede consultarse más información sobre dichos resultados en los sitios web siguientes:

(1) http://www.servicedesigntourism.com/conference/?site=registration

(2) http://www.i-f-t.fr/content/knownet

(3) http://destinet.eu/who-who/civil-society-ngos/fastlain/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006521/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Pilot project to network institutions related to tourism

In the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament entitled 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe', the ninth planned action was to develop a pilot project aimed at networking research institutes, universities, public and private monitoring units, regional and national authorities and national tourism offices.

When does the Commission believe the pilot project will take place?

How long will it last?

Which Member States will be involved in the pilot project?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The Commission has co-financed three projects under a call for proposals entitled 'Knowledge Networks': Service Design in Tourism (1), Knownet (2) and Fast Lain (3). These three projects have now been completed. Their lead partners were respectively: Management Center Innsbruck, Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers and Ecotrans e.V. The beneficiaries involved in these ativities came from the following countries:

(1) Austria (lead partner), Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden;

(2) Austria, Belgium, France (lead partner), Hungary, Italy, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey;

(3) Croatia, Germany (lead partner), France, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden.

The results of these projects are the property of the beneficiaries. More information about the outcomes can be found at:

(1) http://www.servicedesigntourism.com/conference/?site=registration

(2) http://www.i-f-t.fr/content/knownet

(3) http://destinet.eu/who-who/civil-society-ngos/fastlain/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006522/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Tarjeta de movilidad europea

Una de cada seis personas en la EU es discapacitada. Estas personas deben tener las mismas oportunidades que el resto de los ciudadanos, y concretamente el derecho a elegir libremente dónde vivir, trabajar e incluso viajar.

Considerando que el artículo 26 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE establece el «derecho de las personas discapacitadas a beneficiarse de medidas que garanticen su autonomía, su integración social y profesional y su participación en la vida de la comunidad»;

Considerando la Resolución del Parlamento Europeo, de 25 de octubre de 2011, sobre la movilidad y la inclusión de las personas con discapacidad y la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020;

Considerando que cuando una persona con discapacidad cruza su frontera nacional no puede hacer uso de su tarjeta de discapacidad, lo que implica no poder utilizar los servicios puestos a disposición de las personas con discapacidad de ese país;

Considerando que la Tarjeta de movilidad europea sería un instrumento útil para favorecer los desplazamientos de las personas con discapacidad entre Estados miembros;

Considerando que el reconocimiento de una discapacidad puede abrir la puerta a una serie de concesiones, como por ejemplo un mejor acceso a los transportes, o actividades culturales y eventos;

¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión para la creación de una tarjeta europea de movilidad, que reconozca los mismos privilegios en cada Estado miembro a las personas con discapacidad?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-003455/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006522/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: European mobility card

One in every six people in the EU is disabled. These people should have the same opportunities as other citizens — specifically, the right to choose freely where to live, work and even travel.

Article 26 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union establishes the 'right of persons with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community'.

The European Parliament adopted a Resolution on 25 October 2011 on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

When people with disabilities cross national borders, they cannot use their disability card, which means that they cannot avail themselves of the services for people with disabilities in that country.

The European mobility card would be a useful way to encourage travel by people with disabilities among Member States.

Recognition of a disability can open the door to a series of measures, such as better access to transportation or cultural activities and events.

What measures does the Commission plan to adopt in order to create a European mobility card, which would ensure that people with disabilities are afforded the same privileges in all Member States?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question E-003455/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006524/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 juni 2013)

Betreft: Wanbeleid van de Trojka met betrekking tot de redding van Griekenland

Het Internationaal Monetair Fonds (IMF) heeft zijn evaluatie achteraf van uitzonderlijke steun in het kader van de stand-by-overeenkomst van 2010 betreffende Griekenland gepubliceerd ([1]). In dit verslag geeft het IMF toe dat het twijfels had over de draagbaarheid van de schuldenlast en suggereert het daarmee dat Griekenland op zijn minst niet voldeed aan het criterium volgens hetwelke lenen uitsluitend mogelijk is „als er een grote waarschijnlijkheid bestaat dat de overheidsschuld op middellange termijn draagbaar blijft". Het IMF stelt dat er vanaf of kort na het begin van het programma een definitieve oplossing had moeten worden gevonden voor het probleem van de overheidsschuld en dat de Griekse obligaties lang vóór oktober 2011 waarderingscorrecties hadden moeten ondergaan. Volgens het IMF waren de macro-economische veronderstellingen voor het volledige programma bovendien te optimistisch, vooral met betrekking tot de economische groei, de belastinginkomsten en het vermogen van Griekenland om hervormingen door te voeren ([2]). Het IMF zegt in dit verband dat „de mate van participatie aan het programma en de capaciteit om structurele hervormingen door te voeren, overschat werden". Daarnaast meldt het dat er onduidelijkheid heerste over de toekenning van verantwoordelijkheden binnen de Trojka.

De wettigheid van dit programma is met andere woorden hoogst twijfelachtig. Aangezien Griekenland onjuiste gegevens verstrekte over zijn overheidsfinanciën en het IMF te optimistisch was in zijn voorspellingen en zijn eigen procedurevoorschriften negeerde, had het IMF niet aan de redding van Griekenland mogen deelnemen. Zonder de deelname van het IMF zou de reddingsoperatie duidelijk onwettig geweest zijn: uit hoofde van artikel 125 van het VWEU hadden de instellingen en lidstaten van de EU Griekenland namelijk geen geld mogen lenen.

1. Wat denkt de Commissie van de conclusies van het IMF in zijn evaluatie achteraf?

2. Is de Commissie van mening dat haar eigen vooruitzichten voor Griekenland en andere landen die financiële steun ontvangen, te optimistisch zijn? Kan de Commissie in dit verband uitleggen waarom Griekenland volgens haar gegevens volgend jaar opnieuw economische groei zal kennen en er bijgevolg een eind zal komen aan de reddingsoperatie van het land, hoewel de OESO voorspelt dat Griekenland voor het zevende opeenvolgende jaar een recessie zal doormaken ([3])?

3. Beseft de Commissie dat, als de deelname van het IMF aan de reddingsoperatie conform diens eigen procedurevoorschriften onwettig blijkt te zijn, het hele programma onwettig wordt?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(19 juli 2013)

De Commissie heeft reeds haar mening gegeven over het door het geachte Parlementslid aangehaalde verslag van het IMF.

In het document worden enkele opvallende successen aangewezen die tijdens het programma zijn geboekt, in het bijzonder de sterke fiscale consolidatie, de hervorming van het pensioenstelsel en de inperking van spillover-effecten. Er wordt eveneens op gewezen dat het uittreden van Griekenland uit de eurozone is voorkomen. De Commissie heeft reeds kenbaar gemaakt met welke bevindingen in het rapport zij het niet eens is. Zo is zij het niet eens met de conclusie dat het wenselijk was geweest de schuld al in 2010 te herstructureren. De Commissie is van mening dat de herstructurering van de schulden in de privésector tot een besmetting van het systeem had kunnen leiden en het programma dus ernstig zou hebben ondermijnd. De Commissie, die een drijvende kracht achter de grote nadruk van het programma op structurele hervormingen is geweest, is het eveneens oneens met het standpunt dat er niet voldoende inspanningen zijn geleverd om dergelijke hervormingen door te voeren.

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar economische voorjaarsprognoses van 2013 ([4]) voor meer informatie. De Commissie, de ECB en het IMF hanteren dezelfde groeiprognose.

([1]) http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13156.pdf
([2]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/6924ee76-cdfb-11e2-8313-00144feab7de.html#axzz2VLI9hxdE; http://www.forbes.com/sites/karlwhelan/2013/06/05/imf-on-greece-we-screwed-up-but-its-really-the-eurozones-fault/.
([3]) http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_29/05/2013_501374.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006524/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Mismanagement by the Troika of the Greek bailout

The International Monetary Fund has published its Ex Post Evaluation of Exceptional Access under the 2010 Stand-By Arrangement on Greece ([1]). In this report, the IMF admits it had misgivings about debt sustainability, thus suggesting Greece did not meet at least the criterion of only lending where there was 'a high probability of public debt being sustainable in the medium term'. The IMF states that the public debt problem should have been tackled decisively at the outset or early in the programme, and haircuts on Greek bonds should have occurred much earlier than October 2011. It also states that macroeconomic assumptions were too optimistic throughout the programme, especially with regard to economic growth, fiscal revenues and Greece's ability to implement reforms ([2]). In this respect, the IMF affirms that 'the depth of ownership of the program and the capacity to implement structural reforms were overestimated'. Moreover, it reports that 'there was no such clarity in the assignment of responsibilities across the Troika'.

The legality of the programme is therefore all the more questionable. Since Greece falsified its data on public finances, and the IMF was over-optimistic in its forecasts and disregarded its own procedural rules, the IMF should not have participated in the Greek bailout. Without its participation, the bailout would have been overtly illegal, since the EU institutions and Member States could not have lent any money to Greece, pursuant to the 'no bailout clause' enshrined in Article 125 TFEU.

In the light of this:

1. Can the Commission express its stance on the conclusions reached by the IMF in its *ex post* evaluation?

2. Does the Commission think that its own forecasts for Greece and other countries benefiting from financial assistance are too optimistic? In this respect, can the Commission explain why its data see Greece returning to growth and exiting its bailout next year, while the OECD forecasts that Greece will remain in a seventh year of recession ([3])?

3. Is the Commission aware that, if IMF participation in the bailout is proven illegal according to the IMF's own procedural rules, the programme will be unlawful altogether?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

The Commission has already expressed its views on the IMF report referred to by the Honourable Member.

The document identifies notable successes during the programme, in particular the strong fiscal consolidation, the reform of the pension system and the containment of spillovers. It also highlights the fact that avoiding Greece's exit from the euro area was achieved. The Commission has already highlighted the findings of the report with which it disagrees. One of them is the conclusion that an upfront debt restructuring in 2010 would have been desirable. The Commission is of the opinion that private sector debt restructuring would have certainly risked systemic contagion and would also have severely undermined the programme. The Commission, which has been a major driving force behind the strong focus of the programme on structural reforms, also disagrees with the view that not enough was done to identify such reforms.

For detailed information on its most recent economic forecasts, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its Spring 2013 European Economic Forecast ([4]).The Commission, the ECB and the IMF share the same growth forecast.

([1]) http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13156.pdf
([2]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/6924ee76-cdfb-11e2-8313-00144feab7de.html#axzz2VLI9hxdE; http://www.forbes.com/sites/karlwhelan/2013/06/05/imf-on-greece-we-screwed-up-but-its-really-the-eurozones-fault/.
([3]) http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_29/05/2013_501374.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-006525/13
до Комисията
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) и Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 юни 2013 г.)

Относно: Инструмент за сътрудничество за развитие I

Съгласно МФР за 2007—2013 г. финансирането за развитие за сексуално и репродуктивно здраве и права беше предоставяно чрез тематични инструменти на Инструмента за сътрудничество за развитие, преди всичко чрез „Инвестиране в хората“ и „Недържавни участници и местни органи“. Тези възможности за финансиране бяха предоставяни чрез открити покани за отправяне на предложения, което позволяваше на организации на гражданското общество да участват в ускоряването на достъпа до сексуално и репродуктивно здраве и права в страните с ниски и средни доходи.

В предложението на Комисията от юли 2011 г. за Инструмента за сътрудничество за развитие броят на тематичните инструменти е ограничен до два; относими в най-голяма степен към сексуалното и репродуктивно здраве и права са инструментите „Глобални обществени блага и предизвикателства“ и „Организации на гражданското общество и местни органи“. Те обхващат широк спектър от теми и, за разлика от програмата „Инвестиране в хората“, сексуалното и репродуктивното здраве и права не са изрично посочени. Преговорната позиция на Парламента относно Инструмента за сътрудничество за развитие поправя това като утвърждава отново важността на подкрепата на ЕС за пълното прилагане на стратегиите и инициативите за насърчаване на сексуалното и репродуктивното здраве и права. Значението, което Парламентът отдава на сексуалното и репродуктивното здраве и права, отразява съществуващите позиции на ЕС, тъй като сексуалното и репродуктивното здраве и права вече имат важно място в европейската политика, например в заключенията на Съвета относно ролята на ЕС в световното здравеопазване и Европейския консенсус за развитие (2005 г.).

Като има предвид всички посочени факти, Комисията би ли изяснила:

1. Ще има ли конкретен бюджетен ред в рамките на Инструмента за сътрудничество за развитие за подкрепа на Международната конференция за населението и развитието и за Пекинската платформа за действие и за документите от конференцията за преглед, така че да се гарантира отговорност по отношение на ангажиментите на ЕС?

2. Каква ще е частта от тематичните инструменти на Инструмента за сътрудничество за развитие (както за „Глобални обществени блага и предизвикателства“, така и за „Организации на гражданското общество и местни органи“), която ще бъде отпусната за сексуално и репродуктивно здраве и права?

3. Как Комисията ще осигури бъдещото финансиране за организации на гражданското общество, които работят в областта на сексуалното и репродуктивното здраве и права, чрез тематични покани за организациите на гражданското общество?

Отговор, даден от г-н Пиебалгс от името на Комисията
(23 юли 2013 г.)

Комисията възнамерява да продължи работата си в областта на сексуалното и репродуктивното здраве и права (СРЗП) посредством редица инструменти и финансови механизми като крайната цел е да бъдат отстоявани и насърчавани основните човешки права на населението в партньорските държави с оглед на социалния прогрес, включително правото на здравеопазване и образование, равенството между половете и недискриминацията.

С оглед на опростяването на процедурите в бюджетното предложение на Комисията се препоръчва да се консолидират бюджетните номенклатури за Инструмента за сътрудничество за развитие (ИСР), който вече ще включва само два бюджетни реда за всяка от следните три тематични програми: два за организациите на гражданското общество (ОГО) и местните органи, два за глобалните обществени блага и предизвикателства и два за Панафриканската програма. Няма да има специален бюджетен ред, предназначен за изпълнението на програмата за действия на Международната конференция за населението и развитието, нито за Пекинската платформа.

Понастоящем по законодателния пакет, приет от Комисията на 7 декември 2011 г., се водят преговори — най-вече по отношение на ИСР — със съзаконодателите в рамките на тристранния процес. Поради това на този етап е невъзможно да бъде предоставена подробна информация относно тематичното и финансовото разпределение на средствата.

Основният акцент в подхода на Комисията в областта на здравеопазването на национално равнище ще бъде поставен върху оказването на подкрепа за усилията на партньорските правителства в посока изграждане на ефективни и функциониращи системи на здравеопазване, които са в състояние да осигурят достъпни здравни услуги с добро качество, включително услуги в областта на сексуалното и репродуктивното здраве. Освен това в държавите, които получават средства по бюджетния ред за ОГО и местните органи и където сексуалното и репродуктивното здраве е избрано за приоритет, делегациите на ЕС ще бъдат в състояние да предлагат възможности ОГО да упражняват правото си на инициатива ([1]) в полза на достъпа до СРЗП.

([1]) COM(2002) 598 окончателен.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006525/13
à la Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) et Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 juin 2013)

Objet: Instrument de coopération au développement I

Au titre du cadre financier pluriannuel 2007-2013, les fonds pour le développement en matière de santé et droits génésiques et sexuels sont octroyés via des instruments thématiques de l'Instrument de coopération au développement (ICD), essentiellement les programmes «Investir dans les ressources humaines» et «Acteurs non étatiques et autorités locales dans le développement». Ces possibilités de financement ont été annoncées par l'intermédiaire d'un appel général à propositions, ce qui a permis aux organisations de la société civile (OSC) de jouer leur rôle dans l'accélération de l'accès à la santé et aux droits génésiques et sexuels dans les pays à revenu faible et intermédiaire.

La proposition de la Commission de juillet 2011 instituant un instrument de financement de la coopération au développement limite le nombre d'instruments thématiques à deux. Les instruments les plus pertinents dans le cadre de la santé et des droits génésiques et sexuels sont celui lié aux biens publics mondiaux et aux défis qui les accompagnent ainsi que celui lié aux organisations de la société civile et aux autorités locales. Ces instruments couvrent un large éventail de problématiques et, contrairement au programme «Investir dans les ressources humaines», la thématique de la santé et des droits génésiques et sexuels n'y est pas mentionnée explicitement. La position de négociation du Parlement européen concernant l'Instrument de coopération au développement (ICD) comble cette lacune en ce qu'elle réaffirme l'importance du soutien qu'apporte l'Union à la pleine mise en œuvre de stratégies et d'initiatives destinées à promouvoir la santé et les droits génésiques et sexuels. L'importance qu'accorde le Parlement européen à la santé et aux droits génésiques et sexuels reflète les positions actuelles de l'Union, puisque cette problématique figure clairement parmi les orientations politiques européennes, comme l'illustrent les conclusions du Conseil sur le rôle de l'Union dans le domaine de la santé mondiale (2010) et le consensus européen pour le développement (2005).

Compte tenu de tous les aspects soulevés, la Commission peut-elle éclaircir les points suivants:

1. Prévoit-elle une ligne budgétaire spécifique, au sein de l'ICD, destinée au soutien du Programme d'action de la Conférence internationale sur la population et le développement (CIPD), du Programme d'action de Pékin et des documents des conférences de révision, afin d'assurer que l'Union tient ses engagements?

2. Quelle sera la part d'instruments thématiques de l'ICD (aussi bien pour le programme «Biens publics mondiaux et défis qui les accompagnent» que pour le programme «Organisations de la société civile et autorités locales») allouée à la santé et aux droits génésiques et sexuels?

3. De quelle manière la Commission garantira-t-elle le financement futur des OSC œuvrant à la problématique de la santé et des droits génésiques et sexuels par l'intermédiaire d'appels à projets thématiques?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(23 juillet 2013)

La Commission entend continuer à contribuer au développement en matière de santé et de droits génésiques et sexuels au moyen d'un certain nombre d'instruments et de modalités financières, dans le but ultime de maintenir et de promouvoir les droits humains fondamentaux des populations des pays partenaires en matière de progrès social, y compris le droit à la santé et à l'éducation, l'égalité des sexes et la non-discrimination.

Pour simplifier les procédures, la Commission suggère dans sa proposition de budget de consolider les nomenclatures budgétaires pour l'instrument de financement de la coopération au développement (ICD), qui ne comportera que deux lignes budgétaires pour chacun des trois programmes thématiques suivants: deux pour les organisations de la société civile (OSC) et les autorités locales (AL), deux pour les biens publics mondiaux et les défis qui les accompagnent et deux pour le Programme panafricain. Aucune ligne budgétaire spécifique n'est donc prévue pour la mise en œuvre du programme d'action de la conférence internationale sur la population et le développement ni pour le programme d'action de Pékin.

Le paquet législatif, adopté par la Commission le 7 décembre 2011, est actuellement en cours de négociation — et notamment l'ICD — avec les colégislateurs dans le cadre du trilogue. Il n'est donc pas possible de fournir des informations détaillées sur les affectations thématiques et financières à ce stade.

L'approche de la Commission en matière de santé consistera essentiellement, au niveau national, à apporter un soutien aux gouvernements des pays partenaires dans leurs efforts pour mettre en place des systèmes de santé effectifs et efficaces, en mesure de fournir des services de santé abordables de bonne qualité, y compris des services de soins de santé sexuelle et génésique. En outre, dans les pays bénéficiant d'une affectation au titre de la ligne budgétaire OSC et AL et où la santé sexuelle et génésique a été retenue comme priorité, les délégations de l'UE pourront offrir des possibilités en ce qui concerne le droit d'initiative ([1]) des OSC à défendre l'accès à la santé et aux droits génésiques et sexuels.

([1]) COM(2002) 598 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006525/13
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) en Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 juni 2013)

Betreft: Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking (I)

In het kader van het MFK 2007-2013 is er via het thematische programma van het Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking en in het bijzonder de onderdelen „Investeringen in mensen" en „Niet-overheidsactoren en lokale autoriteiten" ontwikkelingshulp toegekend voor seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten. Deze financieringsmogelijkheden vormden het onderwerp van openbare oproepen tot het indienen van voorstellen, met als doel organisaties uit het maatschappelijk middenveld in staat te stellen een rol te spelen bij de bevordering van de seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten in landen met lage en middelhoge inkomens.

In het Commissievoorstel van juli 2011 betreffende het Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking wordt het aantal thematische instrumenten beperkt tot twee. De meest relevante instrumenten voor wat seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten betreft, zijn „Mondiale collectieve goederen en uitdagingen" en „Organisaties van het maatschappelijk middenveld en plaatselijke overheden". Zij dekken echter een brede waaier aan onderwerpen en bevatten geen uitdrukkelijke verwijzing naar de problematiek van seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten, hetgeen in het programma „Investeringen in mensen" wel het geval is. In zijn onderhandelingsstandpunt inzake het Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking corrigeert het Parlement dit door er nogmaals op te wijzen dat het belangrijk is dat de EU de uitvoering van alle strategieën en initiatieven ter bevordering van de seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten ondersteunt. Het belang dat het Parlement aan deze problematiek toekent, weerspiegelt de bestaande standpunten van de EU: seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten komen immers al uitdrukkelijk in het Europese beleid voor, onder meer in de conclusies van de Raad over de rol van de EU met betrekking tot de volksgezondheid in de wereld (2010) en in de Europese consensus inzake ontwikkeling (2005).

Kan de Commissie, rekening houdend met al deze opmerkingen, de volgende punten verduidelijken:

1. Zal het Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking met het oog op de veiligstelling van de verantwoordingsplicht betreffende de verbintenissen van de EU een specifieke begrotingslijn bevatten ter ondersteuning van de internationale conferentie over bevolking en ontwikkeling, het actieprogramma van Peking en de bijbehorende toetsingsconferenties?

2. Wat wordt het proportionele gewicht van de aan seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten toegewezen thematische onderdelen van het Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking („Mondiale collectieve goederen en uitdagingen" en „Organisaties van het maatschappelijk middenveld en plaatselijke overheden")?

3. Hoe wil de Commissie de financiering van organisaties uit het maatschappelijk middenveld die actief zijn op het vlak van seksuele reproductieve gezondheid en rechten, in de toekomst via thematische oproepen aan deze organisaties garanderen?

Antwoord van de heer Piebalgs namens de Commissie
(23 juli 2013)

De Commissie is voornemens te blijven bijdragen aan seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten via een aantal instrumenten en financiële regelingen met als einddoel de handhaving en naleving van de fundamentele mensenrechten van de bevolking van partnerlanden inzake sociale vooruitgang, met inbegrip van het recht op gezondheidszorg en onderwijs, gendergelijkheid en non-discriminatie.

Teneinde de procedures te vereenvoudigen wil de Commissie met haar begrotingsvoorstel begrotingsonderdelen voor het DCI-instrument consolideren. Het voorstel bevat slechts twee begrotingsposten voor elk van de drie volgende programma's: twee voor „organisaties van het maatschappelijk middenveld en plaatselijke overheden", twee voor „mondiale collectieve goederen en uitdagingen" en twee voor het pan-Afrikaans programma. Er is dus geen specifieke begrotingspost voor de uitvoering van het actieprogramma van de Internationale Conferentie over bevolking en ontwikkeling, het zogeheten actieprogramma van Peking.

Over het wetgevingspakket, dat op 7 december 2011 door de Commissie is aangenomen, en met name over het DCI, wordt momenteel onderhandeld met de medewetgevers in het kader van de trialoogprocedure. Bijgevolg kan de Commissie op dit moment geen gedetailleerde informatie over thematische en financiële toewijzingen geven.

De aanpak van de Commissie op het vlak van gezondheid in de partnerlanden is voornamelijk gericht op de ondersteuning van de inspanningen van partnerregeringen om doeltreffende en goed functionerende gezondheidssystemen te ontwikkelen die betaalbare gezondheidszorg van goede kwaliteit bieden, met inbegrip van diensten voor seksuele en reproductieve gezondheidszorg. In landen die een toewijzing uit de begrotingspost „organisaties van het maatschappelijk middenveld en plaatselijke overheden" genieten en waar seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid als een prioriteit is aangemerkt, kunnen de EU-delegaties eveneens mogelijkheden bieden met betrekking tot het initiatiefrecht ([1]) van organisaties uit het maatschappelijk middenveld om te pleiten voor toegang tot seksuele en reproductieve gezondheid en rechten.

([1]) COM(2002) 598 definitief.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006525/13
komissiolle
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) ja Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6. kesäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusväline I

Vuosien 2007–2013 monivuotisessa rahoituskehyksessä kehitysyhteistyövarat, jotka on tarkoitettu seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyteen ja -oikeuksiin, myönnettiin kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineen aihekohtaisten välineiden kautta, joista huomattavimpia olivat "investointi ihmisiin" ja "valtiosta riippumattomat toimijat ja paikallisviranomaiset". Nämä rahoitusmahdollisuudet esiteltiin avoimilla ehdotuspyynnöillä, mikä antoi kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöille mahdollisuuden edistää osaltaan seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyden ja -oikeuksien toteutumista pieni- ja keskituloisissa maissa.

Komission heinäkuussa 2011 esittämässä kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälinettä koskevassa ehdotuksessa aihekohtaisten välineiden määrä on rajoitettu kahteen. Tärkeimpiä välineitä seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyden ja -oikeuksien kannalta ovat julkishyödykkeet ja haasteet sekä kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöt ja paikalliset viranomaiset. Ne kattavat laajan joukon aiheita, eikä seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyttä ja -oikeuksia mainita nimenomaisesti toisin kuin "investointi ihmisiin" -ohjelmassa. Kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälinettä koskeva Euroopan parlamentin neuvottelukanta korjaa tilanteen niin, että vahvistetaan jälleen EU:n tuen merkitys sellaisten strategioiden ja aloitteiden täydelle toteuttamiselle, joille edistetään seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyttä ja niihin liittyviä oikeuksia. Euroopan parlamentin seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveydelle ja -oikeuksille antama merkitys vastaa EU:n aiempia kantoja, sillä seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveys ja -oikeudet on jo otettu selvästi huomioon unionin politiikassa. Siitä esimerkkeinä ovat neuvoston päätelmät EU:sta ja globaalista terveydestä (2010) sekä kehityspolitiikkaa koskeva eurooppalainen konsensus (2005).

Voiko komissio edellä mainitut seikat huomioon ottaen selventää seuraavia kysymyksiä:

1. Tuleeko kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineeseen erityinen budjettikohta, jolla tuetaan väestö- ja kehityskonferenssia ja Pekingin toimintaohjelmaa ja niiden tarkistuskonferensseja EU:n sitoumusten seurattavuuden varmistamiseksi?

2. Millainen osuus kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineen aihekohtaisista välineistä (julkishyödykkeet ja haasteet sekä kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöt ja paikalliset viranomaiset) varataan seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveydelle ja -oikeuksille?

3. Miten komissio takaa seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyden ja -oikeuksien alalla työskentelevien kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöjen tulevan rahoituksen kansalaisjärjestöjä koskevien temaattisten ehdotuspyyntöjen avulla?

Andris Piebalgsin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(23. heinäkuuta 2013)

Komissio aikoo jatkossakin panostaa seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyteen ja siihen liittyviin oikeuksiin monilla välineillä ja rahoitusjärjestelyillä. Niiden perimmäisenä tavoitteena on kumppanimaiden väestön sosiaalista edistystä koskevien perusihmisoikeuksien – joihin kuuluvat myös oikeus terveyteen, koulutukseen, sukupuolten tasa-arvoon ja syrjimättömyyteen – ylläpitäminen ja toteuttaminen.

Menettelyjen yksinkertaistamiseksi komission talousarvioesityksessä ehdotetaan kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineen budjettinimikkeistön yksinkertaistamista siten, että se sisältää vain kaksi budjettikohtaa kullekin seuraavassa luetellulle aihekohtaiselle ohjelmalle: kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöt ja paikallisviranomaiset; globaalit julkishyödykkeet ja haasteet; sekä yleisafrikkalainen ohjelma. Kansainvälisen väestö- ja kehityskonferenssin toimintaohjelman (Pekingin toimintaohjelman) täytäntöönpanon varmistamiseksi ei siis ole erillistä budjettikohtaa.

Lainsäätäjät neuvottelevat parhaillaan komission 7. joulukuuta 2011 hyväksymästä lainsäädäntöpaketista – ja erityisesti kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineestä – kolmikantaneuvotteluissa. Tästä syystä aihekohtaisista välineistä ja osoitettavista määrärahoista ei tässä vaiheessa ole mahdollista antaa yksityiskohtaisia tietoja.

Komission lähestymistavassa terveyteen pääpainona maiden tasolla on tukea kumppanimaita niiden hallitusten pyrkimyksissä rakentaa tehokkaita ja toimivia terveydenhoitojärjestelmiä, joiden avulla voidaan tarjota kohtuuhintaisia ja laadukkaita terveyspalveluja myös seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyden alalla. Lisäksi niissä maissa, joille annetaan rahoitusta kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöjä ja paikallisviranomaisia koskevasta budjettikohdasta ja joissa seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveys on asetettu painopisteeksi, EU:n edustustot voivat tarjota kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöille niiden aloiteoikeuden ([1]) ansiosta mahdollisuuksia edistää seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyttä ja siihen liittyviä oikeuksia.

([1]) KOM(2002)0598 lopullinen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006525/13
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) and Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Development Cooperation Instrument I

Under the 2007-2013 MFF, development funding for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) was granted via thematic instruments of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), most notably through 'Investing in People' and 'Non State Actors and Local Authorities'. These funding opportunities were presented via open calls for proposals, thus allowing civil society organisations (CSOs) to play their role in speeding up access to SRHR in low- and middle-income countries.

In the Commission's proposal for the DCI of July 2011 the number of thematic instruments is limited to two; those most relevant to SRHR are Global Public Goods and Challenges' and 'Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities'. These instruments cover a wide array of topics and, unlike in the Investing in People programme, sexual and reproductive health and rights are not explicitly mentioned. Parliament's negotiating position on the DCI does rectify this by reaffirming the importance of the EU's support to the full implementation of strategies and initiatives to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights. The importance given to SRHR by Parliament reflects existing EU positions, as SRHR already features prominently in European policy, as in the Council conclusions on the EU role in Global Health (2010) and the European consensus for development (2005).

Taking into account all the points raised, can the Commission clarify:

1. Will there be a specific budget line within the DCI dedicated to the support of ICPD and the Beijing Platform and their review conference documents so as to ensure accountability of EU commitments?

2. What will be the proportion of the DCI thematic instruments (for both 'Global Public Goods and Challenges' and 'Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities') allocated to SRHR?

3. How will the Commission ensure future funding for CSOs working on SRHR through thematic CSO calls?

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

The Commission intends to continue contributing to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) through a number of instruments and financial modalities with the ultimate aim of upholding and fulfilling the basic human rights of partner countries' populations to social progress including the right to health and education, gender equality and non-discrimination.

In order to simplify procedures, the Commission budgetary proposal suggests consolidating budgetary nomenclatures for the DCI instrument, which will include only two budget lines for each three following thematic programmes: two for Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and Local Authorities (LA), two for Global Public Goods and Challenges, and two for the Pan-African Programme. Thus, there is no specific budget line dedicated to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development or Beijing Platform.

The legislative package, adopted by the Commission on 7 December 2011, is currently under negotiation — and notably the DCI — with the co-legislators within the framework of the trilogue process. It is therefore not possible to provide detailed information on thematic and financial allocations at this stage.

The main focus of the Commission's approach in health will be, at the country level, by supporting partner governments' efforts to build effective and functioning health systems that are able to provide affordable health services of good quality, including SRH care services. In addition, in countries benefiting from an allocation from the CSO and LA budget line and where SRH is chosen as a priority, EU delegations will be able to offer opportunities for CSO's right of initiative ([1]) to advocate for access to SRHR.

([1]) COM(2002) 598 final.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-006526/13
до Комисията
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) и Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 юни 2013 г.)

Относно: Инструмент за сътрудничество за развитие II

Комисията, Съветът на Европейския съюз и Парламентът понастоящем участват в тристранни разисквания, за да определят правилата за следващия Инструмент за сътрудничество за развитие за периода 2014—2020 г. За разлика от предишния опит този път няма проведени консултации с гражданското общество относно съдържанието на новия Инструмент за сътрудничество за развитие.

По-конкретно мнението на гражданското общество беше слабо потърсено по отношение на два от тематичните инструменти, а именно „Глобални обществени блага и предизвикателства“ и „Организации на гражданското общество и местни органи“. Това следва да се отбележи, още повече че инструментите са изрично предназначени за гражданското общество.

Нещо повече, насърчаването на пълноценно и структурирано участие от страна на организации на гражданското общество е крайъгълният камък на последното съобщение на Комисията по този въпрос. Това съобщение подчертава значението на участието на организациите на гражданското общество във вътрешните политики на партньорските държави, както и в цикъла на планиране на ЕС и в международните процеси.

С оглед на горепосоченото, Комисията би ли могла да изясни:

1. Дали и кога ще организира консултациите, необходими, за да се гарантира, че тематичните инструменти в рамките на Инструмента за сътрудничество за развитие отчитат нуждите и интересите на гражданското общество?

2. Как ще гарантира, че широк спектър от разнообразни заинтересовани организации на гражданското общество (извън базираните в Брюксел) ще получат възможност да дадат своя принос в рамките на тази процедура по консултация?

Отговор, даден от г-н Пиебалгс от името на Комисията
(8 август 2013 г.)

Комисията проведе онлайн обществена консултация относно „Какво трябва да бъде финансирането за външната дейност на ЕС след 2013 г.?“ в периода 2010—2011 г. Получените 220 отговора от 59 страни (от ЕС, Азия, Латинска Америка, държавите от Африка, Карибите и Тихоокеанския басейн (АКТ), съседните държави и държави, участващи в процеса на разширяване), са налице на уебсайта:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/public-consultations/5240_en.htm

Комисията отбелязва, че междуинституционалните преговори относно правното основание за Инструмента за сътрудничество за развитие (ИСР) продължават, както и остава необходимостта от пълното зачитане на участието на съзаконодателите в програмирането. В рамките на тези ограничения, Комисията събра предварителни становища от организациите на гражданското общество (ОГО) и местните власти (МВ) относно бъдещите тематични инструменти на ИСР, предвидени за глобални обществени блага и предизвикателства, и за ОГО и МВ за програмния период.

За тази цел делегациите на ЕС са инструктирани да се консултират с ОГО и МВ, за да се определят на местно ниво приоритетите на бъдещата програма, от които те могат да се възползват. Освен това беше проведен неформален обмен през2012 и 2013 г. в рамките на Политически форум за развитие, проведен в Брюксел заедно със 150 мрежи на неправителствени организации (НПО), профсъюзи, кооперативни организации, фондации, и т.н., както и МВ от ЕС и страните от АКТ, Азия, Латинска Америка и съседните държави. Парламентът и държавите членки бяха също така поканени.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006526/13
à la Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) et Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 juin 2013)

Objet: Instrument de coopération au développement II

La Commission, le Conseil de l'Union européenne et le Parlement européen sont actuellement engagés dans une discussion tripartite visant à déterminer les modalités du prochain Instrument de coopération au développement (ICD) pour la période allant de 2014 à 2020. Contrairement à de précédentes expériences, le contenu du nouvel ICD n'a pas suffisamment fait l'objet d'une consultation de la société civile.

Deux instruments thématiques en particulier, à savoir les programmes «biens publics mondiaux et défis qui les accompagnent» et «acteurs non étatiques et autorités locales», ont à peine été soumis à l'avis de la société civile. Cette situation est d'autant plus singulière que la société civile est le destinataire présumé de ces instruments.

Qui plus est, la promotion d'une participation constructive et structurée des organisations de la société civile (OSC) constituait l'une des pierres angulaires de la récente communication de la Commission à ce sujet. Cette communication soulignait l'importance de la participation des OSC aux politiques intérieures des pays partenaires, ainsi qu'au cycle de programmation de l'Union et aux processus internationaux.

Eu égard à ce qui précède, la Commission pourrait-elle préciser:

1. si elle compte organiser les consultations requises pour garantir une prise en compte des besoins et préoccupations de la société civile par les instruments thématiques de l'ICD, et quand;

2. quelles mesures elle prendra pour faire en sorte qu'une grande variété d'acteurs de la société civile (au-delà de ceux basés à Bruxelles) ait la possibilité d'apporter leur contribution à cette procédure de consultation?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(8 août 2013)

La Commission a lancé une consultation publique en ligne autour de la question «Quels instruments financiers pour l'action extérieure de l'UE après 2013? » ouverte en 2010-2011. Les 220 contributions transmises par 59 pays (États d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique (ACP), Amérique latine, Asie, Union européenne, voisinage et pays de l'élargissement) sont disponibles à l'adresse:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/public-consultations/5240_fr.htm

La Commission note que des négociations interinstitutionnelles relatives à la base juridique de l'instrument de financement de la coopération au développement (ICD) sont en cours et qu'il est important que le rôle des colégislateurs dans le processus de programmation soit pleinement respecté. C'est dans ces limites que la Commission a recueilli les points de vue initiaux des organisations de la société civile et des autorités locales sur les futurs instruments thématiques de l'ICD «biens publics mondiaux et défis qui les accompagnent» et «acteurs non étatiques et autorités locales» en ce qui concerne la phase de programmation.

À cette fin, les délégations de l'UE ont été invitées à consulter les organisations de la société civile et les autorités locales pour définir, à l'échelle locale, les priorités du futur programme dont ces dernières bénéficieront. D'autre part, des échanges informels ont également eu lieu en 2012 et en juin 2013 lors du Forum politique sur le développement organisé à Bruxelles auquel ont participé 150 réseaux d'organisations non-gouvernementales (ONG), des syndicats, des coopératives, des fondations, etc., et les autorités locales provenant de l'UE, des ACP, d'Asie, d'Amérique latine et du voisinage. Le Parlement européen et les États membres y étaient également invités.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006526/13
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) en Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 juni 2013)

Betreft: Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking (II)

De Commissie, de Raad van de Europese Unie en het Parlement discussiëren momenteel over de regels voor het Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking voor 2014-2020. Anders dan in het verleden is het maatschappelijk middenveld niet of nauwelijks geraadpleegd over de inhoud van het nieuwe Instrument.

Met name voor twee van de thematische instrumenten, „Mondiale collectieve goederen en uitdagingen" en „Niet-overheidsactoren en lokale autoriteiten", is het maatschappelijk middenveld nagenoeg niet om zijn mening gevraagd. Dit is des te opmerkelijker als we weten dat het maatschappelijk middenveld de bedoelde begunstigde van deze instrumenten is.

Bovendien vormt de bevordering van zinvolle en gestructureerde participatie van organisaties uit het maatschappelijk middenveld de hoeksteen van een recente mededeling van de Commissie over dit onderwerp. In dit document onderstreept de Commissie het belang van de betrokkenheid van organisaties uit het maatschappelijk middenveld bij het binnenlandse beleid van de partnerlanden van de EU alsook bij de programmeringscyclus van de EU en internationale processen.

Kan de Commissie gezien het bovenstaande verduidelijken:

1. of en wanneer zij de raadplegingen zal organiseren die nodig zijn om te garanderen dat er in de thematische instrumenten in het kader van het Instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking rekening wordt gehouden met de behoeften en belangen van het maatschappelijk middenveld?

2. hoe zij ervoor wil zorgen dat een groot aantal diverse belanghebbenden en organisaties uit het maatschappelijk middenveld (buiten die die in Brussel gevestigd zijn) de kans krijgt om aan deze raadplegingsprocedure deel te nemen?

Antwoord van de heer Piebalgs namens de Commissie
(8 augustus 2013)

De Commissie hield in 2011-2011 een online raadpleging over de financiering van het externe optreden van de EU na 2013. Er kwamen 220 bijdragen uit 59 landen binnen (nl. uit de EU, Azië, Latijns-Amerika, Afrika, het Caribische Gebied, de Stille Oceaan, de nabuurschapslanden en de uitbreidingslanden), die beschikbaar zijn op:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/public-consultations/5240_en.htm

De Commissie wijst erop dat de inter-institutionele onderhandelingen over de rechtsgrondslag voor het instrument voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking (DCI) aan de gang zijn, en dat het noodzakelijk is de betrokkenheid van de medewetgevers bij de programmering volledig te respecteren. Binnen deze beperkingen heeft de Commissie voorlopig advies ingewonnen bij maatschappelijke organisaties en lokale autoriteiten over de toekomstige mondiale collectieve goederen en uitdagingen en over de desbetreffende thematische instrumenten met het oog op de programmeringsfase.

Tot dit doel is de EU-delegaties opgedragen overleg te plegen met maatschappelijke organisaties en lokale autoriteiten om op lokaal niveau de prioriteiten van het toekomstige programma ten behoeve van deze organisaties en autoriteiten vast te stellen. Daarnaast vonden in 2012 en in juni 2013 binnen het kader van het Beleidsforum over ontwikkelingsvraagstukken eveneens informele uitwisselingen plaats met 150 netwerken van ngo's, vakbonden, coöperatieven, stichtingen, enz., alsook met lokale autoriteiten uit de EU, de ACS-landen, Azië, Latijns-Amerika en de nabuurschapslanden. Het Parlement en de lidstaten waren hiervoor ook uitgenodigd.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006526/13
komissiolle
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) ja Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6. kesäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusväline II

Euroopan komissio, Euroopan unionin neuvosto ja Euroopan parlamentti käyvät parhaillaan kolmikantaneuvotteluja, jotta saataisiin aikaan säännöt seuraavalle kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineelle vuosille 2014–2020. Toisin kuin aiemmin kansalaisyhteiskuntaa ei ole tällä kertaa kuultu kehitysyhteistyön uuden rahoitusvälineen sisällöstä.

Kansalaisyhteiskunnan kuuleminen on ollut puutteellista erityisesti liittyen kahteen aihekohtaiseen välineeseen, jotka koskevat julkishyödykkeitä ja haasteita sekä paikallisia viranomaisia. Tämä on erityisen merkillepantavaa, kun otetaan huomioon, että juuri kansalaisyhteiskunnan on tarkoitus olla välineistä hyötyvä taho.

Lisäksi kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöjen järkevän ja jäsennellyn osallistumisen tuki oli keskeisellä sijalla komission hiljattain esittämässä asiaa käsitelleessä tiedonannossa. Siinä pidettiin erityisen tärkeänä kansalaisjärjestöjen osallistumista kumppanuusvaltioiden sisäpolitiikkaan, EU:n ohjelmasuunnitteluun sekä kansainvälisiin prosesseihin.

Voiko komissio nämä seikat huomioon ottaen selventää seuraavia kysymyksiä:

1. Milloin komissio aikoo mahdollisesti järjestää tarvittavat kuulemiset sen takaamiseksi, että kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineeseen liittyvissä aihekohtaisissa välineissä otetaan huomioon kansalaisyhteyskunnan tarpeet ja huolenaiheet?

2. Miten komissio aikoo taata, että monenlaiset kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöt (Brysselissä olevien toimijoiden lisäksi) saavat mahdollisuuden antaa panoksensa tällaisessa kuulemismenettelyssä?

Andris Piebalgsin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(8. elokuuta 2013)

Komissio järjesti vuosina 2010–2011 julkisen verkkokuulemisen EU:n ulkoisten toimien rahoituksesta vuoden 2013 jälkeen. Vastauksia saatiin 59 maasta (EU, Aasia, Latinalainen Amerikka, Afrikan, Karibian ja Tyynenmeren maat, AKT-maat sekä naapuruus- ja laajentumispolitiikan alaan kuuluvat maat), ja nämä 220 kannanottoa ovat luettavissa osoitteessa http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/public-consultations/5240_en.htm.

Komissio huomauttaa, että kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineen (DCI) oikeusperustasta käydään edelleen toimielinten välisiä neuvotteluja, minkä lisäksi lainsäätäjien oikeutta osallistua ohjelmasuunnitteluun on noudatettava kaikilta osin. Komissio on näissä puitteissa koonnut ohjelmasuunnittelua varten kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöjen ja paikallisviranomaisten alustavia näkemyksiä kahdesta kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusvälineeseen jatkossa kuuluvasta temaattisesta välineestä, joista toinen koskee globaaleja julkishyödykkeitä ja haasteita ja toinen kansalaisyhteiskuntaa edustavia järjestöjä ja paikallisviranomaisia.

Tätä varten EU:n edustustoja on neuvottu kuulemaan kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöjä ja paikallisviranomaisia, jotta niiden hyväksi jatkossa toteutettavan ohjelman painopisteet voitaisiin määritellä paikallisesti. Tämän ohella on käyty epävirallista yhteydenpitoa vuonna 2012 ja Brysselissä kesäkuussa 2013 järjestetyn kehitysyhteistyön politiikkafoorumin (Policy Forum on Development) puitteissa. Foorumiin osallistui 150 valtiosta riippumattomien järjestöjen, ammattiliittojen, osuuskuntien ja säätiöiden verkostoa sekä paikallisviranomaisia EU:sta, AKT-maista, Aasiasta, Latinalaisesta Amerikasta ja Euroopan naapuruuspolitiikan alaan kuuluvista maista. Mukaan oli kutsuttu myös Euroopan parlamentti ja jäsenvaltiot.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006526/13
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) and Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Development Cooperation Instrument II

The Commission, the Council of the European Union and Parliament are currently involved in a three-way discussion to determine the rules for the next Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), for the period 2014-2020. Unlike in previous experiences, there has been a lack of civil society consultation on the content of the new DCI.

In particular, the opinion of civil society has barely been sought regarding two of the thematic instruments, namely 'Global Public Goods and Challenges' and 'Non-state Actors and Local Authorities'. This is all the more remarkable given that civil society is the intended recipient of the instruments.

What is more, the promotion of meaningful and structured participation from civil society organisations (CSOs) was the cornerstone of the recent Commission communication on this subject. This communication underlined the importance of CSO involvement in partner countries' domestic policies, as well as in the EU programming cycle and international processes.

In light of the above, could the Commission clarify:

1. if and when it will organise the consultations required to ensure that the thematic instruments within the DCI are taking into account the needs and concerns of civil society;

2. how it will ensure that a wide variety of CSO stakeholders (beyond those based in Brussels) are given the chance to provide input in this consultation procedure?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The Commission held an online public consultation on 'What funding for EU external action after 2013?' in 2010-2011. The 220 contributions received from 59 countries (EU, Asia, Latin America, Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP), Neighbourhood and Enlargement) are available on:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/public-consultations/5240_en.htm

The Commission notes that interinstitutional negotiations on the legal basis for the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) are ongoing, as well as the need to fully respect the co-legislators involvement in programming. Within these constraints, the Commission has collected preliminary views of Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and Local Authorities (LA) on the future DCI Global Public Goods and Challenges and CSO — LA thematic instruments for the programming phase.

To this end, EU Delegations have been instructed to consult CSOs and LAs to locally define priorities of the future programme benefitting them. Besides, informal exchanges also took place in 2012 and in June 2013 within the Policy Forum on Development in Brussels with 150 networks of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Trade Unions, Cooperatives, Foundations, etc. and LA from the EU and ACP, Asia, Latin America, the Neighbourhood. Parliament and Member States were also invited.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006527/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: European Investment Bank funding

Could the Commission specify how much funding Ireland will receive from the European Investment Bank in 2013 and outline the areas to which these funds will be allocated?

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

The EIB is currently appraising projects located in Ireland which are expected to result in funding levels of approximately EUR 600 millions in 2013, an increase over the EUR 500 millions provided in 2012.

The new loans will support projects undertaken by SMEs as well as in the education, energy and transport sectors.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006528/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Commission country-specific recommendations

The Commission has recently adopted a number of country-specific recommendations for Member States on how to promote sustainable economic growth and create jobs. Given that Northern Ireland is still lagging behind many other regions in terms of economic recovery and means for prosperity, would the Commission consider adopting a more region-focused agenda so that areas like Northern Ireland can receive the assistance they need?

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

Country-specific recommendations (CSRs) are based, *inter alia*, on an assessment of the National Reform Programmes (NRPs) and of the Stability and Convergence Programmes submitted by the governments of the Member States, and, where macroeconomic imbalances are deemed to exist, on the in-depth reviews under the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure (MIP).

The recommendations are addressed to the Member States and possess a national character. However, this should not discourage Member States from developing initiatives at a regional level when addressing the recommendations.

The regional dimension plays a central role in many of the Commission's policies and initiatives. The Honourable Member is referred, in particular, to the dedicated Commission website for details on the implementation of the 2007-2013 Cohesion Policy in Northern Ireland through the European Regional Development Fund (available from http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/uk/ukn_en.htm?14). Further information on structural fund operations in Northern Ireland is available from the dedicated webpage of the Department of Finance and Personnel of Northern Ireland (http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/index/finance/european-funding.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006529/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Gender pension gap in the EU

A recent Commission report indicates that across the EU female pensions are 39% lower than male pensions.

Will the Commission outline what it is doing to halt any further widening of this disparity?

What measures are being taken to ensure fairness between the pensions of men and women across Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The 39% Gender Pension Gap documented in a recent study ([1]) result largely from three facts: women participate less in the labour market, work fewer years and hours and receive lower wages.

It is also affected by the lower coverage of women in private schemes and by the design of national pension systems, including whether there are non-contributory schemes covering everybody and crediting of care-related career breaks.

The resulting need to reduce gender disparities, i.e. pension and gender pay gaps, through a mix of employment and pension policies is a key point in the White Paper on Pensions ([2]). The Commission addresses the issue in Annual Growth Surveys and Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs), which highlight the need to raise the employment rates of women and equalise the pensionable age for men and women. In 2012 Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia adopted reforms equalising pensionable ages. CSRs for 2013, aprroved by the Council ([3]), urge Austria to bring forward the harmonisation of pensionable age for men and women, Bulgaria — to introduce the same statutory retirement age for men and women, and Romania — to continue the pension reform started in 2010 by equalising the pensionable age for men and women.

The Commission is furthermore working with Member States to understand and address the sources of gender pension disparities in the Social open method of coordination and the strategy for equality between women and men ([4]). The Pension Adequacy Report ([5]) gives particular attention to gender issues.

([1]) European Network of Experts on Gender Equality: 'The Gender Gap in Pensions in the EU', DG JUST 2013: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130530_pensions_en.pdf
([2]) White Paper: An Agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pensions, COM(2012) 55 final: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7341&langId=en
([3]) 2013 European Semester: Country Specific Recommendations: Moving Europe Beyond the Crisis, COM(2013) 350 final: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/
([4]) Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6568&langId=en
([5]) Pension Adequacy in the European Union 2010-2050: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7805&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006530/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Kazakhstan

President Barroso recently concluded his first visit to Kazakhstan at the invitation of President Nazarbayev. This visit was expected to bolster the ongoing negotiations for a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Kazakhstan.

Will the Commission outline the details of the proposed agreement?

Will the Commission also detail how it is continuing to press Kazakhstan on its human rights record?

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

The ongoing negotiations with Kazakhstan on a new, enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) will lead to the first new generation Partnership and Cooperation Agreement the EU concludes with a Central Asian country. The EU hopes it will be comprehensive in scope, it will provide an updated legal framework in all areas of mutual interest and it will support Kazakhstan's reform and modernisation efforts, including the protection of human rights, fundamental freedoms and rule of law. The HR/VP will keep the European Parliament fully informed, in accordance with the provisions of the framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission.

Human rights concerns are raised systematically in meetings at all levels with Kazakhstan, including in high-level meetings as well as in the context of the regular Human Rights Dialogues.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006531/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Participation in European Parliament elections

A recent Commission survey indicated that almost two thirds (64%) of young Europeans intend to vote in the 2014 European Parliament elections.

Given the record low turnout of 43% in the 2009 elections, what is the Commission doing to encourage citizens to exercise their democratic right and vote in the forthcoming 2014 European Parliament elections?

Answer given by Ms Reding on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2013)

As stated in the 2013 EU Citizenship Report 'EU citizens: your rights, your future' ([1]), participation in European Parliament elections is the primary way for citizens to contribute to the shaping of EU policy and constitutes the bedrock of representative democracy in the European Union. This is why the Commission recently proposed measures to facilitate citizens' participation in the European Parliament elections and to strengthen the European dimension of these elections. Initiatives notably include a communication ([2]) and a recommendation ([3]) for further enhancing the democratic and efficient conduct of the European elections.

In its 2013 EU Citizenship Report, the Commission announced that it will further promote EU citizens' awareness of their EU citizenship rights and in particular their electoral rights by producing a handbook presenting those EU rights in clear and simple language.

Moreover, the Commission's communication campaign for the 2013 European Year of Citizens and the Citizens' Dialogues carried out by Commissioners together with MEPs and local politicians support the mobilisation ahead of the 2014 elections.

([1]) COM(2013)269.
([2]) COM(2013)126.
([3]) OJ L 79, 21.3.2013, p. 29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006532/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: EU Civil Society Platform

The Commission has recently launched its new EU Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings, which will bring together over 100 European civil society organisations to exchange experiences and substantiate ideas on how best to assist human trafficking victims and prevent others from falling victim to this crime.

Will the Commission outline how it intends to measure this platform's success?

Will the Commission detail the cost of establishing and running this platform?

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

On 31 May 2013, approximately 100 civil society organisations from 26 Member States and Croatia participated in the launch of the EU Civil Society Platform against trafficking in human beings. The Europe-wide Platform has been set up by the Commission in order to serve as a forum for civil society organisations working in the field of trafficking in the EU and to gather crucial, up-to-date information on the main challenges that these organisations are facing on the ground.

The Platform is meant to be an ongoing activity. The Commission will organise regular meetings for participants (a second meeting is provisionally scheduled for autumn 2013) and will try to facilitate online communication within the platform. Therefore, the overall assessment of the success of the Platform will be done in the future, especially in the framework of the evaluation of the EU Strategy to eradicate trafficking in human beings (2012-2016).

Regarding the first meeting of the Platform, it has served participants to exchange experiences and ideas on how to best expand their networks and assist victims. Participants also reflected on the policy priorities and future activities of the Platform, including possible awareness-raising activities, and ways to involve organisations based outside the EU.

The Commission supports the Platform by organising its meetings, assuming the administrative cost and travel expenses of the participants.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006533/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Additional Commissioner portfolios

The Commission has recently announced that it is to give the future EU commissioner from Croatia the portfolio of 'consumer protection'. Given that agreement was recently reached in the Council to keep the system of one commissioner per Member State and that further enlargement of the Union is likely, could the Commission outline what portfolios it intends to bestow on any new commissioners?

Could it also detail what powers existing commissioners may lose in order to accommodate an enlarged College of Commissioners?

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

The issue of which portfolio a Commissioner from any Member State will be responsible for will be decided by the President of the Commission when the issue arises.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006534/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Aid to Jordan

The Commission recently announced that it is to provide additional assistance to Jordan, to the sum of EUR 50 million, to help alleviate the impact of refugees from Syria.

Will the Commission outline how much assistance has been given to Jordan since the beginning of the Syrian crisis in March 2011? What other measures is the Commission taking to assist these refugees?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The funds allocated to Jordan by the EU from 2011 to May 2013 amount a total of EUR 378.3 million.

The breakdown of this amount is as follows:

— EUR 223 million under the bilateral National Indicative Programme 2011-13;

— EUR 70 million under the SPRING ([1]) programme;

— EUR 61.5 million for humanitarian assistance to cope with the Syrian crisis.

— EUR 23.8 million as additional development assistance to cope with the refugees crisis (including EUR 2.9 million from the Instrument for Stability).

In June 2013 the Commission made available an additional amount of EUR 60 million for Jordan to support education, health services and host communities with a high concentration of Syrian refugees.

([1]) Support to Partnership, Reform and Inclusive Growth.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006535/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Long-term unemployment

Can the Commission detail how it is supporting Irish authorities and businesses with regard to the issue of long-term unemployment?

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

The European Social Fund (ESF) is the Commission's main instrument to support Member States in combating unemployment and thus also long-term unemployment. For the period 2007-2013, EUR 375 362 370 of the ESF were allocated to the Irish ESF operational programme. Together with national match funding, the total volume of this programme is EUR 750 724 740.

The original objectives of this programme were to support the adaptability of workers and the activation of people furthest away from the labour market. The ESF operational programme was twice modified, in 2009 and in 2012, in order to increase its focus on measures that support unemployed people. Thus, main target groups are the unemployed, but participants are also early school leavers, people with difficulties in literacy and numeracy, people with disabilities, young people who show a potential to participate in offending or anti-social behaviour. Activities to promote gender equality (positive actions and gender mainstreaming) are also included in this priority.

ESF co-finances to a large extent training to improve the skills basis of the target groups. Measures that in particular focus on long-term unemployed, like the Labour Market Activation Fund and its successor, the Labour Market Education and Training Fund, known as Momentum, are also co-financed by ESF. The latter currently provides additional 6,500 training places for long-term unemployed, with a total cost of EUR 20 million and an ESF share of 50%.

For the next programming period, 2014-2020, ESF will also be invested in fighting long-term unemployed, as this is one of the biggest challenges that Ireland faces.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006536/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Language schools in Europe

Given the increasing mobility of European citizens and the corresponding need to learn languages, could the Commission please answer the following:

What help, if any, does it provide to aid the establishment of language schools in EU Member States?

What assistance does it intend to provide to aid the establishment of language schools in the future?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

Good language skills contribute to increasing levels of employability and mobility. This is why the need to improve the teaching and learning of foreign languages is among the key messages in the Commission's Rethinking Education strategy ([1]).

It is the education systems in the Member States that have to provide students with the language skills required by the European labour market. The Commission is monitoring, together with the education authorities of the Member States, the results of language teaching in mainstream education. It has proposed a European benchmark for language competences, still to be approved by the Council. Dedicated language schools can only supplement the efficient teaching and learning of foreign languages in school from an early age.

In the Commission's proposal for the new Erasmus+ programme in the field of education, training, youth and sport, linguistic support for learning mobility will feature prominently. Students in all sectors of education, as well as youth volunteers, teachers, trainers and staff, will have the opportunity to practice their linguistic skills while studying or training in another country. The programme can also help financing the development of new methodologies for teaching languages.

([1]) Rethinking education: Investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes COM(2012) 669.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006537/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(7 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Ley de prevención de blanqueo de capitales

La Ley de Prevención de Blanqueo de Capitales de abril de 2010 ([1]) que transpone la Directiva 2005/60/CE, obliga a las entidades españolas, pero también a aseguradoras, empresas de inversión y gestoras de fondos entre otras, a recabar de sus clientes información a fin de conocer la naturaleza de su actividad profesional o empresarial y a adoptar medidas dirigidas a comprobar razonablemente la veracidad de dicha información. Tales medidas consistirán en el establecimiento y aplicación de procedimientos de verificación de las actividades declaradas por los clientes. Dichos procedimientos tendrán en cuenta el diferente nivel de riesgo (según el artículo 5).

Los bancos han optado por solicitar a sus clientes la nómina en el caso de trabajadores por cuenta ajena o balances, contratos, certificados u otros similares si es por cuenta propia, sin que sea indispensable la domiciliación de la nómina en el banco. La documentación deberá ser recogida antes del 2015 y guardada por diez años. En el caso de que los clientes no sean de nacionalidad española, deben aportar también la misma información con una fotocopia de la tarjeta de residencia. Asimismo, las autoridades públicas pueden acceder sin autorización alguna a los ficheros creados por los bancos.

¿Considera correctos los procedimientos de verificación de las actividades declaradas por los clientes que están implantando algunas entidades financieras españolas en aplicación de la ley 10/2010?

¿Considera que están teniendo en cuenta el diferente nivel de riesgo de las personas trabajadoras por cuenta propia y por cuenta ajena, siendo mucho menor en este segundo caso?

¿Qué garantías ofrecen los bancos y entidades privadas de que no utilizan dicha información privilegiada de su clientela de manera comercial y lucrativa?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de julio de 2013)

La tercera Directiva contra el blanqueo de capitales (DBC) es una Directiva de armonización mínima, por lo que incumbe a los Estados miembros decidir las medidas destinadas a cumplir sus disposiciones de la forma más apropiada, teniendo en cuenta los diferentes sistemas y riesgos específicos existentes en sus jurisdicciones. Sin embargo, las medidas de diligencia debida de los clientes establecidas por las legislaciones nacionales y los procedimientos creados por entidades como los bancos deben ser idóneas y proporcionadas para ajustarse a la DBC y a la legislación sobre protección de datos de la UE. Los Estados miembros y las entidades cubiertas deben determinar los riesgos asociados a una relación comercial con los clientes. El nivel de riesgo de un cliente desencadenará diferentes medidas que deben adoptar las instituciones financieras en función de la residencia, la actividad o el sector del cliente.

Respecto a la protección de datos, las normas de la UE en la materia garantizan que la información solo pueda utilizarse para la finalidad específica para la que haya sido recogida y la legislación española (Ley n° 10/2010) incluye disposiciones dirigidas a garantizar que la información facilitada no se utilice con fines comerciales. Además, el artículo 32, apartado 1, de la Ley n° 10/2010 establece que el tratamiento de datos personales y de los ficheros creados para el cumplimiento de las disposiciones de esa Ley serán protegidas por la Ley Orgánica 15/1999 de protección de datos y la legislación correspondiente con arreglo al Derecho vigente de la UE sobre la protección de datos.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2010/04/29-1/pdfs/BOE-A-2010-6737.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006537/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Law on the prevention of money laundering

The Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering of April 2010 ([1]), which transposes Directive 2005/60/EC, requires Spanish banks and insurance, investment and asset management companies, etc. to obtain from their customers information concerning the nature of their professional or business activities and to take measures to check the veracity of that information. Those measures will take the form of the drawing-up and implementation of procedures to verify whether the activities declared by their customers are genuine. The procedures will also take account of the level of risk inherent in those activities (in accordance with Article 5).

The banks have opted to ask customers who are employed persons to provide a salary slip, even if that salary is not paid into an account held with the bank in question, and customers who are self-employed to submit accounts, contracts, certificates or other similar documents. The documents in question must be submitted before 2015 and kept for 10 years. If a customer is not a Spanish national, he or she will be required to provide a photocopy of his or her residence permit together with the documents. The authorities will be able to consult the files compiled by the banks without seeking prior authorisation.

Does the Commission regard the procedures for verifying the activities declared by customers which some Spanish financial institutions are introducing in order to comply with Law 10/2010 as appropriate?

Does it feel that these procedures take account of the lower level of risk incurred by employed persons as compared to persons with their own businesses?

What assurances do banks and private financial institutions give that they will not use this privileged information provided by their customers for commercial or profit-making purposes?

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

The 3rd Anti-Money Laundering Directive (AMLD) is a minimum harmonisation directive so it is for the Member States to decide the measures to comply with its provisions in the most appropiate way given the different systems and specific existing risks in their jurisdictions. Nevertheless, the costumer due diligence measures established by the national legislations and the procedures created by the covered entities such as banks must be adequate and proportionate to be in line with the EU AML and data protection legislation. Member States and covered entities must determine risks associated with a business relationship with customers. The level of risk of a customer will trigger different measures to be carried out by the financial insitutions depending on the residence, activity or sector in which the customer is working.

With respect to data protection, EU data protection rules ensure that information can only be used for the particular purpose for which it was collected and the Spanish legislation, Act 10/2010 includes provisions to guarantee that the information provided will not be used for commercial purposes. Furthermore, Article 32.1 of Act 10/2010 sets outs that the processing of personal data and of files created for fulfilment of the provisions of this Act will be protected by the Ley Orgánica 15/1999 on data protection and corresponding legislation in compliance with the current EU legislation on data protection.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2010/04/29-1/pdfs/BOE-A-2010-6737.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006540/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Rapport 2013: un monde de plus en plus dangereux pour les réfugiés et les migrants

Faute d'action internationale dans le domaine des droits humains, le monde est en train de devenir de plus en plus dangereux pour les réfugiés et les migrants, a déclaré Amnesty International le 23 mai à l'occasion de la sortie de son rapport annuel sur la situation des droits humains dans le monde.

Les droits de millions de personnes qui ont fui les conflits et les persécutions, ou qui ont quitté leur pays en quête de travail et d'une vie meilleure, pour eux et leur famille, sont bafoués, a dénoncé l'organisation. Partout dans le monde, les États se montrent davantage désireux de protéger leurs frontières nationales que les droits de leurs citoyens et ceux des hommes et des femmes qui viennent chercher refuge ou de meilleures chances chez eux.

L'incapacité à traiter effectivement les situations de conflit est en train de créer une classe d'exclus au niveau de la planète. Les droits des hommes, des femmes et des enfants qui fuient les conflits ne sont pas protégés. De nombreux États bafouent les droits fondamentaux au nom du contrôle de l'immigration et vont bien au-delà des mesures légitimes de contrôle aux frontières.

Que répond la Commission à ce constat d'échec dressé par Amnesty International?

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

La Commission a pris connaissance du rapport d'Amnesty International, et d'une manière plus générale, est consciente des lacunes des systèmes mondiaux pour la protection internationale des personnes qui en ont besoin. S'agissant des engagements pris par l'UE, la Commission n'hésite pas à intervenir, dans le cadre des compétences qui sont les siennes en vertu des traités, si elle n'est pas certaine que les États membres respectent leurs obligations au titre de la législation de l'UE.

En ce qui concerne les demandeurs d'asile et les bénéficiaires de la protection internationale, l'UE vient d'adopter un ensemble de mesures dans le cadre du Régime d'asile européen commun (CEAS) ([1]). Ces mesures définissent un ensemble de normes communes rigoureuses et encouragent une coopération plus étroite pour faire en sorte que les demandeurs d'asile soient traités de manière uniforme dans un régime ouvert et équitable, quel que soit l'endroit de l'UE où ils demandent l'asile. Le but est de conduire à des décisions plus justes, plus rapides et de meilleure qualité en matière d'asile, et d'accorder davantage de soutien aux demandeurs d'asile qui ont des besoins particuliers. Le CEAS vise également à garantir des conditions humaines d'accueil matériel (notamment en matière de logement) pour les demandeurs d'asile dans toute l'UE et à faire en sorte que les droits fondamentaux des personnes concernées soient pleinement respectés.

L'UE a par ailleurs mis au point des mesures visant à aider les pays tiers qui accueillent des réfugiés, notamment des programmes de protection régionale qui aident les pays tiers à apporter leur protection aux réfugiés, ainsi qu'une contribution financière de l'UE pour les efforts de réinstallation déployés par les États membres.

En ce qui concerne les contrôles aux frontières, le cadre législatif est en cours de révision en vue de renforcer encore l'obligation pour les États membres de respecter les droits fondamentaux. Le code frontières Schengen ([2]) doit être appliqué dans le plein respect de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'UE et ne modifie en rien les droits des réfugiés et des personnes en quête d'une protection internationale. Toutes les mesures de contrôle aux frontières devraient être proportionnées et non discriminatoires.

([1]) Voir http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/index_en.htm
([2]) Règlement (CE) nº 562/2006 du 15 mars 2008 établissant un code communautaire relatif au régime de franchissement des frontières par les personnes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006540/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: 2013 report: an increasingly dangerous world for refugees and migrants

Global inaction on human rights is making the world an increasingly dangerous place for refugees and migrants: that was the conclusion announced by Amnesty International on 23 May 2013 as it launched its annual report on the human rights situation worldwide.

The organisation said that the rights of millions of people who have escaped conflict and persecution, or migrated to seek work and a better life for themselves and their families, have been abused. Governments around the world are accused of showing more interest in protecting their national borders than the rights of their citizens or the rights of those seeking refuge or opportunities within those borders.

The failure to address conflict situations effectively is creating a global underclass. The rights of men, women and children fleeing conflict are unprotected; and many governments are abusing human rights in the name of immigration control — going well beyond legitimate border control measures.

What is the Commission's response to Amnesty International's documentation of these failures?

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

The Commission is aware of the report by Amnesty International, and, more broadly, of the incompleteness of global systems for international protection of those in need. Regarding the EU's commitments, the Commission does not hesitate to intervene, in line with its role under the treaties, when there is reason to doubt that Member States are respecting their obligations under EC law.

Concerning asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, the EU has just adopted a package of measures under the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) ([1]). These set out common high standards and will promote stronger cooperation to ensure that asylum-seekers are treated equally in an open and fair system, wherever they apply within the EU. The intention is to lead to fairer, quicker and better quality asylum decisions as well as providing more support to asylum-seekers with special needs. The CEAS also aims at ensuring humane material reception conditions (such as housing) for asylum-seekers across the EU and that the fundamental rights of the persons concerned are fully respected.

The EU has also developed measures to assist third countries with refugee situations, including Regional Protection Programmes which give assistance to third countries in providing protection to refugees, as well as EU funding for resettlement efforts by Member States.

On border controls, the legislative framework is being amended to further emphasise Member States' obligation to respect fundamental rights. The Schengen Borders Code ([2]) must be applied in full respect of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and does not affect the rights of refugees and persons in need of international protection. All border control measures should be proportionate and non-discriminatory.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/index_en.htm
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 of 15 March 2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006541/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Attaque de travailleurs humanitaires en Afghanistan

Le 29 mai, des hommes armés non identifiés et au moins un kamikaze ont pris pour cible le bureau du CICR à Jalalabad (province du Nangarhâr), tuant un agent de sécurité afghan et blessant un autre employé de l'organisation. Cet attentat n'a pas été revendiqué, mais il fait suite à un autre commis le 24 mai contre une résidence de l'Organisation internationale pour les migrations dans la capitale afghane, Kaboul. Celui-ci a été revendiqué par les talibans, qui ont toutefois affirmé que la cible était une résidence de la CIA. Les attaques commises par des groupes armés contre des organisations humanitaires constituent des crimes de guerre et doivent cesser immédiatement. Les organisations telles que le CICR doivent pouvoir effectuer leur travail essentiel, qui consiste à sauver des vies, sans craindre d'être la cible de violences. Cette attaque est un affront à l'humanité. Les responsables de l'attentat de Jalalabad doivent être traduits en justice et jugés conformément au droit international et aux normes internationales.

Les attaques visant délibérément le personnel humanitaire sont strictement interdites par le droit international et constituent des crimes de guerre. Les talibans et les autres groupes armés doivent cesser immédiatement d'attaquer des cibles humanitaires en Afghanistan. D'innombrables Afghans dépendent du travail de ces organisations.

L'Afghanistan présente les pires indicateurs de santé dans le monde et le manque d'accès aux soins y est chronique. Les attaques visant délibérément les organisations humanitaires portent préjudice à la santé et au bien-être de la population afghane, notamment dans les régions isolées et dans les zones les plus touchées par le conflit.

1. Quels plans la Commission envisage-t-elle à court, moyen et long terme en Afghanistan?

2. Constate-t-elle une amélioration depuis le début des actions qu'elle a entreprises?

3. La Commission possède-t-elle des statistiques sur le nombre de personnes, présentes pour des raisons humanitaires ou de coopération, victimes d'attentats depuis la fin de la guerre?

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

L'engagement actuel de l'Union européenne en Afghanistan se fonde sur le plan d'action arrêté par le Conseil en 2009. L'Union est particulièrement attachée au renforcement des institutions d'État et à la mise en œuvre intégrale de l'accord-cadre de responsabilité mutuelle de Tokyo. L'Afghanistan est le principal bénéficiaire en Asie des fonds accordés au titre du budget de l'UE. La planification des programmes de l'Union prévus en Afghanistan jusqu'en 2020 a été engagée et sera finalisée dans les prochains mois. À plus long terme, l'Union européenne négocie un accord de coopération de dix ans en matière de partenariat et de développement.

Le service d'aide humanitaire et de protection civile (ECHO) fournit depuis 17 ans une aide de survie à l'Afghanistan de manière indépendante, neutre et impartiale. ECHO n'a cessé de plaider en faveur du respect des lois et des principes humanitaires internationaux auprès de toutes les parties afin de protéger cette indépendance qui lui permet d'atteindre les personnes qui ont désespérément besoin d'aide. L'Union condamne le plus fermement possible toutes les attaques visant des organisations et des travailleurs humanitaires. Ces derniers ont grandement contribué à améliorer de manière significative la qualité de vie de la majorité de la population afghane depuis 2002. Cette amélioration s'est traduite par une augmentation de l'espérance de vie de plus de 20 ans (elle dépasse aujourd'hui les 60 ans), une diminution de moitié du taux de mortalité infantile et une réduction de plus de trois quarts du nombre de femmes qui meurent en couches.

L'UE et les autres donateurs dans le domaine de la santé ont demandé au ministère de la santé publique de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour prévenir les attaques et protéger les professionnels de la santé. L'Union ne dispose pas de statistiques officielles sur le nombre de travailleurs humanitaires tués ou blessés. Selon l'«Aid Worker Security Database», le nombre de ces attaques s'élèverait à 324 depuis 2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006541/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Attacks on aid workers in Afghanistan

On 29 May 2013, unidentified armed men and at least one suicide bomber staged an attack on the offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Jalalabad (Nangarhar Province), killing an Afghan guard and injuring another employee of the organisation. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack, but it followed another launched against the offices of the International Organisation for Migration in the Afghan capital, Kabul, on 24 May 2013. Responsibility for that attack was claimed by the Taliban, who stated that a building used by the CIA had been the intended target. Attacks committed by armed groups against humanitarian organisations are war crimes and must end at once. It is essential that organisations such as the ICRC should be able to carry out their vital work, saving lives, without fear of being targeted. The attack which took place on 29 May 2013 is an affront to humanity, and those responsible must be brought before the courts and be tried in accordance with international law and conventions.

Attacks which specifically target aid workers are strictly prohibited under international law and are considered war crimes. The targeting of humanitarian organisations in Afghanistan by the Taliban and other armed groups must end immediately. Countless Afghans rely on the work carried out by these organisations.

The public-health situation in Afghanistan is disastrous and access to healthcare is practically non-existent in many areas. Attacks which deliberately target aid organisations are severely detrimental to the health and well-being of the Afghan people, especially in remote parts of the country and in the areas worst hit by the conflict.

1. What are the Commission's short-, medium- and long-term plans for action in Afghanistan?

2. Has the Commission noticed any improvement since it started its operations in Afghanistan?

3. Does the Commission have figures for the number of aid or cooperation workers who have been killed or injured in Afghanistan since the war ended?

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

Current EU engagement in Afghanistan is based on the action plan agreed the by Council in 2009. The EU is focused on strengthening the institutions of State and the full implementation of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF). Afghanistan is the largest recipient in Asia of funding from the EU budget. Planning for the EU's programming in Afghanistan up to 2020 has been initiated and should be finalised in the coming months. For the longer term, the EU is negotiating a 10 year Cooperation Agreement for Partnership and Development.

The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO) has provided independent, neutral and impartial life-saving assistance in Afghanistan for 17 years. ECHO has consistently advocated the respect of international humanitarian law and principles with all parties to safeguard the independent space required to access people in desperate need of assistance. The EU condemns in the strongest possible terms all attacks on humanitarian and aid organisations and workers. These are people who have made a major contribution to the significant improvement in the quality of most Afghans' lives since 2002. This has included increasing life expectancy by more than 20 years to above 60, the halving of the infant mortality rate and reducing by more than three-quarters the number of mothers dying in childbirth.

The EU and other health donors have requested the Ministry of Public Health to take the necessary measures to prevent attacks and protect health workers. The EU does not have official statistics on the numbers of aid workers killed or injured. The Aid Worker Security Database estimates that there have been 324 such attacks since 2002.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006542/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Mesures positives en République dominicaine

Le nouveau projet de loi sur la police présenté au Parlement par le président de la République dominicaine constitue une avancée importante, mais il reste encore beaucoup à faire pour que la police nationale devienne une institution respectueuse des droits humains.

Parmi les aspects positifs du nouveau projet de loi, il faut souligner l'établissement de normes conformes aux règles internationales en ce qui concerne l'usage de la force et des armes à feu, ainsi que le renforcement des mécanismes de contrôle et de reddition de comptes dans la police. Toutefois, ce projet de loi ne définit pas la responsabilité des supérieurs hiérarchiques, ni la responsabilité civile de la police en tant qu'institution, par rapport aux violations des droits humains commises par des policiers dans le cadre de leurs fonctions. La seule manière d'obtenir que la réforme de la police soit efficace et durable est de s'assurer qu'il existe une volonté politique de mener à bien tous les changements requis à court, moyen et long terme, avec une participation active de la société civile aux prises de décisions.

La première démonstration de cette volonté sera l'organisation d'audiences publiques au Parlement pour que la société civile puisse s'assurer de la pérennité des avancées du projet de loi, et de la bonne résolution des problèmes observés.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle proposer des rencontres entre les autorités européennes et leurs homologues de République dominicaine?

2. La Commission prévoit-elle un quelconque support pour l'accomplissement des réformes positives qui se mettent peu à peu en place dans le pays?

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

Les problèmes de sécurité constituent un obstacle au développement de la République dominicaine, la criminalité et le trafic de stupéfiants ayant augmenté au cours des dernières années. La nouvelle loi présentée au Parlement reflète l'engagement du nouveau gouvernement à réformer les forces de sécurité pour lutter contre l'insécurité, notamment en professionnalisant la police et en rationalisant les ressources.

L'Union européenne a discuté de l'avancement de la réforme de la police avec le gouvernement du pays par l'intermédiaire de sa délégation à Saint-Domingue. Elle entretient avec le gouvernement dominicain un dialogue politique portant notamment sur la situation sécuritaire et sur le respect de l'État de droit et des Droits de l'homme par les forces de l'ordre. Récemment, la délégation de l'Union a aussi organisé un échange de vues avec les représentants de la société civile afin d'examiner les politiques de sécurité nationale.

Le programme de coopération de l'Union avec la République dominicaine, au moyen duquel l'Union soutient la réforme des institutions publiques et apporte notamment une assistance technique au gouvernement dans la définition des aspects spécifiques de la réforme de la police, est doté d'un budget de 179 millions d'euros ([1]).

La programmation du prochain programme de coopération ([2]) est en cours de préparation. Compte tenu des expériences passées et à la lumière des nouveaux engagements des autorités dominicaines, l'Union accordera une attention particulière à la nécessité de soutenir les réformes institutionnelles, en particulier en ce qui concerne les forces de l'ordre.

Sur le plan régional, la stratégie commune UE-Cariforum récemment adoptée comporte un volet «criminalité et sécurité». La République dominicaine aura la possibilité de participer pleinement aux programmes liés à la sécurité financés au titre de l'enveloppe régionale.

([1]) Dans le cadre du 10^e^ FED (2007-2013).
([2]) Pour la période 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006542/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Positive steps in the Dominican Republic

The new draft law presented to the Parliament of the Dominican Republic by its President is a major step forward, but there remains much to be done if the police are to become an institution which respects human rights.

Among the positive aspects of the draft should be mentioned the establishment of standards in line with international rules on the use of force and firearms and the strengthening of control and accountability mechanisms in the police. However, the draft does not define the responsibility of those in the hierarchy or the civil responsibility of the police as an institution for human rights abuses committed by police officers in the course of their duties. The only way to achieve an effective and lasting reform of the police is to ensure that there is the political will to implement all the changes needed in the short, medium and long term, with the active participation of civil society in decision-making.

The first chance to see this in action will be through the organisation of public meetings in the parliament to show civil society the progress made by the draft and the successful resolution of problems identified.

1. Does the Commission intend to propose meetings between the European authorities and their counterparts in the Dominican Republic?

2. Is the Commission planning to offer support in order to help achieve the positive reforms which are gradually being implemented in that country?

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

The security challenges constitute an obstacle to the development the Dominican Republic. Criminality and drug trafficking have increased in the recent years. The new law presented to the Parliament reflects the commitment by the new administration to reform the security forces aiming at tackling the insecurity, notably by professionalization of the police and rationalisation of resources.

The EU, through its Delegation in Santo Domingo, has held discussions with the country's government on the state of the reform of the Police. The security situation and the respect by the security institutions for the rule of law and human rights are the themes of the political dialogue that the EU is regularly holding with the Dominican government. Recently an exchange of views with the representatives of the civil society was also organised by the EU Delegation to discuss the national security policies.

The EU cooperation programme with the Dominican Republic amounts to EUR 179 million ([1]), within which the EU has been supporting the reform of the public institutions, more specifically, technical assistance to the government in defining specific aspects of the Police reform.

The programming exercise of the next cooperation programme ([2]) is currently being prepared. On the basis of the past experiences and in light of the new commitments of the Dominican authorities the EU will be paying special attention to the need for support to institutional reforms, in particular security institutions.

On the regional level crime and security is one of the axes of the recently adopted joint EU-CARIFORUM strategy. The Dominican Republic will have the possibility of full participation in the security related programmes financed under the regional envelope.

([1]) Under the 10th EDF (2007-2013).
([2]) For 2014-2020.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006543/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Ouganda — arrestation de militants dans un contexte préoccupant de répression des médias

Les autorités ougandaises doivent mettre fin à l'attaque contre la liberté d'expression qui a conduit à la fermeture forcée de plusieurs médias au cours des cinq derniers jours. Des policiers armés ont fermé deux journaux et deux stations de radio le 20 mai. Ces médias avaient fait état d'un complot présumé du gouvernement visant à assassiner des personnalités politiques opposées à la passation du pouvoir entre le président Yoweri Museveni et son fils. La police antiémeute a arrêté jeudi cinq militants des Droits de l'homme, au motif qu'ils protestaient contre la fermeture du «Daily monitor», premier organe de presse à avoir, depuis son siège de Kampala, évoqué ce complot au début du mois.

Ces tentatives désespérées des autorités ougandaises pour occulter une affaire politique gênante démontrent un mépris flagrant pour la liberté d'expression et violent le droit à l'information des Ougandais. Les journalistes doivent être libres d'effectuer leur travail légitime et les charges retenues contre les personnes exprimant de manière pacifique leur divergence de vues doivent être abandonnées.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission à ce sujet?

2. Compte-t-elle mettre cette question à l'ordre du jour?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle publier un communiqué officiel sur le sujet et entamer des discussions avec les autorités ougandaises?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(5 août 2013)

L'UE est très préoccupée par la tendance accrue à une limitation des libertés fondamentales en Ouganda dont l'Honorable Parlementaire se fait l'écho, et a suivi de près l'évolution de la situation en ce qui concerne la récente fermeture temporaire de quatre médias ainsi que l'arrestation de plusieurs journalistes et défenseurs des Droits de l'homme.

L'UE a une position très claire sur la liberté d'expression et la liberté des médias: elle condamne tout type de restriction illégale de ces libertés.

Dernièrement, la délégation de l'UE à Kampala a rencontré à plusieurs reprises des représentants de la société civile et des défenseurs des Droits de l'homme, ainsi que les autorités ougandaises, pour s'entretenir avec eux des événements mentionnés par l'Honorable Parlementaire. Les vigoureuses mesures prises par les autorités chargées de veiller au respect de la loi ne semblant pas avoir de base juridique solide, la délégation de l'UE et les États membres de l'UE représentés à Kampala ont publié une déclaration locale de l'UE exprimant leurs vives inquiétudes quant au respect de la liberté d'expression et de la liberté des médias. Quelques jours après la diffusion de cette déclaration, les médias concernés ont été autorisés à rouvrir et toutes les personnes arrêtées ont été libérées dans de bonnes conditions de sécurité.

Bien que cette crise particulière ait été résolue de manière satisfaisante, l'UE a la ferme intention de continuer à faire connaître ses préoccupations concernant les violations des Droits de l'homme dans le cadre d'un dialogue avec le gouvernement. En outre, elle maintiendra son soutien à la société civile locale dans sa lutte pour un média indépendant et dynamique dans le pays.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006543/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Uganda — activists arrested against a worrying backdrop of media repression

The Ugandan authorities must put a stop to the attacks on freedom of expression which have led to the forced closure of several media in the past five days. Armed police closed down two newspapers and two radio stations on 20 May. The newspapers and radio stations had reported on an alleged government plot to assassinate politicians opposed to the transfer of power from President Yoweri Museveni to his son. On Thursday riot police arrested five human rights activists for protesting against the closure of the Kampala-based *Daily Monitor*, the first newspaper to have mentioned the plot at the beginning of the month.

These desperate attempts by the Ugandan authorities to cover up an embarrassing political scandal demonstrate a flagrant disregard for freedom of expression and are a violation of the Ugandan people's right to information. The journalists must be freed to carry on their legitimate work and all charges against people peacefully expressing a difference of opinion must be dropped.

1. What is the Commission's position on this matter?

2. Does it intend to put this matter on the agenda?

3. Is the Commission intending to publish an official communiqué on this matter and begin discussions with the Ugandan authorities?

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

The EU is very concerned about the increased tendency to curtail fundamental freedoms in Uganda as referenced by the Honourable Member and has been closely following developments regarding the recent temporary closure of four media outlets and the arrests of a number of journalists and human rights activists.

The EU position on freedom of expression and freedom of media is very clear. It condemns any type of illegal restriction of such liberties.

The EU Delegation in Kampala has recently met several times with civil society and Human Rights campaigners as well as with the Ugandan authorities to discuss the events mentioned by the Honourable Member. Since the strong actions taken by law enforcement authorities do not appear to have a strong legal basis, the EU Delegation together with EU Member states in Kampala issued a local EU statement expressing deep concerns about respect for freedom of expression and freedom of media. A few days after the statement was released, the affected media outlets were authorised to reopen and all arrested persons were safely released.

Although this specific crisis has now been resolved satisfactorily, the EU fully intends to keep raising concerns over violation of human rights in dialogue with the government. In addition the EU will continue to support local civil society in its fight for an independent and vibrant media in the country.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006544/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Soudan du Sud — toujours pas de justice pour les manifestants tués

Le 9 décembre 2012, les forces de sécurité ont ouvert le feu sur une manifestation pacifique, tuant six personnes sur place. Deux autres manifestants sont morts plus tard à l'hôpital. La manifestation faisait suite à la mort de deux hommes, lors d'une flambée de violence entre jeunes et forces de sécurité le jour précédent. Huit manifestants pacifiques sont morts alors qu'ils étaient aux mains des forces de sécurité et, apparemment, personne n'a encore été inculpé ni poursuivi cinq mois plus tard. L'affaire crée un précédent fâcheux pour ce nouveau pays, et sape la liberté d'expression et de réunion pacifique.

La manifestation du 9 décembre 2012 ainsi que l'homicide dont ont été victimes deux hommes lors d'une flambée de violence la veille ont eu lieu pendant une période de troubles civils à Wau, capitale de l'État du Bahr el Ghazal occidental, faisant suite à une décision visant à déplacer un siège administratif à l'extérieur de la ville. Les autorités doivent diligenter des enquêtes approfondies, efficaces et impartiales et engager des poursuites contre les personnes soupçonnées d'être responsables de ces homicides, commis il y a plus de cinq mois, et d'un certain nombre d'autres morts survenues pendant les troubles civils de Wau. La Constitution de transition du Soudan du Sud garantit le droit de réunion pacifique et d'association, ainsi que le droit à la liberté d'expression. Selon les normes internationales, et afin de protéger le droit de toute personne à la vie et à la sécurité, les responsables de l'application des lois doivent, autant que possible, utiliser des moyens non violents.

Selon les normes internationales, tout usage, même prétendument accidentel, de la force létale dans les opérations de maintien de l'ordre doit faire l'objet d'une enquête indépendante et impartiale. Aucune enquête sérieuse n'a été menée et l'identité des agents des forces de sécurité responsables de ces homicides reste indéterminée.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission à ce sujet?

2. Compte-t-elle mettre cette question à l'ordre du jour?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle publier un communiqué officiel et mettre en œuvre l'appareil diplomatique?

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

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante suit de près l'évolution de la situation concernant les manifestations de l'année passée à Wau. Au début du mois de juin, le tribunal d'exception de Wau-Nord a prononcé onze peines de mort à la suite du meurtre de six agriculteurs pendant les troubles civils. Ce tribunal a vu le jour dans la foulée de la répression musclée des manifestations populaires contre le projet de transfert d'une unité administrative; les protestations ont été suivies d'une vague de violences ethniques au cours de laquelle au moins 24 personnes ont perdu la vie et plus de 60 personnes ont été blessées. Par ailleurs, treize autres décès ont été imputés aux agents de sécurité de l'État, qui ont démantelé de force des barrages routiers et ont ouvert le feu sur les manifestants.

Outre que l'UE s'oppose par principe à la peine de mort, elle constate également avec inquiétude que seuls des manifestants ont été traduits en justice pour actes de violence. Aucun des membres des forces de sécurité qui avaient tiré sur les manifestants non armés n'a dû rendre des comptes.

La délégation de l'Union à Djouba lancera une campagne auprès des autorités pour leur rappeler notre opposition vigoureuse à la peine de mort, en toutes circonstances, indépendamment des crimes commis, et les encourager à enquêter sur les agissements des forces de sécurité. Le système judiciaire du Sud-Soudan est également incité à mener des investigations approfondies et à poursuivre tous ceux qui se sont rendus coupables d'actes criminels, quel que soit leur statut, y compris au sein de l'administration et des forces de sécurité.

En outre, la représentante spéciale de l'Union européenne pour la République du Soudan et la République du Sud-Soudan aborde régulièrement les questions des Droits de l'homme dans le cadre de ses contacts bilatéraux.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006544/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: South Sudan — still no justice for demonstrators killed

On 9 December 2012, security forces opened fire on a peaceful demonstration, killing six people. Two other demonstrators later died in hospital. The demonstration followed the deaths of two men when violence had flared up the previous day between young people and the security forces. Eight demonstrators died at the hands of the security forces, yet it seems that, five months on, no one has been accused or prosecuted. This sets a regrettable precedent for this young country and undermines the freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

The demonstration and the killing of two men in the previous day's violence took place during a period of civil unrest in Wau, the capital of the state of Western Bahr el Ghazal, which followed a decision to move the headquarters of an administrative body out of the town. The authorities must quickly begin a thorough, effective and impartial investigation and take action against those suspected of carrying out these killings, which were committed over five months ago, and the killings of others which took place during the civil unrest in Wau. The transitional constitution of South Sudan guarantees the right to peaceful assembly and association as well as the right to freedom of expression. According to international standards and in order to protect the right of every individual to life and security, those responsible for implementing the law must, as far as possible, use non-violent means.

International standards state that every instance of the use of lethal force in law enforcement operations — even if ostensibly accidental — must be investigated independently and impartially. No proper investigation has taken place in this case, and the identity of the members of the security forces responsible for the killings remains unknown.

1. What is the Commission's position on this issue?

2. Does the Commission intend to put this issue on its agenda?

3. Does the Commission intend to publish an official communication and set diplomatic proceduresin motion?

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

The High Representative/ Vice-President is following closely the developments related to last years' demonstrations in Wau. At the beginning of June, the Wau North special court handed down eleven death sentences for the killing of six farmers during the unrests. The court was established in the wake of a heavy-handed crackdown on popular protests against the planned relocation of an administrative unit; the protests were followed by a spate of ethnic violence that left at least twenty-four people killed and more than 60 injured. Another thirteen deaths were attributed to the state security officers, who forcefully removed roadblocks and opened fire on protestors.

Apart from the EU's principled objection to the death penalty, the EU is concerned that only protesters were put on trial for the violence. None of the members of the security forces who had fired on unarmed protesters were held to account.

The EU Delegation in Juba will carry out a demarche to the government reiterating our firm opposition to the death penalty under all circumstances, regardless of the crimes committed, and encouraging investigation into the action of the security forces. The South Sudanese judiciary is also encouraged to conduct thorough investigations and prosecute all those liable of criminal acts, irrespective of their status, including in the administration and the security forces.

In addition, the EU's Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan raises human rights issues on a regular basis in her bilateral contacts.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006545/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Exproprier Mittal

Le secteur sidérurgique de notre pays ainsi que le personnel affecté a beaucoup souffert du comportement anti-social et contre-productif de Mittal durant ces dernières années, qui a mis à feu et à sang la sidérurgie européenne. Pour tenter de sauver ce qui peut encore l'être dans le bassin liégeois, les pouvoirs publics veulent donner à la Région la possibilité d'exproprier un propriétaire d'entreprise et de se réapproprier ses outils.

Cette mesure concerne toute «société, universalité, branche d'activité ou site d'exploitation établi en Région wallonne». Les sociétés, organes ou préposés sont tenus de collaborer à une instruction menée par un réviseur d'entreprise désigné par la Région si les actifs ne sont pas identifiés avec précision.

C'est la négociation d'une procédure de cession à l'amiable qui serait privilégiée, mais cela sous-entend un accord entre les deux parties. Si le propriétaire refuse, la Région peut alors activer la procédure d'expropriation pour cause d'utilité publique, décidée par le seul gouvernement wallon via un arrêté d'expropriation. Cet arrêté contraint le propriétaire d'être «le garant de la bonne conservation des actifs» et de répondre à l'assignation par la Région devant le tribunal de première instance «afin de valider le montant de l'indemnité compensatoire». Et gare au propriétaire qui entraverait délibérément, «frauduleusement ou dans le but de nuire» le processus engagé par la Région, à quelque stade que ce soit, puisqu'il s'expose à une peine de prison de six mois à deux ans.

1. La Commission nous rejoint-elle dans cette démarche?

2. Pense-t-elle proposer ce type de démarche au niveau européen pour éviter que, lorsqu'un repreneur sérieux est trouvé, la nonchalance, la mauvaise foi ou tout autre obscure raison du propriétaire ne fasse capoter l'affaire, provoquant de nombreuses pertes d'emplois?

3. Qu'en est-il d'une politique sidérurgique et industrielle de l'Union européenne?

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

1. La Commission n'intervient pas en ce qui concerne le régime de la propriété dans les États membres (EM) ([1]), lesquels peuvent nationaliser une entreprise. Toutefois, la liberté générale accordée aux EM pour organiser leur régime de propriété doit s'exercer dans le respect des règles fondamentales que sont la liberté d'établissement ([2]), la libre circulation des capitaux ([3]) et la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne (UE) ([4]).

Par conséquent, toute mesure d'expropriation doit être pleinement justifiée, c'est-à-dire qu'elle doit être prise dans l'intérêt public, être non discriminatoire, être proportionnée à l'objectif d'intérêt public et prévoir une indemnisation équitable et rapide des investisseurs. Le non-respect de ces exigences irait à l'encontre de l'objectif, que l'Union s'est fixé, d'établir un marché intérieur opérationnel ([5]).

2. La Commission ne prévoit pas de proposer une telle mesure au niveau européen, et n'est pas compétente pour le faire.

3. La Commission a récemment adopté une communication intitulée *Plan d'action pour une industrie sidérurgique compétitive et durable en Europe*. Ce plan d'action répond à l'ambition d'aider le secteur à relever les défis d'aujourd'hui, en particulier la baisse actuelle de la demande, et à jeter les bases de sa compétitivité future en promouvant l'innovation et en créant de la croissance et des emplois. C'est la première fois, depuis le plan Davignon en 1977, que la Commission propose un plan d'action pour la sidérurgie.

L'UE a plus que jamais besoin de son économie réelle pour soutenir la reprise économique et la Commission souhaite que, d'ici à 2020, l'industrie fournisse 20 % du PIB. En octobre, la Commission établira un rapport d'avancement sur la communication relative à la politique industrielle adoptée en octobre 2012. Dans le domaine de l'acier, la Commission effectuera, au cours de l'année prochaine, un suivi des mesures proposées dans le plan d'action pour s'assurer qu'elles produisent l'effet recherché.

([1]) Article 345 du TFUE.
([2]) Article 49 du TFUE.
([3]) Article 63 du TFUE.
([4]) Article 17 de la Charte.
([5]) Article 3 du TUE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006545/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Expropriating Mittal

Our country's steel industry and the employees who are affected have suffered grievously from the anti-social and counterproductive behaviour of Mittal in recent years, as he has torched the European steel industry. In an attempt to save what is not already irremediably lost in the Liège area, the public authorities wish to give the Regional Authority the power to expropriate any owner of a business and take possession of his means of production.

This measure concerns any 'company, property, sector or operating site established in the Walloon Region'. Companies, bodies or managers are required to cooperate in an inquiry by an auditor appointed by the Region if the assets are not identified with precision.

Preference would be given to negotiating a handover by way of an amicable settlement, but that presupposes agreement being reached between the two parties. If the owner refuses, the Region may then set in train the expropriation procedure on grounds of public utility decided by the Walloon Government alone by means of an expropriation order. Such an order would compel the owner to be 'the guarantor of the satisfactory preservation of the assets' and to enter an appearance before the court of first instance in response to a summons by the Region 'in order to validate the amount of the compensation payment'. Woe betide an owner who, at any stage, deliberately obstructs, 'fraudulently or with the aim of causing harm', the procedure initiated by the Region, as he would be liable to imprisonment for a term of between six months and two years.

1. Does the Commission support us in this action?

2. Will the Commission propose this type of action at European level to ensure that, once a party who is seriously interested comes forward to take over the business, the transaction is not scuppered due to negligence, bad faith or any other obscure reason on the part of the owner, causing numerous job losses?

3. What is the current situation with regard to a European Union steel policy and industrial policy?

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

1. The Commission will not interfere in the Member States' (MS) rules governing the system of property ownership ([1]). MS may nationalise a company. However, the general freedom given to MS to organise their property regimes must be applied in compliance with the fundamental rules, namely the freedom of establishment ([2]), the free movement of capital ([3]) and the Charter on Fundamental Rights of the EU ([4]).

Therefore, any expropriation measure must be fully justified, meaning: it has to be taken in the public interest, be non-discriminatory, be proportionate to the public interest and must provide for fair and timely compensation of investors. The non-compliance with these requirements would go against the Union's aim of establishment of the functioning Internal Market ([5]).

2. The Commission does not plan nor have the competence to propose any such action at European level.

3. The Commission recently adopted its communication *Action plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe*. This action plan has the ambition to help this sector confront today's challenges, in particular the current drop in demand, and lay the foundations for future competitiveness by fostering innovation, creating growth and jobs. It is the first time since the Davignon Plan of 1977, that the Commission proposes an action plan for steel.

The EU needs its real economy more than ever to underpin the economic recovery and the Commissions aims for industry to deliver 20% of GDP by 2020. In October the Commission will establish a progress report on the industrial policy Communication adopted last october 2012. In the area of steel, the Commission will monitor the actions put forward in the action plan over the next year to make sure they are having the effect they aimed for.

([1]) Article 345 TFEU.
([2]) Article 49 TFEU.
([3]) Article 63 TFEU.
([4]) Article 17.
([5]) Article 3 TEU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006546/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Android de Google: abus de position dominante (suivi)

Cette question fait suite à la question E-004260/2013 dont le but était de faire la lumière sur l'éventuel abus de position dominante de Google qui utiliserait son système d'exploitation pour téléphones mobiles Android comme cheval de Troie pour tromper ses partenaires, monopoliser le marché des téléphones mobiles et contrôler les données des consommateurs.

1. Une fois l'enquête conclue, par quels biais et dans quel ordre la Commission communique-t-elle et à qui s'adresse-t-elle?

2. Pourquoi les députés qui ont interpellé la Commission sur tel ou tel dossier ne sont-ils pas, eux aussi, informés, via une lettre ou au moins un courriel, des conclusions de l'enquête ou du dossier? Ce serait en tout cas plus élégant que de l'apprendre via la presse ou par un quelconque canal général et permettrait un échange d'informations plus pointu entre les personnes directement concernées.

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(31 juillet 2013)

La Commission examine en ce moment un certain nombre de pratiques commerciales de Google en ce qui concerne le système d'exploitation Android afin d'établir si elles peuvent constituer une infraction au droit européen de la concurrence.

Pour ce qui est de la communication des mesures d'instruction prises dans une affaire donnée ou de l'issue des différentes étapes d'une affaire, les règles de procédure fixées dans les règlements relatifs à la concurrence concernés, tels que le règlement (CE) nº 1/2003 ([1]) du Conseil et le règlement (CE) nº 773/2004 ([2]) de la Commission, ainsi que dans la communication de la Commission concernant les bonnes pratiques relatives aux procédures d'application des articles 101 et 102 du TFUE sont suivies ([3]). Conformément auxdites règles, seules les parties à la procédure ou, le cas échéant, le ou les plaignants sont directement informés des conclusions correspondantes.

Alors qu'il n'est pas prévu que les députés européens ou le grand public reçoivent des informations au sujet d'une enquête en cours, entre autres pour ne pas porter préjudice aux droits de la partie faisant l'objet de l'enquête et pour des raisons de confidentialité, les grandes étapes sont communiquées publiquement afin de sensibiliser l'opinion aux mesures coercitives de la Commission, notamment au moyen de communiqués de presse et de la publication de décisions finales. Parallèlement, la Commission est disposée à examiner la manière dont les députés ayant manifesté de l'intérêt pour une affaire en particulier pourraient être informés individuellement des étapes majeures de l'affaire en question au moment où lesdites étapes sont rendues publiques.

([1]) Règlement (CE) nº 1/2003 du Conseil du 16 décembre 2002 relatif à la mise en œuvre des règles de concurrence prévues aux articles 81 et 82 du traité, JO L 1 du 4.1.2003, p. 1.

([2]) Règlement (CE) nº 773/2004 de la Commission du 7 avril 2004 relatif aux procédures mises en œuvre par la Commission en application des articles 81 et 82 du traité CE, JO L 123 du 27.4.2004, p. 18.

([3]) JO C 308 du 20.11.2011, p. 6.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006546/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Google Android: abuse of dominant position (follow-up)

This question follows on from Written Question E-004260/2013, the aim of which was to shed light on the possible abuse of a dominant position by Google, which uses its Android mobile operating system as a Trojan horse to deceive its partners, monopolise the smart phone market and monitor consumer data.

1. Once the investigation has been completed, who will the Commission notify of the findings, by what means and in what order?

2. Why are Members who have raised a particular issue with the Commission not informed by letter or at least by email of the findings of the relevant investigation or of the Commission's position on the issue? This would certainly be more courteous than leaving them to hear this through the press or some other unofficial channel and would make for a more meaningful exchange of information among those directly concerned.

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The Commission is currently looking into a number of business practices by Google in relation to the Android operating system with a view to establishing whether they may amount to an infringement of EU competition law.

As regards the communication of investigative measures taken in a particular case or the outcome of different stages of a case, the procedural rules established in the relevant competition regulations such as Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 ([1]) and Commission Regulation (EC) No 773/2004 ([2]), as well as the Commission notice on best practices for the conduct of proceedings concerning Articles 101 and 102 TFEU are followed ([3]). According to these rules, only the parties to the proceedings or as relevant, the complainant(s) are directly informed of the relevant findings.

Whilst detailed information to Members of the European Parliament or the broader public relating to an ongoing investigation is not provided for, in part not to prejudice the rights of the party under investigation and for confidentiality reasons, relevant milestones are communicated publicly to ensure awareness of the Commission's enforcement actions, in particular through press releases and publication of final decisions. At the same time, the Commission is willing to look into ways in which individual Members who show interest in a particular case could be informed individually of relevant milestones in that case at the time such milestones become public.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty, OJ L 1, 4.1.2003, p.1.

([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 773/2004 of 7 April 2004 relating to the conduct of proceedings by the Commission pursuant to Articles 81 and 82 of the EC Treaty, OJ L 123, 27.4.2004, p. 18.

([3]) OJ C 308, 20.11.2011, p.6.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006547/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Accord Union européenne — Inde: suivi

La présente question s'inscrit dans le prolongement de la question E-004383/2013 dont le but était de faire le point sur l'accord entre l'Union européenne et l'Inde et qui surtout traduisait une inquiétude quant à l'avenir des médicaments génériques.

1. La Commission a-t-elle quantifié, ou compte-t-elle quantifier, les conséquences d'un tel traité sur les génériques? Quel est le nombre de génériques fabriqués? Combien de vies ont-ils permis de sauver?

2. Dans sa réponse, la Commission indique ce qui suit: «De fait, en 2010 l'Union européenne et l'Inde étaient déjà convenues que le chapitre sur les droits de propriété intellectuelle du futur accord n'imposerait à aucune des parties d'introduire des modifications dans sa législation en matière de DPI en ce qui concerne l'accès aux médicaments. Cela signifie que l'ALE n'entraînera aucun changement dans la législation actuelle de l'Inde à cet égard, qu'il s'agisse de la protection des données, de la durée des brevets ou encore de l'application des DPI». Quels sont les paragraphes du texte qui auraient alors une influence sur la législation actuelle de l'Inde?

3. Où le projet d'accord est-il accessible pour lecture?

4. Quel est le calendrier autour de cet accord?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(16 juillet 2013)

La Commission est consciente de l'importance que les médicaments génériques peuvent avoir pour l'amélioration de l'accès des populations les plus pauvres aux médicaments, ainsi que du rôle joué par l'Inde à cet égard. Le chapitre sur les droits de propriété intellectuelle (DPI) de l'accord de libre-échange (ALE) entre l'Union européenne (UE) et l'Inde n'affectera pas la capacité de cette dernière à produire et à exporter des médicaments génériques à un prix abordable pour les personnes dans le besoin.

Pour être absolument claire sur ce point, l'UE a proposé d'inclure dans l'ALE la précision suivante:«Aucune disposition du présent accord ne peut être interprétée de manière à compromettre la capacité des parties à promouvoir l'accès aux médicaments»; par conséquent, l'ALE n'imposera pas à l'Inde de modifier sa législation relative aux DPI. Le seul domaine des DPI pour lequel la Commission attend de l'Inde des engagements qui pourraient requérir un changement dans la législation de ce pays est celui de la protection des indications géographiques.

Les discussions sont en cours et les textes doivent faire l'objet de travaux supplémentaires avant de pouvoir être rendus publics. Décider de manière unilatérale de mettre les textes à la disposition du public à ce stade des discussions pourrait miner la confiance de l'autre partie, étant donné la sensibilité de certains enjeux. Néanmoins, la Commission a toujours pleinement et immédiatement informé le Parlement, par l'intermédiaire de la commission INTA, de l'avancée des négociations.

Il n'existe pas de délai pour la conclusion de cet ALE. Toutefois, les deux parties déploient des efforts intenses pour résoudre les questions en suspens de façon à trouver au plus vite un accord qui profite aux deux parties. Des progrès considérables ont été réalisés depuis le début des négociations; les questions qui sont toujours sur la table sont celles qui demandent les décisions les plus importantes de part et d'autre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006547/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: EU-India agreement: monitoring

The present question is a follow-up to Question E-004383/2013, which seeks a review of the agreement between the European Union and India and, in the main, reflects concern about the future of generic medicinal products.

1. Has the Commission quantified, or does it intend to quantify, the consequences of such an agreement for generic medicinal products? How many generic medicinal products are manufactured? How many lives have they saved?

2. In its answer, the Commission indicated that: 'In fact, in 2010 the EU and India already agreed that the IPR (intellectual property rights) chapter of the future agreement will not require either party to introduce amendments to its current IPR law in relation to access to medicines. This implies that the FTA will not result in any changes to India's current legislation, not only with respect to data protection and patent term, but also in relation to IPR enforcement.' Which paragraphs of the text would therefore affect India's current legislation?

3. Where can the draft agreement be consulted?

4. What is the timetable for this agreement?

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

The Commission is well aware of the role that generics can play in improving access to medicines for the poorest populations, as well of the role played by India in this respect. The Intellectual Property (IPR) Chapter in the EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will not undermine India's ability to produce and export affordable generic medicines for people in need.

To make this absolutely clear the EU has proposed that the FTA contain a provision stating that 'nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as to impair the capacity of the Parties to promote access to medicines' and consequently the FTA does not require India to change its IPR legislation in relation to access to medicines. The only area of intellectual property where the Commission is looking for commitments by India that could require a change in its legislation is with regard to protection of geographical indications.

Discussions are ongoing and texts still need further work before they can be made public. Putting texts in public domain unilaterally at this stage of the discussions could undermine the confidence of the other party given the sensitivity of some of the issues involved. Nevertheless, the Commission has kept the European Parliament, through the INTA committee, fully and immediately informed of how the negotiations are developing.

There is no agreed deadline for concluding this agreement; however both sides are making intensive efforts to resolve outstanding issues so as to reach a mutually beneficial deal at the earliest. Significant progress has been made since start of the negotiations; issues remaining on the table are the ones that require the more difficult decisions on both sides.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006548/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Transport de chevaux: (prolongement de la question E-011234/2012)

Concernant la question parlementaire E-011234/2012 et la réponse de la Commission, nous voudrions obtenir un complément d'informations:

1. Pourquoi la Commission a-t-elle demandé un avis scientifique de l'EFSA sur ce dossier si elle ne le prend pas en considération, et que, par là même, la Commission ne propose pas de règlement révisé conformément à ces conclusions scientifiques?

2. Le conseil scientifique de l'EFSA concernant le transport des chevaux va plus loin que les dispositions du règlement actuel (CE) n° 1/2005; plus important encore, l'EFSA conseille de réduire les temps de transport des chevaux destinés à l'abattage à un maximum de 12 heures, tandis que le règlement permet 24 heures. Comment la Commission s'attend-elle à ce que les États membres se servent de cet avis scientifique concernant le transport de chevaux au sein de l'Union européenne tant que les conclusions de l'EFSA ne sont pas inclues dans un règlement révisé?

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

1. La Commission a demandé l'avis scientifique ([1]) de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) pour préparer le rapport requis à l'article 32 du règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 ([2]) relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport ([3]). La Commission a adopté ce rapport en novembre 2011 ([4]).

2. **T**oute proposition législative de la Commission dans le domaine du bien-être des animaux pendant le transport est précédée d'une évaluation approfondie des aspects pertinents de la mesure concernée. Un tel avis scientifique n'est qu'un élément parmi d'autres de cette évaluation.

Au titre de l'article 1er, paragraphe 3, du règlement n° 1/2005, un État membre peut adopter des mesures nationales plus contraignantes pour les transports se déroulant entièrement à l'intérieur de ses frontières. Il lui est donc loisible de se référer à l'avis scientifique de l'EFSA pour son propre territoire, s'il le juge nécessaire.

([1]) À la demande de la Commission européenne, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) a adopté, le 2 décembre 2010, un avis scientifique concernant le bien-être des animaux lors du transport («Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport»). EFSA Journal 2011; 9(1):1966 [125 pp.].

([2]) Règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport et les opérations annexes. JO L 3 du 5.1.2005, p. 1.

([3]) Au titre de l'article 32 du règlement n° 1/2005 «[…] la Commission présente au Parlement européen et au Conseil un rapport sur l'incidence du présent règlement sur le bien-être des animaux transportés et sur les courants d'échanges d'animaux vivants dans la Communauté. En particulier, ce rapport prend en compte des preuves scientifiques des besoins de bien-être des animaux[…]».

([4]) Rapport de la Commission au Parlement européen et au Conseil sur l'incidence du règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport. COM(2011)700 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006548/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Transport of horses (further to Question E-011234/2012)

Following Question E-011234/2012 and the Commission's answer, we request the following additional information:

1. Why has the Commission requested a scientific opinion from EFSA on this matter if it is not taking it into account or recommending a review of the regulation in the light of these scientific findings?

2. EFSA's Scientific Council on the transportation of horses goes further in its recommendations than the provisions of the current Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005; more importantly, EFSA recommends reducing the transport time of horses for slaughter to a maximum of 12 hours, while the regulation allows 24 hours. How does the Commission expect the Member States to make use of this scientific opinion concerning the transport of horses within the EU when EFSA's findings are not included in a revised Regulation?

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

1. The Commission asked for the scientific opinion ([1]) of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in order to prepare the report requested in Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 ([2]) on the protection of animals during transport ([3]). The report was adopted by the Commission in November 2011 ([4]).

2. Any Commission proposal for legislation in the area of animal welfare during transport is preceded by an in-depth assessment of relevant aspects of the measure. A scientific opinion is only one element in this assessment.

According to Article 1(3) of Regulation 1/2005 Member States are allowed to adopt stricter national measures for transports that take place entirely within the territory of that Member State. Hence, there is the possibility for Member States to refer to the scientific opinion of EFSA in their own countries, should they see that this is necessary.

([1]) On request from the European Commission the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) adopted on 2 December 2010 the 'Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport'. EFSA Journal 2011;9(1):1966 [125 pp.].

([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]) According to Article 32 of Regulation 1/2005 '[…] the Commission shall present a report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the impact of this regulation on the welfare of animals being transported and on the trade flows of live animals within the enlarged Community. In particular, the report shall take into account scientific evidence on welfare needs of animals […]'.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006550/13
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente / Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Kadhafi à la Cour pénale internationale

La Libye doit respecter la décision prononcée par la Cour pénale internationale (CPI) et remettre immédiatement Saif Al-Islam Kadhafi à cette dernière, à La Haye.

La Libye est en pleine transition. Son système judiciaire s'est effondré après la chute du gouvernement Kadhafi, et le pays n'est pas encore en mesure de mener des procédures équitables et, à plus forte raison, de juger Saif Al-Islam Kadhafi pour les crimes que la CPI l'accuse d'avoir commis.

La Libye doit respecter l'obligation qui lui est faite de remettre Saif Al-Islam Kadhafi à la CPI, et elle doit veiller à ce que les droits de celui-ci soient pleinement protégés au cours de son transfert.

Saif Al-Islam Kadhafi, fils de Mouammar Kadhafi, doit répondre de deux chefs de crimes contre l'humanité — meurtre et persécution — pour son rôle présumé dans le conflit ayant mené à la chute du gouvernement Kadhafi.

1. Dans une décision rendue publique vendredi 31 mai, les juges de la CPI ont conclu que la Libye n'est pas apte à enquêter sur Saif Al-Islam Kadhafi, ni à lancer des poursuites à son encontre, et qu'il n'a pas été démontré de manière satisfaisante que l'enquête nationale concerne la même affaire que celle présentée devant la CPI. La Vice-Présidente/Haute Representante joint-elle donc à cet appel afin que la Lybie remette immédiatement Saif Al-Islam Kadhafi à cette dernière, à La Haye?

2. La Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante compte-t-elle agir, en tant que représentant européen et donc co-libérateur du pays du joug du dictateur, afin de garantir que justice soit faite?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(16 août 2013)

L'Union européenne suit attentivement la procédure judiciaire liée à l'affaire Saif al-Islam. Elle estime que le droit de M. Saif al-Islam à une procédure régulière devrait être garanti par la Libye conformément à ses obligations internationales. Dans ce contexte, l'UE a appelé la Libye à continuer à coopérer pleinement avec la Cour pénale internationale, y compris en ce qui concerne le mandat d'arrêt émis à l'encontre de M. Saif al-Islam, conformément aux obligations légales du pays découlant de son adoption de la résolution 1970 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies le 26 février 2011.

Parallèlement, l'UE soutient les efforts déployés par la Libye afin de renforcer les capacités du pouvoir judiciaire après des décennies de mauvaise gestion sous le régime précédent. Un programme de 10 millions d'euros financé par l'Union européenne pour l'appui au secteur de la justice et de la police est en cours de mise en œuvre dans le pays. L'objectif de ce projet est de promouvoir l'État de droit en Libye au moyen d'un renforcement de la bonne gouvernance et de la culture civile dans les secteurs de la sécurité et de la justice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006550/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Gaddafi at the International Criminal Court

Libya must comply with the decision taken by the International Criminal Court (ICC) and immediately hand over Saif al-Islam Gaddafi to The Hague.

Libya is in the throes of transition. Its judicial system collapsed following the fall of the Gaddafi regime, and the country is not yet able to conduct fair trials, let alone try Saif al-Islam Gaddafi for the crimes the ICC alleges he has committed.

Libya must fulfil its obligation to hand over Saif al-Islam Gaddafi to the ICC and must ensure that Mr Gaddafi's rights are upheld during his transfer.

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, the son of Muammar Gaddafi, has been summonsed to answer two counts of crimes against humanity — murder and persecution — for the part he allegedly played in the conflict which led to the fall of the Gaddafi regime.

1. In a decision published on Friday, 31 May 2013, the ICC judges concluded that Libya was not in a position to investigate Saif al-Islam Gaddafi or to initiate legal proceedings against him, and that insufficient evidence had been presented to demonstrate that the investigation launched in Libya covered the case that was the subject of the ICC proceedings. Does the Vice-President/High Representative support the call for Libya to hand over Saif al-Islam Gaddafi to the ICC in The Hague?

2. In her capacity as the representative of the EU and thus as co-liberator of Libya from the yoke of dictatorship, does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take action to ensure that justice is done?

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

The EU is following attentively the judicial process related to the case of Saif al-Islam.The EU believes that the due process rights of Mr Saif al-Islam should be guaranteed in accordance with Libya's international obligations. In this context, the EU has been calling on Libya to continue to fully cooperate with the International Criminal Court, including with regard to the arrest warrant issued against Mr Saif al-Islam, in accordance with its legal obligations following the adoption of UNSCR 1970 on 26 February 2011.

In parallel, the EU is supporting Libya to strenghten the capacity of the judicary after decades of missmanagement under the previous regime. A EUR 10 million programme on Support to the Justice and Police Sector funded by the European Union is currently being implemented in the country The objective of the project is to promote the Rule of Law in Libya through the strengtheningof good governance and civilian culture in the security and justice sectors.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006551/13
à Comissão
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Representante da Comissão Europeia em Portugal

Na resposta à minha pergunta E-003988/2013 (27.5.2013), a Comissão Europeia declara que «não se pronuncia sobre as tomadas de posição dos partidos políticos nacionais» e que, no «caso específico de Portugal, a Comissão exprimiu várias vezes a importância da estabilidade política e de um amplo consenso político para que o país possa ultrapassar as dificuldades atuais.»

Ora, a minha pergunta surgiu precisamente porque o representante da Comissão em Portugal se pronunciou sobre a tomada de posição de um partido político nacional, no caso, sobre a apresentação de uma moção de censura ao governo por parte do Partido Socialista. A atitude do chefe da Representação da Comissão é contraditória com a afirmação de que «a Comissão não se pronuncia sobre as tomadas de posição dos partidos políticos nacionais».

Havendo evidência de que o funcionário agiu contra os princípios da Comissão, pergunto:

— que justificação foi apresentada pelo funcionário para o referido comportamento?

— que medidas foram tomadas para assegurar que este tipo de situações não se repete e que a Representação da CE em Portugal agirá com neutralidade em relação a todos os partidos políticos?

E, nos termos do regulamento (CE) n.° 1049/2001, fico a aguardar o acesso à cópia do relatório que sobre o assunto terá sito enviado à Comissão.

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(19 de julho de 2013)

Queira a Senhora Deputada reportar-se à resposta dada pela Comissão à sua pergunta escrita E-003988/2013 ([1]).

Por ocasião do contacto com o secretário do Partido Socialista encarregado das relações internacionais e da comunicação, o representante da Comissão em Portugal, em consonância com a posição da Comissão, exprimiu a importância da estabilidade política e de um amplo consenso político para que o país possa ultrapassar as dificuldades atuais.

A Comissão não se pronuncia sobre as tomadas de posição dos partidos políticos nacionais. Este princípio está claramente estabelecido e é respeitado nos contactos dos Chefes de Representação com as autoridades nacionais, os partidos e as restantes figuras políticas.

O pedido de acesso a documentos submetido pela Senhora Deputada será tratado separadamente, segundo o procedimento previsto pelo Regulamento (CE) n.° 1049/2001 relativo ao acesso do público aos documentos do Parlamento Europeu, do Conselho e da Comissão.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006551/13
to the Commission
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Commission representative in Portugal

In its answer of 27 May 2013 to my Question E-003988/2013, the Commission said that it does not comment on positions taken by national political parties and that, in the specific case of Portugal, it had on several occasions highlighted the importance of political stability and broad political consensus so that the country could overcome its current difficulties.

However, my question arose precisely because the Commission representative in Portugal did comment on a position taken by a national political party, specifically the Socialist Party's decision to table a motion of censure against the government. The attitude taken by the head of the Commission's representation contradicts the assertion that the Commission does not comment on positions taken by national political parties.

Given that it appears clear that the official concerned acted against the Commission's principles, can the Commission answer the following questions:

— what justification did the official concerned give for this behaviour?

— what steps have been taken to prevent any recurrence of such situations and guarantee that the Commission's representation in Portugal will act neutrally in relation to all the political parties?

Furthermore, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, I await access to a copy of the report on this matter that will have been forwarded to the Commission.

(Version française)

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

L'Honorable Parlementaire voudra bien se reporter à la réponse que la Commission a donnée à sa question écrite E-003988/2013 ([1]).

Lors du contact avec le secrétaire du Parti Socialiste chargé des relations internationales et de la communication, le Représentant de la Commission au Portugal, en cohérence avec la position de la Commission, a exprimé l'importance de la stabilité politique et d'un large consensus politique pour que le pays puisse surmonter ses difficultés actuelles.

La Commission ne se prononce pas sur les positions prises par les partis politiques nationaux. Ce principe est clairement établi et respecté dans les contacts des Chefs de Représentation avec les autorités nationales, les partis et les autres acteurs politiques.

La demande d'accès à des documents introduite par l'Honorable Parlementaire fait l'objet d'un traitement séparé, selon la procédure prévue par le règlement (CE) nº 1049/2001 relatif à l'accès du public aux documents du Parlement européen, du Conseil et de la Commission.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html#sidesForm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006552/13
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE) y Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(7 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Importación de plagas en cítricos

El riesgo de la llegada de nuevas plagas de cítricos a través de las importaciones procedentes del hemisferio Sur se ha recrudecido en los últimos años. Existe en concreto un peligro muy alto de la aparición de una nueva enfermedad, «citrus greening», causada por una bacteria muy agresiva y cuyos vectores de transmisión se encuentran ya presentes en territorio europeo. Además otros países emergentes en materia de exportación de cítricos, como Bangladesh, han pasado a engrosar la lista de aquellos que presentan mayores riesgos. De hecho, hasta el pasado mes de octubre se habían interceptado 19 envíos de cítricos procedentes de ese país afectados por diversas plagas y enfermedades, una cifra sólo superada por Sudáfrica.

Por otra parte, ¿no cree la Comisión que habría que aprovechar el nuevo proyecto sobre sanidad vegetal que ha presentado recientemente para incorporar el principio de reciprocidad en los intercambios con países terceros, de tal manera que se establezcan medidas como los registros de explotaciones en origen, las auditorías fitosanitarias o la creación de puntos de inspección en frontera especializados, tal como ya exigen en la actualidad países como Estados Unidos, Japón o Corea a los cítricos españoles? ¿Dispone la Comisión de algún plan para combatir una eventual contaminación de la enfermedad del «citrus greening»?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de julio de 2013)

El 6 de mayo de 2013, la Comisión adoptó una propuesta de nuevo Reglamento sobre medidas de protección contra las plagas de los vegetales ([1]), que debe sustituir al actual acto de base (Directiva 2000/29/CE del Consejo). El Reglamento propuesto implementa la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria (CIPF), de la que la Unión y sus Estados miembros son partes contratantes. En consonancia con la CIPF, las piedras angulares de la propuesta son la evaluación y la gestión del riesgo, más que la reciprocidad, que no se basaría en aspectos técnicos, sino comerciales. Las normas relativas a los controles fronterizos se establecen en la propuesta de Reglamento sobre los controles oficiales.

La Directiva 2000/29/CE del Consejo ([2]) establece medidas específicas contra la introducción y la propagación en la EU de organismos nocivos regulados para los cítricos, que incluyen las bacterias de «citrus greening» y sus vectores «Diaphorina citri» y «Trioza erytreae». Sobre la base de los nuevos datos técnicos disponibles, actualmente se están preparando medidas adicionales que ofrecen una protección más completa. Con ello, la Comisión ofrece un marco jurídico reforzado para proteger el territorio de la UE de la introducción de este organismo devastador.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/pressroom/docs/proposal-regulation-pests-plants_en.pdf
([2]) DO L 169 de 10.7.2000, p.1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006552/13
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE) and Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Importing citrus pests

The risk of new citrus pests arriving in Europe as a result of imports from the southern hemisphere has increased in recent years. More specifically, there is a real danger that a new disease called 'citrus greening' could appear, which is caused by a very aggressive strain of bacteria and whose transmission vectors have already been found on European territory. What is more, other countries which have recently started to export citrus fruits, such as Bangladesh, have added to the list of those which pose a serious threat. Indeed, in the period to October 2012, 19 consignments of citrus fruits from Bangladesh were intercepted and were found to contain various types of pests and diseases. The only country with a worse record was South Africa.

Does the Commission not believe that it would be a good idea to incorporate into its recent proposal on plant health the principle of reciprocity in dealings with third countries so that requirements such as origin holding registers, plant health audits and the creation of specialist border crossing inspection points are imposed on imports from non-EU countries in the same way as they already are in countries such as the USA, Japan and Korea on imports of Spanish citrus fruits? Has the Commission thought about the action it would take if the 'citrus greening' disease were to contaminate European produce?

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

On 6 May 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal for a new Regulation on protective measures against pests of plants ([1]), which should replace the current basic act (Council Directive 2000/29/EC). The proposed Regulation implements the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), to which the Union and its Member States are a contracting party. Risk assessment and risk management are the cornerstone of the proposal, in line with the IPPC, rather than reciprocity which would not be based on technical risk aspects, but on trade aspects. Rules concerning border controls are set out in the accompanying proposal for a regulation on Official Controls.

Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([2]) provides specific measures against the introduction into and spread within the EU of citrus regulated harmful organisms including the citrus greening bacterium, and its vectors, 'Diaphorina citri' and 'Trioza erytreae'. An even more complete protection is envisaged through additional measures that are currently prepared based on new technical data. This way the Commission provides the maximal legal framework to protect the EU territory against the introduction of this devastating organism.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/pressroom/docs/proposal-regulation-pests-plants_en.pdf
([2]) OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006553/13
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE) y Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(7 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Importación de plagas en cítricos

En 2012, la Unión Europea interceptó 35 partidas de cítricos de Sudáfrica contaminadas con alguna plaga, y en 29 de los casos se trataba de *Guignardia citricarpa* (mancha negra). La Comisión Europea, consciente de la gravedad del problema, comunicó el 1 de noviembre a ese país su intención de tomar medidas en el caso de que se detectaran cinco nuevas partidas con algún rastro de plagas.

¿Puede informar la Comisión de cuántas detecciones se han producido desde entonces en partidas de cítricos sudafricanos remitidas a Europa? ¿Podría detallar el contenido y el alcance de las medidas que adoptaría en el supuesto de que Sudáfrica supere el límite de detecciones impuesto?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de julio de 2013)

En la actual temporada de exportación los Estados miembros no han comunicado haber interceptado cítricos procedentes de Sudáfrica contaminados con *Guignardia citricarpa* (la «mancha negra» de los cítricos).

Si en esta temporada de exportación se interceptan partidas de cítricos, la Comisión estudiará la posibilidad de incoar el procedimiento para establecer posibles restricciones comerciales temporales a los cítricos. El contenido de las restricciones que se propongan dependerá del tipo de incumplimiento. Las posibles medidas tendrían que ser debatidas y aprobadas por los Estados miembros en el Comité Permanente, previa consulta con las autoridades sudafricanas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006553/13
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE) and Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Blight imported in citric fruit

In 2012, the European Union intercepted 35 consignments of citric fruit from South Africa contaminated with blight of one kind or another. In 29 of these cases the blight concerned was *Guignardia citricarpa* (citrus black spot). The Commission, aware of the gravity of this problem, notified the South African authorities on 1 November 2012 of its intention to take action should traces of blight of some kind be detected in a further five consignments.

How many cases of blight have been detected since then in consignments of citric fruit sent from South Africa to the European Union? Could the Commission give details of the content and scope of the measures it would adopt in the event that South Africa exceeds the limit set for consignments contaminated with blight?

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

For the current export season, no interceptions of citrus fruits from South Africa have been notified by Member States due to the presence of 'Guignardia citricarpa' or citrus black spot.

If consignments of citrus fruits are intercepted during the same export season, the Commission would consider initiating the procedure to put in place possible temporary trade restrictions for citrus fruits. The content of the proposed restrictions will depend on the type of non-compliances. Potential measures would need to be discussed and approved by Member States in the Standing Committee after consultation with the South African authorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006554/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Irregularidades del sistema judicial ruandés en el caso Victoire Ingabire

Como sostuve en mi pregunta E-010366/2012 sobre el proceso a la dirigente política ruandesa Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza, se trata de un proceso que continúa mostrando numerosas irregularidades. Los continuos cambios y deficiencias del juicio están poniendo en cuestión la imparcialidad del sistema judicial de Ruanda en este caso.

En la respuesta que la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante dio a la citada pregunta se expresaba su completo respeto al sistema judicial de Ruanda, pese a «expresar periódicamente su preocupación por los derechos humanos». De cara a la expresión de preocupación, parece ser un instrumento que no está resultando suficiente para garantizar un juicio justo para Victorie Ingabire que está sufriendo un proceso de nula validez jurídica.

En los pasados días 16,17 y 18 de abril, se reinició en Kigali el proceso a Ingabire, tras una cadena de interrupciones y reanudaciones de carácter irregular, que están dilatando este dudoso proceso donde el propio juez actúa como parte en el juicio. Así, de forma totalmente irregular, el juez condenó a Ingabire por el delito de traición y el de «negacionismo», cuando estos cargos no estaban recogidos en ningún sitio. El veredicto del tribunal la condena por sus opiniones políticas. Además, en dicha condena se emplearon como prueba documentos remitidos por la acusada que contenían expresiones escritas por la ONU sobre el conflicto ruandés.

¿Puede detallar las vías en las que la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante está actuando para garantizar que Victoire Ingabire sea sometido a un proceso judicial justo?

¿Considera que «expresar periódicamente su preocupación por los derechos humanos» es suficiente para garantizar la imparcialidad de la justicia ruandesa en el juicio a Victoire Ingabire?

¿Considera un veredicto justo el pronunciado el 18 de abril en el que se condena por delitos que no figuraban en la propia acta del juicio hasta el momento del veredicto?

¿Reclamará la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante la puesta en libertad de Victoire Ingabire ante las irregularidades observadas durante el juicio y el veredicto?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

La delegación de la UE y varios Estados miembros de la UE han asistido al juicio de Ingabire. La información se comunica periódicamente a los Estados miembros de la UE, así como en las reuniones mensuales de los puntos de contacto de los defensores de los derechos humanos. La UE también se ha reunido con miembros del partido de la Sra. Ingabire, incluidos su vicepresidente y el abogado de Ingabire.

El diálogo político periódico permite plantear las preocupaciones de la UE en materia de cuestiones sensibles de derechos humanos. A este respecto, la UE y la comunidad internacional confían en que las autoridades ruandesas no escatimarán esfuerzos para que se imparta una justicia independiente sobre la base de un proceso transparente y pruebas no controvertidas.

La UE seguirá centrando su actuación en el apoyo y la supervisión de los compromisos que ha asumido Ruanda de aplicar las recomendaciones del examen periódico universal (*Universal Periodic Review*) en materia de derechos humanos. Se hace especial hincapié en los compromisos que persiguen fomentar un sistema político más abierto, incluidos un auténtico debate político, la libertad de expresión y la aparición de organizaciones políticas activas y responsables.

La sentencia del Alto Tribunal que condenó el pasado mes de octubre a Ingabire a ocho años de prisión por los delitos de conspiración y de negación del genocidio de 1994 contra los tutsis ha sido recurrida tanto por la defensa como por la acusación en marzo y en abril, respectivamente. El Tribunal Supremo de Ruanda no dictado sentencia hasta la fecha. Se trata de un proceso complejo, dado el amplio carácter de las disposiciones jurídicas aplicables y el estatuto de la persona demandada.

La UE sigue de cerca la evolución de este asunto y estudiará tomar otras medidas en caso necesario.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006554/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Irregularities in the Rwandan judicial system in the case of Victoire Ingabire

As stated in my Question E-010366/2012 on the trial of Rwandan political leader Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza, this is a judicial process riddled with irregularities. Continual changes and flaws in the judgment cast doubt on the impartiality of the Rwandan judicial system in this case.

The answer the VP/HR gave to that question expressed respect for the judicial system of Rwanda, despite the fact the EU and Member States 'regularly raised their concerns for the respect of human rights.' That concern would not seem to be a sufficient means of ensuring a fair trial for Victoire Ingabire, who is subject to a judicial process which has no legal validity.

Recently, on 16,17 and 18 April, the trial of Ingabire resumed in Kigali, after a string of abnormal interruptions and resumptions that have held up this dubious legal process, in which the judge himself is a party in the trial. Hence, in a completely irregular manner, the judge has convicted Ingabire of treason and 'denial' when these charges are nowhere on record. The court has sentenced her for her political opinions. What is more, in arriving at its conclusions, the court relied on evidence which included documents submitted by the defendant that contained UN observations on the conflict in Rwanda.

What channels is the Vice-President/High Representative using to ensure that Victoire Ingabire receives a fair trial?

Does she consider the regular raising of concerns for the respect of human rights to be a sufficient means of ensuring the impartiality of the Rwandan judicial system in the trial of Victoire Ingabire?

Does she consider the verdict pronounced on 18 April, sentencing Ingabire for crimes which did not appear in the records prior to the verdict being issued to be a just one?

In view of the irregularities noted during the trial and in this verdict, will the Vice-President/High Representative call for Victoire Ingabire to be released?

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

The EU delegation and several EU Member States have attended the Ingabire trial. The information has been regularly shared with the EU Member States as well as at the monthly Human Rights Defenders Focal Point meetings. The EU has also met with Ms Ingabire's party members, including acting vice-president and Ingabire's defence attorney.

The regular political dialogue allows raising the EU concerns for the respect of human rights sensitive issues. In this regard, the EU and the international community expect that all efforts will be deployed by the Rwandan authorities with a view to allow the independent provision of Justice on the basis of a transparent trial and uncontested facts.

The EU will continue to focus its action on the support and monitoring of the commitments that Rwanda has made to implement the Universal Periodic Review recommendations on Human Rights. Particular emphasis are placed on commitments that aim at promoting a more open political system, including genuine political debate, freedom of expression and the emergence of active and responsible political organisations.

High Court's decision last October which sentenced Ingabire to eight years' imprisonment for both conspiracy as well as denying the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi has been appealed by both the defence and the prosecution, respectively in March and in April. To this day there is no verdict pronounced by the Rwanda Supreme Court. This is a complex process given the broad nature of the applicable legal provisions and the status of the defendant.

The EU is following the developments of the case and will consider further action if necessary.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006560/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Umsetzung Wasserrahmenrichtlinie

Mit der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie (WRRL) aus dem Jahr 2000 sollte in der Europäischen Union der Grundstein für ein neues, breiteres Verständnis der Funktionen und des Werts der Gewässer als Lebensräume gelegt werden.

In Österreich wurde bei der Umsetzung der WRRL das Augenmerk auf Gewässerzustand und Gewässergüte gelegt, und in diesem Zusammenhang wurden Milliarden von Euro in die Sammlung und Reinigung von Abwässern aus Haushalten und Industrie investiert. Es wurden Maßnahmen zur Herstellung der Fischdurchgängigkeit ebenso wie solche zur Restrukturierung von Gewässern samt Nebengewässer und Auen ergriffen. Die Rückführung in einen möglichst naturnahen Zustand dient dabei nicht nur der Wiederherstellung von Lebensräumen für die Natur, sondern auch der Schaffung von Erholungsräumen für die Bevölkerung.

1. Wie ist der Stand der Umsetzung der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie?

2. In welchen Bereichen sieht die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang noch Nachbesserungsbedarf?

3. Gibt es einen Überblick darüber, worauf die einzelnen EU-Staaten diesbezüglich ein Augenmerk legen?

4. Welche Projekte werden in diesem Zusammenhang mit EU-Subventionen gefördert?

5. In welchem Ausmaß werden diesbezüglich Vorzeigeprojekte einzelner Mitgliedstaaten publik gemacht?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(22. Juli 2013)

Die wichtigsten Instrumente der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie (2000/60/EG) für die Verbesserung des Wassermilieus sind die Bewirtschaftungspläne für die Einzugsgebiete (*River Basin Management Plans*, RBMP) und das 2009 festgelegte Maßnahmenprogramm (*Programme of Measures*, PoM). Die in diesem Programm vorgesehenen Maßnahmen mussten bis Ende 2012 operativ sein. Bis Dezember 2015 müssen Oberflächengewässer und Grundwasser einen guten Zustand aufweisen und die ersten Bewirtschaftungspläne müssen aktualisiert worden sein.

Die Kommission hat alle von den Mitgliedstaaten vorgelegten Bewirtschaftungspläne geprüft und die Prüfungsergebnisse am 14. November 2012 veröffentlicht (KOM(2012)670 und SWD(2012)379 ([1])). Die Berichte enthalten sowohl eine EU-weite Übersicht als auch landesspezifische Bewertungen. Die Prüfungsergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass das Ziel eines guten Zustands bis 2015 für einen signifikanten Teil der Wasserkörper nicht erreicht sein wird. Das Wassermilieu leidet vor allem unter hydromorphologischen Belastungen, Verschmutzung und übermäßiger Wasserentnahme.

In Österreich werden Projekte zur Bewirtschaftung von Wasserressourcen über das Programm zur Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums 2007-2013 finanziert. Für diese Maßnahme stehen für einen Zeitraum von sieben Jahren Mittel in Höhe von 5,4 Mio. EUR bereit; ergänzt durch die österreichische Kofinanzierung beläuft sich die Gesamtfinanzierung auf ungefähr 9 Mio. EUR.

Nach den EU-Finanzierungsregelungen entscheidet jeder Mitgliedstaat, welche Projekte durchgeführt werden sollen. Es steht den Mitgliedstaaten auch frei, ihre Vorzeigeprojekte zu fördern.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/participation/map_mc/map.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006560/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the Water Framework Directive

The 2000 Water Framework Directive (WFD) was intended to lay the foundations, in the EU, for a new, broader understanding of the functions and value of waters as habitats.

When the WFD was implemented in Austria, attention focused on water status and quality; and, in this connection, billions of euros have been invested in collecting and purifying household and industry wastewater. Measures have been taken to make it possible for fish to migrate through waters, as well as to restructure waters, including backwaters and floodplains. Renaturation as far as possible serves not only to restore natural habitats, but also to create recreational areas for people.

1. What is the state of play with regard to implementation of the WFD?

2. In what areas, in this connection, does the Commission see a need to make improvements?

3. Is there an overview of what individual Member States are focusing on in this connection?

4. What projects in this connection are receiving EU subsidies?

5. To what extent, in this connection, are individual Member States' flagship projects being publicised?

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

The main tools foreseen in the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) for the improvement of water environment are River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) and the Programme of Measures (PoM), adopted in 2009. By the end of 2012 measures in the PoM needed to be operational. By December 2015 the good status for surface and ground water has to be achieved and the first RBMPs updated.

The Commission assessed all RBMPs reported by Member States and published its findings on 14 November 2012 (COM(2012)670 and SWD(2012)379 ([1])). The reports contain both an EU overview and country specific assessments. The assessment indicates that the objective of good status by 2015 will not be achieved for a significant proportion of water bodies. The main pressures on the water environment are hydromorphological pressures, pollution and over-abstraction.

In Austria, water resource management projects are funded through the rural development programme 2007-2013. The financial allocation for this measure is EUR 5.4 million for the 7 years, complemented by co-financing at national level for a total of about EUR 9 million.

According to regulations governing the EU funds, it is for each Member State to decide on the projects that are to be implemented. Member States are also free to promote their flagship projects.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/participation/map_mc/map.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006561/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Sicherung von Eisenbahnkreuzungen

Bei einem Bremsweg von bis zu mehr als einen Kilometer endet beinahe jede Kollision zwischen Zug und Mensch tödlich. Dennoch geht den Verkehrsteilnehmern auf Eisenbahnkreuzungen manchmal jegliche Rationalität verloren. Da wird dann auf trügerische Gewohnheiten vertraut und bei rotem Ampellicht oder sich senkenden Schranken noch die Kreuzung überquert. Umfragen des österreichischen Kuratoriums für Verkehrssicherheit (KfV) zufolge hat sich jede zweite befragte Person an Eisenbahnkreuzungen schon einmal sorglos verhalten.

Seit 2012 wird in Österreich daher intensiv daran gearbeitet, abhängig vom Verkehrsaufkommen auf der Straße, der gefahrenen Höchstgeschwindigkeit auf der Schiene und den Sichtverhältnissen auf der Kreuzung klare Kriterien zur technischen Sicherungsart einer Eisenbahnkreuzung zu definieren. Zudem wurde zwischen 2007 und 2011 die Zahl der nicht technisch gesicherten Eisenbahnkreuzungen von 5 370 auf 3 712 reduziert. Damit gelang es, die Zahl der Unfälle und Verunglückten zu reduzieren.

1. In wie weit gibt es hinsichtlich der Sicherheit von Eisenbahnkreuzungen eine Zusammenarbeit auf EU-Ebene etwa betreffend gemeinsamer Kriterien zur technischen Sicherungsart?

2. Welchen Stellenwert nimmt die Sicherung des Schienenverkehrs in den EU-Eisenbahn-Paketen ein?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(24. Juli 2013)

1. Auf europäischer Ebene gibt es keine Standardkriterien für physische Barrieren oder Sicherheitsmaßnahmen. Für Bahnübergänge wurden jedoch Indikatoren festgelegt, die es der Europäischen Eisenbahnagentur ermöglichen, die Sicherheitsbilanz der Mitgliedstaaten im Auftrag der Kommission jährlich zu beurteilen. Danach ist die Zahl der Todesfälle an Bahnübergängen im Zeitraum 2009-2011 durchschnittlich um 5,7 % pro Jahr zurückgegangen.

2. Die Richtlinie 2004/49/EG über Eisenbahnsicherheit in der Gemeinschaft ([1]) war Teil des zweiten Eisenbahnpakets. Sie bildet den Rahmen für eine gemeinsame Herangehensweise an Sicherheitsmaßnahmen, die Risikobewertung und die Sicherstellung unabhängiger Untersuchungen von Unfällen. Diese Änderungen verdeutlichen das klare Bekenntnis zur kontinuierlichen Anpassung der Sicherheitsmaßnahmen im Schienenverkehr an moderne Sicherheitsüberlegungen. Derzeit wird im Europäischen Parlament und im Rat eine Neufassung dieser Richtlinie ([2]) erörtert, die die Kommission im Rahmen des vierten Eisenbahnpakets vorgelegt hat, um sicherzustellen, dass sich die Sicherheitsbilanz im Zuge der allmählichen Öffnung des Eisenbahnmarktes weiter verbessert.

([1]) ABl. L 164 vom 30.4.2004.
([2]) Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über die Eisenbahnsicherheit (KOM(2013)031 endg.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006561/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Securing level crossings

With a braking distance of up to more than a kilometre, virtually every time a person is struck by a train the outcome is fatal. Nevertheless, road users sometimes seem to lose all sense of reason on level crossings. People put their trust in perilous habits and try to get over level crossings when the lights are red or the barriers are coming down. According to surveys conducted by the Austrian Road Safety Board (*Kuratorium für Verkehrssicherheit*), one in every two respondents admits to having behaved recklessly at a level crossing.

As a result of this, intensive work has been underway in Austria since 2012 to set clear criteria for how level crossings should be secured, based on volume of traffic on the road in question, maximum speed on the section of track and visibility at the level crossing. Furthermore, the number of open level crossings was reduced from 5 370 to 3 712 between 2007 and 2011. This has helped to reduce the number of accidents and casualties.

1. To what extent is cooperation being brought to bear at EU level with regard to safety at level crossings, for instance in terms of standard criteria for barriers and other safety measures?

2. What significance has been attached to rail transport safeguards in the EU's railway packages?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2013)

1. There are no standard criteria for physical barriers or safety measures specified at the European level. However level crossings are subject to indicators that allow the European Railway Agency, on behalf of the Commission, to assess annually the safety performance of Member States. For the period 2009-2011 level crossing user deaths have been decreasing by 5.7% per year on average.

2. Directive 2004/49/EC on the safety of the Community's railways ([1]) was part of the 2nd Railway Package. This directive provided a framework for a common approach to managing safety, assessing risk and ensuring independent investigation of accidents. These changes show a clear commitment to ensuring that the railway safety keeps pace with modern safety thinking. A recast of this directive ([2]), currently under discussion at the EP and at the Council, was proposed by the Commission under the 4th Railway Package intended to ensure that the improving safety record is maintained as the railway market is progressively being opened.

([1]) OJ L 164, 30.4.2004.
([2]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on railway safety, COM(2013) 031 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006562/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Steigerung der Fahrradnutzung — Ausbau von Radabstellplätzen

Mit ausschlaggebend für eine stärkere Nutzung des Fahrrads — als umweltfreundliches Verkehrsmittel und damit als Beitrag zur Verringerung der Feinstaubbelastung etc. — ist der Ausbau sicherer Radabstellplätze. Dabei gilt es nicht nur, die Abstellsituation für Fahrräder bei älteren Gebäuden zu verbessern, sondern auch bei Geschäftsgebäuden mit entsprechender Besucherfrequenz und öffentlichen Einrichtungen. In Österreich läuft in diesem Zusammenhang im Rahmen des „klima: aktiv mobil" Förderprogramms die Förderoffensive „Sanierung Fahrradparken"; durch welche der Ausbau sicherer Radabstellplätze und E-Bike-Ladestationen finanziell unterstützt wird. Zusätzlich wird daran gearbeitet, weitere Bedingungen fürs Radfahren (etwa Ausbau von Radwegen) zu verbessern.

1. Welche EU-Förderungen gibt es für Maßnahmen zur Steigerung der Nutzung von Fahrrädern?

2. Welche erfolgreichen grenzüberschreitenden Rad-Wege-Projekte gibt es, und welche sind noch in Planung?

3. Welche Maßnahmen werden auf EU-Ebene, etwa hinsichtlich E-Bike-Ladestationen, ergriffen?

4. In wie weit geht die EU hinsichtlich Radabstellplätzen bei eigenen Gebäuden der EU-Institutionen und -Agenturen mit gutem Beispiel voran?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(2. August 2013)

1. Die Nutzung des Fahrrads wird durch EU-Mittel in erheblichem Umfang insbesondere über das Programm STEER (Verkehrssäule des Programms „Intelligente Energie — Europa") mit insgesamt 14 Mio. EUR für 12 europäische Fahrradpilotprojekte und die Initiative CIVITAS zur Förderung der Entwicklung neuer Konzepte für den sicheren Radverkehr in Städten (Budget: 200 Mio. EUR seit 2002) unterstützt. In den 59 CIVITAS-Städten wurden bislang mehr als 120 fahrradbezogene Maßnahmen (einschließlich Radabstellplätze) umgesetzt.

2. Die meisten im Rahmen der Strukturfonds und des Kohäsionsfonds geschaffenen grenzüberschreitenden Kooperationsprogramme beinhalten verschiedene fahrradbezogene Projekte, mit denen der Fremdenverkehr in den Grenzregionen angekurbelt werden soll. Die Projekte, zu denen aufgeschlüsselt nach Projekt keine strukturierten Informationen verfügbar sind, umfassen Infrastrukturmaßnahmen (z. B. Aufbau oder Verbesserung kurzer Streckenabschnitte oder die Anbindung bestehender Radwege an internationale Radwege) und sonstige Maßnahmen (z. B. Erstellung grenzübergreifender und mehrsprachiger Karten, Verbesserung der Beschilderung usw.). Eine Datenbank mit Informationen über Projekte der europäischen territorialen Zusammenarbeit wird derzeit im Rahmen des Programms INTERACT entwickelt.

3. Elektrofahrzeuge fallen in den Geltungsbereich des Pakets „Saubere Energie im Verkehr" vom 24. Januar 2013 ([1]). Ein Bedarf an speziellen E-Bike-Ladestationen konnte jedoch nicht festgestellt werden, da Elektrofahrräder über die Stromversorgung der privaten Haushalte aufgeladen werden können.

4. Die Kommission hat sich verpflichtet, die Nutzung von Privat- und Dienstfahrrädern zu fördern. Neben Fahrradständern vor einigen Kommissionsgebäuden stehen den Bediensteten in allen Tiefgaragen Fahrradständer zur Verfügung. Fast alle Gebäude sind mit bis zu 12 Dienstfahrrädern für Fahrten der Bediensteten zwischen den Kommissionsgebäuden ausgestattet.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/cpt/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006562/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Increasing bicycle use by making more bicycle parking places available

Making secure bicycle parking places more widely available is a key factor in encouraging more people to travel by bicycle, an environmentally friendly form of transport, and thereby help reduce particulate pollution. Bicycle parking facilities need to be improved not only in the case of older buildings, but also at public buildings and business premises which have a large number of visitors. Austria has introduced a 'safer cycle parking' initiative in connection with the Austrian Energy Agency's 'klima: aktiv mobil' action programme for environmentally friendly mobility. This initiative provides funding for secure cycle parking and E-bike charging stations. At the same time, efforts are being made to improve conditions for cyclists (e.g. by creating more cycle lanes).

1. What EU funding is available for measures to encourage increased bicycle use?

2. What successful cross-border cycle path projects exist, and what projects are planned?

3. What measures are being taken at EU level to introduce E-bike charging stations?

4. To what extent is the EU setting a good example by providing bicycle parking at the buildings occupied by EU institutions and agencies?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

1. Significant financial support from Community funds is provided to cycling, notably through the STEER Programme (transport pillar of the Intelligent Energy-Europe programme) which has provided EUR 14 million to 12 European pilot projects related to cycling, and the CIVITAS Initiative which promotes the development of new approaches to safe cycling in cities (budget: EUR 200 million since 2002). Over 120 cycling-related measures (including cycle parking infrastructure) have been implemented in the 59 CIVITAS cities.

2. Most cross border cooperation programmes developped under Structural and Cohesion funds include various bicycle-related projects aiming to attract tourists to border regions. Although structured information on individual projects is not available, the projects include infrastructure (e.g. building or improving short sections, or linking existing paths to international cycle routes) and other measures (e.g. creation of cross-border and multilingual maps, improving signs, etc.). A database of information on European territorial cooperation projects is under development by INTERACT.

3. Electric vehicles are included in the scope of the Clean Power for Transport package of 24 January 2013 ([1]). However, no needs have been identified for dedicated e-bike charging infrastructure as e- bikes can be charged using existing household infrastructure.

4. The Commission is committed to promoting the use of private and service bicycles. All underground car-parks include staff bike racks, along with external bike racks in front of some Commission buildings. Almost all buildings have up to 12 service bicycles available for staff travelling between Commission buildings.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/cpt/.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006563/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Niebler (PPE)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Verordnung (EU) Nr. 260/2012/SEPA-Lastschriftverfahren

In Deutschland können Einzugsermächtigungen für Lastschriften bisher über das Internet erteilt werden. Ab Februar 2014 soll dieses Verfahren angeblich nicht mehr möglich sein. Aus dem Anhang der VO 260/2012/EU, 3. a) vii), in dem von der „Zeichnung des Mandats" die Rede ist, schließen die deutschen Kreditinstitute, dass Mandate künftig nur noch handschriftlich oder als sogenannte E-Mandate erteilt werden können. Die Deutsche Bundesbank weist darauf hin, dass Lastschrifteinzüge, die wie bisher üblich über das Internet erfolgen, unautorisiert sein werden und binnen 13 Monaten zurückgegeben werden können.

Für Online-Versandhändler kommt eine handschriftlich erteilte Einzugsermächtigung nicht in Frage, da kein Kunde, der etwas im Internet bestellt, eine solche danach per Post verschicken wird.

Die Möglichkeit eines E-Mandats besteht zwar in der Theorie, ist jedoch nach Kenntnis der Bundesbank in Deutschland nicht geplant.

Während große Internet-Versandhändler wie Amazon oder eBay aufgrund eigener Zahlungsmethoden nicht auf die Lastschrift angewiesen sind, ist das insbesondere bei kleineren und mittleren Unternehmen nicht der Fall. Wenn diese in Zukunft auf eine teurere Zahlungsart zurückgreifen müssen, wird das Geschäft für viele von ihnen nicht mehr rentabel sein.

1. War der Kommission dieses gravierende Problem, das für kleinere Online-Versandhändler durch die Verordnung entstehen würde, zum Zeitpunkt ihrer Ausarbeitung bewusst?

2. Haben die Banken bezüglich des Formerfordernisses aus der Verordnung die Schlüsse gezogen, die von der Kommission beabsichtigt waren?

3. Wann ist mit einer umfassenden (verbindlichen) Einführung des E-Mandats zu rechnen?

4. Ist bis zu einer solchen Einführung eine Ausnahmeregelung für den deutschen Zahlungsverkehr denkbar, welche die bisherige Einzugsermächtigung über das Internet erlaubt, solange auch gleichzeitig das SEPA-Lastschriftverfahren angeboten wird?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(28. August 2013)

Bereits heute können SEPA-Lastschriften elektronisch via Internet ausgeführt werden, entweder auf der Grundlage eines auf Papier erteilten Mandats zum Lastschrifteinzug oder gängiger nicht harmonisierter elektronischer Lösungen. Ab dem 1. Februar 2014 (Stichtag für die Umstellung in den Mitgliedstaaten des Euro-Währungsgebiets) müssen SEPA-Lastschriften den Anforderungen der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 260/2012 genügen, auch der technischen Anforderung von Nummer 3 Buchstabe a Ziffer vii des Anhangs, auf die in der Anfrage Bezug genommen wird. Diese Bestimmung impliziert nicht, dass die Ermächtigung nur handschriftlich oder in Form eines sogenannten E-Mandats erteilt werden kann. Vielmehr stellt sie auf das Datum der Zeichnung des Mandats ab. Im Übrigen schreiben die Bestimmungen des Anhangs keine spezifische Form — unterzeichnet oder nicht — für das Mandat vor.

Das europäische Recht gibt kein bestimmtes Datum für die Einführung von E-Mandat-Lösungen vor. Der European Payments Council hat bis zum 15. August 2013 eine öffentliche Umfrage zu E-Mandat-Lösungen für den Lastschrifteinzug durchgeführt. Die ersten Ergebnisse der Erhebung dürften im dritten Quartal 2013 vorliegen. Die Kommission würde harmonisierte marktbasierte Lösungen für ein europäisches elektronisches Lastschrifteinzugsmandat begrüßen. Damit würde eine wichtige Verknüpfung zwischen elektronischem Handel und SEPA geschaffen.

Nach Auffassung der Kommission können die bestehenden nationalen Einzugsermächtigungsinstrumente auch nach dem 1. Februar 2014 weiter angewandt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006563/13
to the Commission
Angelika Niebler (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Regulation (EU) No 260/2012: direct debiting systems

In Germany, direct debiting can currently be authorised via the Internet. Apparently, as of February 2014 this will no longer be possible. German lending institutions understand the annex to Regulation (EU) No 260/2012, with its reference in point 3(a)(vii) to the signing of the payer's mandate, to mean that authorisation may in future be given only in writing or in the form of a so-called e-mandate. The Bundesbank warns that direct debit orders made via the Internet, as has been common practice to date, will be unauthorised and may be returned unpaid within 13 months.

It is not feasible for online traders to use direct debit forms that require signature, as no customer who has placed an order online will then be prepared to put a debit form in the post.

The use of an e-mandate is, in theory, possible, but so far as the Bundesbank knows there are no plans for this type of system in Germany.

While larger online trading companies like Amazon or eBay, with their own payment systems, need not rely on direct debiting, the situation for smaller and medium-sized companies, in particular, is different. Having to resort in future to the use of more expensive payment methods may mean that such companies cease to be profitable.

1. Was the Commission aware when the regulation was being drafted that it could create this serious problem for smaller online trading companies?

2. Have the banks interpreted the regulation as the Commission intended it to be interpreted with regard to the requirement concerning the form of authorisation?

3. When is the e-mandate system likely to be introduced on a comprehensive (and compulsory) basis?

4. Would it be feasible, pending the introduction of that system, for an exception to be made for German payment transactions continuing to permit Internet authorisation provided that the possibility of using the SEPA direct debit scheme is also offered?

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

Already today SEPA Direct Debits (SDDs) can be made electronically via the Internet by using a paper based mandate or current non-harmonised electronic mandate solutions. By 1 February 2014 (migration date for euro area Member States) SDDs need to be in line with the requirements set out in Regulation (EU) No 260/2012 and the mentioned technical requirement of point 3(a)(vii) of the annex. The latter does not imply that authorisation will only be given in writing or in the form of a so-called e-mandate but refers to the date the mandate was signed. Moreover, the annex does not require a specific form for the mandate, signed or not.

European law does not mandate any date for the introduction of electronic mandate solutions. The European Payments Council carried out a public survey regarding SDD electronic mandate solutions until 15 August 2013. The first results of this survey are expected during the 3rd quarter 2013. The Commission would welcome harmonised market-based solutions for a European electronic mandate for SDDs. This would provide an important link between e-commerce and SEPA.

In the Commission's view, the existing national tools for collecting mandates can still be used after 1 February 2014.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006564/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η Δημοκρατία στην εποχή του Μνημονίου

Ο ειδικός εμπειρογνώμων των Ηνωμένων Εθνών Σέφας Λούμινα, ολοκληρώνοντας την αποστολή του στην Ελλάδα στις 26.4.2013, ανέφερε μεταξύ άλλων ότι: απειλούνται ή υπονομεύονται τα οικονομικά και κοινωνικά ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα από τις σκληρές πολιτικές που επιβλήθηκαν στην Ελλάδα με αντάλλαγμα τη διάσωσή της από την χρεοκοπία, απειλούνται το δικαίωμα στην εργασία (άδικες απολύσεις εγκύων, διακρίσεις εις βάρος γυναικών και μεταναστών), η κοινωνική στήριξη (η μόνη χώρα στην ευρωζώνη χωρίς ολοκληρωμένο κοινωνικό δίχτυ ασφάλειας), το δικαίωμα στη στέγη και στην πρόσβαση σε υπηρεσίες υγείας και υπάρχει ανερχόμενη ρατσιστική βία. Επεσήμανε επίσης τους κινδύνους από την ιδιωτικοποίηση βασικών δημόσιων αγαθών, όπως είναι το νερό, με την υπόδειξη να συσταθεί ειδικό κεφάλαιο ώστε οι μετοχές να αγοραστούν από συνεταιρισμούς πολιτών. Καταλήγοντας, κάλεσε την ελληνική κυβέρνηση και την τρόικα να ενσωματώσουν τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα στις πολιτικές για τη δημοσιονομική προσαρμογή και τις μεταρρυθμίσεις, θέτοντας μετρήσιμους στόχους για τη μείωση της ανεργίας, την άμβλυνση της φτώχειας, την κάλυψη κοινωνικών αναγκών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Χρειάζονται ειδικοί εμπειρογνώμονες, και μάλιστα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών, για να αντιληφθεί η ΕΕ πως η Δημοκρατία του Μνημονίου είναι ελλιπής και καταθρυμματίζει το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Μοντέλο για το οποίο η ΕΕ πρωτοστάτησε και περηφανευόταν;

— Πότε θα σταματήσει αυτός ο κατήφορος και πώς;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει πλήρη επίγνωση της δύσκολης κοινωνικής κατάστασης στην Ελλάδα, και συμφωνεί ότι η αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας και η βελτίωση των δικτύων κοινωνικής ασφάλειας είναι καθοριστικής σημασίας. Για τον λόγο αυτό, το πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής ανταποκρίνεται στην κοινωνική πρόκληση με σειρά μέτρων στον τομέα της απασχόλησης και των κοινωνικών πολιτικών.

Η καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας αποτελεί κορυφαία πολιτική προτεραιότητα. Σύμφωνα με τις απαιτήσεις του Μνημονίου, οι αρχές λαμβάνουν εκτενή μέτρα με σκοπό να δημιουργήσουν ευνοϊκότερες συνθήκες για τη δημιουργία θέσεων απασχόλησης και εκπονούν ένα συνολικό σχέδιο δράσης για την απασχόληση, που περιλαμβάνει, μεταξύ άλλων μέτρων, βραχυπρόθεσμο πρόγραμμα δημοσίων έργων, με στόχο κυρίως τους μακροχρόνια ανέργους, το οποίο θα δρομολογηθεί σύντομα και θα χρηματοδοτηθεί με κονδύλια της ΕΕ. Τον Ιανουάριο του 2013, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ενέκρινε σχέδιο δράσης για τους νέους που θα λάβει χρηματοδότηση της ΕΕ ύψους 517 εκατ. ευρώ. Το σχέδιο αποσκοπεί στην προώθηση της απασχόλησης, της επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης και της επιχειρηματικότητας των νέων, και απευθύνεται σχεδόν σε 350 000 νέους.

Η έλλειψη ολοκληρωμένου κοινωνικού δικτύου ασφαλείας στην Ελλάδα χρονολογείται πριν την οικονομική και χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση. Δεδομένης της ελλειμματικής κοινωνικής προστασίας, το πρόγραμμα εστιάζεται επίσης στη βελτίωση της κοινωνικής ασφάλειας, επιχειρώντας ιδίως την καλύτερη στόχευση των κοινωνικών παροχών. Σύμφωνα με τις απαιτήσεις του Μνημονίου, οι αρχές σχεδιάζουν ένα καθεστώς βοήθειας για τους μακροχρόνια ανέργους που απευθύνεται στους φτωχούς, καθώς και ένα καθεστώς ελάχιστου εισοδήματος που θα δημιουργηθεί σε πιλοτική βάση, από τον Ιανουάριο του 2014. Αυτό θα είναι συνδεδεμένο με άλλες ενεργητικές και παθητικές πολιτικές της αγοράς εργασίας και κοινωνικές μεταβιβάσεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006564/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Impact of the memorandum of understanding on Greece

Speaking on 26 April 2013 at the end of his mission to Greece, Cephas Lumina, a UN independent expert, warned that the excessively harsh policies imposed on Greece as part of the bailout were threatening or undermining human rights in economic and social terms, placing at risk the right to employment (unfair dismissal of pregnant women and discrimination against women and migrants), welfare benefits (Greece is the only country in the euro area without a comprehensive welfare safety net), housing and access to health services. In addition, he warned against an upsurge of racist violence. He also underlined the dangers of privatising utilities, for example water, urging that a special fund be set up to enable individuals to purchase shares through cooperatives. In conclusion, he called on the Greek Government and the Troika to adopt a human rights based approach to financial adjustment and reform and set measurable targets for the reduction of unemployment, poverty alleviation and the provision of welfare benefits.

In view of this:

— Does the Commission believe that the EU needs a United Nations independent expert to make it appreciate the problems created in Greece by the memorandum of understanding and realise that it is destroying the EU's treasured and much-vaunted European social model?

— When will it remedy this disastrous situation and how?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the difficult social situation in Greece, and agrees that tackling unemployment and improving social safety nets are crucial. For this reason, the adjustment programme tackles the social challenge with a set of measures in the field of employment and social policies.

Fighting unemployment is a top political priority. As required in the Memorandum of Understaunding (MoU), the authorities are taking extensive measures to foster more favourable conditions for job creation, and are developing a comprehensive employment action plan that includes, among other measures, a short term public works scheme targeted to the long term unemployed and to be financed with EU funds, to be launched shortly. In January 2013, the Greek Government has endorsed a youth action plan which is backed by an EU funding of EUR 517 million. It aims at promoting youth employment, training and entrepreneurship and targets nearly 350 000 young people.

The absence of a comprehensive welfare safety net in Greece predates the economic and financial crisis. In view of the deficiencies of social protection, the programme also focuses on improving social safety net, in particular through better targeting social benefits. Following MoU requirements, the authorities are designing an assistance scheme for the long term unemployed targeted to the poor, as well as a minimum income scheme to be created on a pilot basis, as of January 2014. This will be articulated with other active and passive labour market policies and social transfers.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006565/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κρίση και Μνημόνιο

Η παγκόσμια οικονομική κρίση με τις μνημονιακού χαρακτήρα ρυθμίσεις που επιβάλλει, όπως τις βιώνουμε ειδικά στην Κύπρο, δημιουργεί οδυνηρές στρεβλώσεις. Παραβιάζει θεμελιώδη και οικονομικά δικαιώματα του ανθρώπου, όπως είναι το δικαίωμα στην περιουσία, στην ιδιοκτησία και στις προσωπικές καταθέσεις σε τράπεζες (όπως το κούρεμα καταθέσεων στην Κύπρο).

Καλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει:

— επιδιώκει άμεσα ή έμμεσα συρρίκνωση δικαιωμάτων και κεκτημένων;

— κατανοεί τα ολέθρια σφάλματα που διαπράττονται σε βάρος ευρωπαίων πολιτών;

— πιστεύει πως η απόφαση του Γιούρογκρουπ, για κούρεμα καταθέσεων στην Κύπρο, συνιστά ωμή παραβίαση στην ιδιοκτησία και στην ίδια την τραπεζική πίστη;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Αυγούστου 2013)

Τα μέτρα που αφορούν τους καταθέτες τραπεζών δεν αποφασίσθηκαν από την Ευρωομάδα. Τα μέτρα αυτά συνιστούν μονομερείς δεσμεύσεις των κυπριακών αρχών, οι οποίες αποτέλεσαν τη βάση για το πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής και τη συνοδευτική χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή, που καλείται να παράσχει ο ΕΜΣ. Τα ληφθέντα μέτρα προστατεύουν όλες τις καταθέσεις μέχρι 100 000 ευρώ σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 51 παράγραφος 1 του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων, οι διατάξεις του Χάρτη απευθύνονται στα κράτη μέλη μόνον όταν εφαρμόζουν το δίκαιο της Ένωσης. Ως προς το προαναφερόμενο ζήτημα το ΚΜ δεν ενήργησε στο πλαίσιο της εφαρμογής του δικαίου της ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει καμία ένδειξη ότι η Κύπρος μπορεί να έχει αγνοήσει κάποια από τις διεθνείς υποχρεώσεις της όσον αφορά την προστασία των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων με τη θέσπιση των εν λόγω μέτρων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006565/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Economic crisis and the memorandum of understanding

The global economic crisis and the austerity measures thereby necessitated under the memorandum of understanding, particularly in Cyprus (where savings accounts have suffered haircuts), are resulting in serious anomalies such as the infringement of fundamental freedoms and economic rights, including the right to property and the right to hold personal bank accounts.

In view of this:

— Is the Commission seeking, directly or indirectly, to erode our rights and entitlements?

— Does it appreciate the devastating mistakes which have been made at the expense of the European people?

— Does it believe that the Eurogroup decision to impose a haircut on bank deposits in Cyprus is a blatant infringement of the right to property, undermining the banking system itself?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 August 2013)

The measures concerning bank depositors have not been decided by the Eurogroup. These measures constitute unilateral commitments of the Cypriot authorities that provided the basis for the macroeconomic adjustment programme and the accompanying financial assistance that is to be provided by the ESM. Measures taken protect all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with the EU principles.

According to Art. 51 (1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, its provisions are addressed to the Member States (MS) only when they are implementing EC law. In the matter referred to the MS did not act in the course of implementation of EC law. The Commission has no indication that Cyprus might have disregarded any of its international obligations regarding the protection of fundamental rights by adopting the measures at issue.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006566/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VAT rates

Could the Commission confirm its recommendation (COM(2013) 0378) that the United Kingdom raise increased revenue by making greater use of the standard rate of VAT?

Would it consider it desirable to extend the standard rate to domestic heating, to which a reduced rate currently applies?

Would it consider it desirable to extend the standard rate to domestic water supply, which is currently zero rated?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

As stated in the communication of the future of VAT ([1]), the Commission favours a restricted use of reduced VAT rates in order to increase the efficiency of the VAT system. The recommendation for the UK to make greater use of the standard VAT rate is, therefore, in line with this objective.

Regarding extending the standard rate to domestic heating and water supply this is a matter for the UK bearing in mind its current list of zero and reduced rates. Any decision should be considered in light of economic evaluation ([2]), along with other studies such as the Mirrlees Review, that confirms that the use of reduced rates is often not the most suitable instrument for pursuing policy objectives, particularly for ensuring redistribution to poor households or encouraging the consumption of a good that is deemed socially desirable ([3]).

([1]) COM(2011) 851.

([2]) Copenhagen Economics, Study on reduced VAT applied to goods and services in the Member States of the European Union, Final Report, 21.6.2007.

([3]) The Mirrlees Review [Mirrlees et al (2011), Tax by Design: the Mirrlees Review. Chapter 9 — Broadening the VAT base] concluded that a comprehensive broadening of the VAT base would benefit the economy and could raise a net GBP 3 billion (EUR 5 billion) of tax revenue (Based on the old 17.5% rate of VAT), even after using the tax-benefit system to compensate households, especially poorer households, for the increase in their cost of living. The Mirrlees Review also proposes an alternative reform which is redistributional (i.e. compensates only poorer households) which would raise a net GBP 10 billion (EUR 11.8 billion). However, the report points out that this reform could reduce incentives to work.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006567/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Grandes marques et leurs vêtements toxiques

Un mois après Zara, Mango, Esprit et Levi's, c'est au tour de la marque japonaise Uniqlo de s'engager dans une mode sans toxiques. Toutes ces firmes se sont engagées à éliminer de leur chaîne d'approvisionnement tout rejet de substances chimiques dangereuses d'ici 2020. La marque s'engage sur des échéances à plus court terme pour l'élimination de substances toxiques prioritaires telles que les NPE et le PFC (entre 2013 et 2015 selon les substances). D'autres marques, comme GAP, G-Star Raw et Calvin Klein, restent à la traîne, alors que douze de leurs concurrents mondiaux se sont engagés à rendre publiques les données concernant les rejets des usines de leurs sous-traitants. Cette initiative permettra aux personnes vivant près des installations de fabrication, mais aussi à tout un chacun de savoir ce qui est rejeté dans l'environnement, encourageant ainsi d'autres marques à divulguer plus d'informations.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle légiférer plus durement sur l'utilisation des NPE et des PFC?

2. De manière plus générale, qu'est-ce qui retient la Commission d'obliger les marques à rendre public le détail des composants dont les rejets d'usines sont potentiellement dangereux ou très marquants pour l'environnement?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(9 septembre 2013)

1. L'utilisation de nonylphénol (NP) et d'éthoxylate de nonylphénol (NPE) en tant que substances ou dans des mélanges, à des concentrations égales ou supérieures à 0,1 % en masse, dans le traitement des textiles et du cuir est interdite dans l'UE depuis 2005 (voir entrée 46 à l'annexe XVII de REACH ([1])). Le 29 juillet 2013, la Suède a informé l'Agence européenne des produits chimiques (AEPC) de son intention de proposer des restrictions supplémentaires en ce qui concerne leur présence dans les articles textiles qui peuvent être nettoyés à l'eau ([2]).

L'utilisation de sulfonate de perfluorooctane (SPFO) et de ses dérivés dans les textiles est limitée depuis 2006 dans l'UE par la directive 2006/122/CE ([3]) et, depuis 2010, par une modification ([4]) du règlement (CE) n° 850/2004 concernant les polluants organiques persistants ([5]).

En juin 2013, l'éthoxylate de 4-nonylphénol et l'acide perfluorooctanoïque (APFO) ([6]) ont été recensés comme substances très préoccupantes et ajoutés à la liste des substances candidates. Si l'AEPC ([7]) considère ces substances comme prioritaires et si la Commission les ajoute à l'annexe XIV de REACH, leur mise sur le marché et leur utilisation dans l'UE ne seront possibles que moyennant autorisation.

2. Les informations relatives aux émissions provenant des sites industriels en Europe sont couvertes par le règlement (CE) n° 166/2006 concernant la création d'un registre européen des rejets et des transferts de polluants (PRTR européen). Le PRTR européen permet de satisfaire à l'exigence, pour certains types d'activités et d'établissements industriels dépassant une capacité déterminée, de notifier à la Commission les rejets et les transferts de certains polluants lorsque ceux-ci dépassent les seuils établis. Les données notifiées sont mises à la disposition du public sur le site web du PRTR ([8]). La directive-cadre sur l'eau ([9]) exige que les États membres contrôlent la présence de nonylphénol et respectent la norme de qualité établie pour cette substance dans les eaux de surface d'ici à 2015. Tout dépassement de la norme doit être signalé à la Commission. Bientôt, les SPFO seront eux aussi soumis à une norme.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 1907/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 décembre 2006 concernant l'enregistrement, l'évaluation et l'autorisation des substances chimiques, ainsi que les restrictions applicables à ces substances (REACH), JO L 396 du 30.12.2006.
([2]) http://www.echa.europa.eu/fr/web/guest/registry-of-submitted-restriction-proposal-intentions
([3]) Directive 2006/122/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 12 décembre 2006 portant trentième modification de la directive 76/769/CEE du Conseil concernant le rapprochement des dispositions législatives, réglementaires et administratives des États membres relatives à la limitation de la mise sur le marché et de l'emploi de certaines substances et préparations dangereuses (sulfonates de perfluorooctane), JO L 372 du 27.12.2006.
([4]) Règlement (UE) n° 757/2010 de la Commission du 24 août 2010 modifiant les annexes I et III du règlement (CE) n° 850/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil concernant les polluants organiques, JO L 223 du 25.8.2010.
([5]) Règlement (CE) n° 850/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 29 avril 2004 concernant les polluants organiques persistants, JO L 158 du 30.4.2004.
([6]) Ainsi que son sel d'ammonium, le pentadécafluorooctanoate d'ammonium.
([7]) Agence européenne des produits chimiques, dont le siège se trouve en Finlande — www.echa.europa.eu
([8]) http://prtr.ec.europa.eu/
([9]) Directive 2000/60/CE (JO L 327 du 22.12.2000) et la directive 2008/105/CE (JO L 348 du 24.12.2008).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006567/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Major brands and toxic clothes

Following the commitment made by Zara, Mango, Esprit and Levi's one month ago to stop using toxic chemicals in clothes production, the Japanese brand Uniqlo has now followed suit. All these brands have committed themselves to eliminating all hazardous chemicals from their supply chains by 2020 and to eliminating the most toxic substances, such as NPEs and PFCs, sooner (between now and 2015, depending on the substance concerned). Other brands, such as GAP, G-Star Raw and Calvin Klein, are lagging behind, given that 12 of their global competitors are currently preparing to publish pollution data from their suppliers' factories. This initiative will be an eye-opener for those living close to factories, and for each and every one of us, by revealing exactly what is being released into the environment, and it will also put pressure on other fashion labels to disclose more information.

1. Does Commission plan to pass legislation clamping down on the use of NPEs and PFCs?

2. More generally, what is stopping the Commission from requiring retailers to disclose details of the substances in factory effluents which are potentially hazardous or highly polluting?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

1. The use of nonylphenol (NP) and nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPE), as substances or in mixtures in concentrations equal to or greater than 0.1% by weight, in textiles and leather processing has been banned in the EU since 2005 (now Entry 46 in Annex XVII to REACH ([1])). On 29 July 2013, Sweden has informed ECHA that it will propose further restrictions on their presence in textile articles that can be washed in water ([2]).

The use of perfluooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and its derivatives in textiles has been restricted in the EU since 2006 by Directive 2006/122/EC ([3]) and since 2010 by an amendment ([4]) to Regulation (EC) No 850/2004 ([5]) on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

In June 2013, 4-nonylphenol ethoxylate and pentadecafluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) ([6]) were identified as Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC) and included in the Candidate List. If prioritised by ECHA ([7]) and added by the Commission to Annex XIV to REACH, their placing on the market or use in the EU will be possible only if authorised.

2. Information on emissions from industrial sites in Europe is covered by Regulation (EC) No 166/2006 concerning the establishment of a European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR). E-PRTR addresses specific types of industrial activities and facilities above a certain capacity need to report to the Commission the releases and transfers of certain pollutants above prescribed thresholds. The reported data are made available on the public E-PRTR website ([8]). Under the Water Framework Directive ([9]), Member States are obliged to monitor nonylphenol and to meet a quality standard for this substance in surface waters by 2015. Exceedances of the standard must be reported to the Commission. A standard will soon also apply to PFOS.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals; OJ L 396, 30.12.2006.
([2]) http://www.echa.europa.eu/web/guest/registry-of-submitted-restriction-proposal-intentions
([3]) Directive 2006/122/EC of The European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 amending for the 30th time Council Directive 76/769/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations (perfluorooctane sulfonates); OJ L 372.
([4]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 757/2010 of 24 August 2010 amending Regulation (EC) No 850/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on persistent organic pollutants as regards Annexes I and III; OJ L 223.
([5]) Regulation (EC) No 850/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on persistent organic pollutants; OJ L 158.
([6]) As well as its ammonium salt, ammonium pentadecafluorooctanoate (APFO).
([7]) The European Chemicals Agency, based in Helsinki, Finland — www.echa.europa.eu
([8]) http://prtr.ec.europa.eu
([9]) Directive 2000/60/EC (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000) with Directive 2008/105/EC, OJ L 348, 24.12.2008.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-006568/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Anni Podimata (S&D)
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έκθεση αξιολόγησης του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου για το πρόγραμμα της Ελλάδας

Στην έκθεση αξιολόγησης του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου για την χρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας (Greece: Ex post evaluation of exceptional access under the 2010 stand-by arrangement), που δημοσιεύτηκε πριν από λίγες μέρες, γίνονται σημαντικές διαπιστώσεις και αναφορές σχετικά με το σχεδιασμό, τις αποφάσεις και την υλοποίηση του προγράμματος της Ελλάδας. Από την έκθεση προκύπτουν σημαντικά συμπεράσματα και κρίσιμα ερωτήματα για τον ρόλο και τις αποφάσεις από την πλευρά της ΕΕ και ειδικά της Επιτροπής και της ΕΚΤ που εκπροσωπούν την Ευρωζώνη στην Τρόικα. Συγκεκριμένα: Το ΔΝΤ αναφέρει σαφώς ότι είχε επιφυλάξεις σχετικά με τη βιωσιμότητα του δημοσίου χρέους της Ελλάδας. Αναφέρει επίσης ότι υπήρχε μεγάλη ανησυχία στην Ευρωζώνη εξαιτίας της έκθεσης ευρωπαϊκών τραπεζών σε κρατικά ομόλογα της ευρωπαϊκής περιφέρειας.

— Ποια ήταν η θέση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με αυτές τις δύο διαπιστώσεις; Καθυστέρησε όντως η αναδιάρθρωση του ελληνικού χρέους, με συνέπεια την εμβάθυνση της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής κρίσης στην Ελλάδα, αλλά και με κόστος σε όρους αποτελεσματικότητας για το πρόγραμμα, προκειμένου να μην υποστούν ζημιές φορείς του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα στις άλλες χώρες της Ευρωζώνης;

Το ΔΝΤ διαπιστώνει ότι μεταξύ των καθοριστικών παραγόντων για την επιτυχία του προγράμματος περιλαμβάνεται η αποδοχή και η ανάληψη της ευθύνης του προγράμματος από τη χώρα που το υλοποιεί.

— Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή με την άποψη αυτή; Κατά πόσο η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι συντέλεσαν στη μειωμένη αποδοχή του προγράμματος οι επικαιροποιήσεις με συνεχή αιτήματα για λήψη νέων μέτρων, καθώς και σειρά δηλώσεων μελών θεσμικών οργάνων της ΕΕ με χαρακτήρα αμφισβήτησης απέναντι στην Ελλάδα;

Η δημοσιοποίηση αυτής της έκθεσης αξιολόγησης από το ΔΝΤ είναι ένα σημαντικό βήμα διαφάνειας και λογοδοσίας. Από πλευράς ΕΕ, εξακολουθεί να μην υπάρχει αυτού του είδους η διαδικασία διαφάνειας και λογοδοσίας.

— Είναι στα σχέδια της Επιτροπής, ως μέλος της Τρόικας, να προβεί σε αντίστοιχη μορφή εσωτερικής αξιολόγησης των προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής και δημοσιοποίηση αντίστοιχης έκθεσης που θα επιτρέψει τον διάλογο και πιθανότατα τη βελτίωση των διαδικασιών σχεδιασμού και υλοποίησης των προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής στις χώρες που δέχονται στήριξη από την ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη εκφράσει τις απόψεις της αναφορικά με το έγγραφο του ΔΝΤ για την εκ των υστέρων αξιολόγηση. Ως προς το ζήτημα της αναδιάρθρωσης του χρέους, η Επιτροπή δεν συμφωνεί με το συμπέρασμα του ΔΝΤ ότι η αναδιάρθρωση θα έπρεπε να είχε γίνει νωρίτερα. Η έκθεση αγνοεί το γεγονός της διασύνδεσης των οικονομιών των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ. Η Επιτροπή φρονεί ότι η αναδιάρθρωση του χρέους του ιδιωτικού τομέα θα ενείχε σίγουρα τον κίνδυνο συστημικής μετάδοσης και θα είχε επίσης υπονομεύσει σοβαρά την έκβαση του προγράμματος. Αυτή ήταν η θέση όλων των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ.

Η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η οικειοποίηση του προγράμματος από τις ελληνικές αρχές αποτελεί προϋπόθεση για την επιτυχία του. Οι ελληνικές αρχές επέδειξαν και εξακολουθούν να επιδεικνύουν ισχυρή προσήλωση στην υλοποίηση του προγράμματος, μολονότι απαιτούνται περαιτέρω προσπάθειες σε πολλούς τομείς και δεν υπάρχουν περιθώρια εφησυχασμού.

Η αξιολόγηση του προγράμματος προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας αποτελεί συνεχή διαδικασία. Στις 17 Μαΐου η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε την τελευταία αξιολόγησή της όσον αφορά την πρόοδο της Ελλάδας στο πλαίσιο του 2ου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής. Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου στην έκθεση: Το δεύτερο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα — Δεύτερη ανασκόπηση Μάιος 2013 (http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/op148_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006568/13
to the Commission
Anni Podimata (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: IMF evaluation report on programme for Greece

The IMF evaluation report on funding for Greece (Greece: Ex post evaluation of exceptional access under the 2010 stand-by arrangement) published a few days ago contains a number of significant findings and observations regarding planning, decision-making and implementation of the programme for Greece, leading to a number of important conclusions and raising major questions regarding the role of the EU and its decision-making processes, particularly with regard to the Commission and ECB, which represent the euro area within the Troika. Specifically, the IMF clearly expresses reservations regarding the sustainability of the Greek public debt, indicating that the euro area was particularly nervous at the exposure of European banks to bonds issued by certain European governments.

— What stance was adopted by the Commission in response to these two conclusions? Was Greek debt rescheduling in fact delayed for the purpose of protecting financial institutions in other countries of the euro area, thereby worsening the economic and social crisis in Greece and undermining the effectiveness of the programme?

One of the principal IMF programme evaluation criteria is assumption of responsibility for the programme by the country implementing it.

— Does the Commission concur? Does it take the view that adjustments to the programme with constant demands for new measures, together with the expressions of doubt emanating from the EU institutions in respect of Greece are undermining acceptance of the programme?

Publication of the IMF evaluation report is a major step towards greater transparency and accountability, which continue to be lacking within the EU.

— Does the Commission, as a member of the Troika, intend to carry out an internal assessment of its own and also publish a report on its findings, thereby facilitating dialogue and hopefully improve the planning and implementation of adjustment programmes in countries receiving EU support?

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

The Commission has already expressed its views on the IMF *ex-post* evaluation document. On the issue of debt restructuring, the Commission does not agree with the IMF conclusion that an upfront debt restructuring in 2010 would have been desirable. The report ignores the interconnected nature of the euro area Member States. The Commission believes that private sector debt restructuring would have certainly risked systemic contagion and would also have severely undermined the programme. This was the unanimous position of the Member States of the euro area.

The Commission believes that ownership of the programme by the Greek authorities is a precondition for success. The Greek authorities have shown and continue to show strong commitment with programme implementation, although further efforts are needed in many areas and there is no room for complacency.

The evaluation of the adjustment programme for Greece is a continuous process. On 17 May, the Commission published its last assessment of progress made by Greece in the context of the 2nd economic adjustment programme. For further information, The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the report: The Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece — Second Review May 2013, at:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/op148_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006570/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Anstieg der Gaspreise in der EU

Ende Mai 2013 wurde bekannt, dass die Gaspreise in der EU im ersten Halbjahr 2012 gegenüber dem Vergleichszeitraum im Jahr 2011 durchschnittlich um 10,3 % gestiegen sind. Während es in Lettland, Estland, Bulgarien und Portugal die stärksten Preissteigerungen gab, kam es in Slowenien als einzigem EU-Staat zu einer Verbilligung von Gas um 7,8 Prozent.

1. Welche Gründe haben nach Ansicht der Kommission zum Anstieg der Gaspreise geführt?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Anstieg der Gaspreise?

3. Welche Gründe sieht die Kommission dafür, dass die Preise in Lettland, Estland, Bulgarien und Portugal im Vergleich zu den übrigen EU-Staaten besonders stark gestiegen sind?

4. Hat die Kommission analysiert, warum sich der Gaspreis in Slowenien verbilligt hat? Wenn ja, welche Gründe hat die Kommission für die Verbilligung der dortigen Gaspreise ausgemacht? Wenn nicht, wird die Kommission eine solche Analyse durchführen?

5. Welche Schritte sollten die übrigen EU-Staaten nach Ansicht der Kommission unternehmen, um weitere Preisanstiege zu vermeiden?

6. Welche grundsätzliche Strategie verfolgt die Kommission, um einen weiteren Anstieg der Gaspreise in der EU zu vermeiden?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(30. Juli 2013)

Die hohen Energiepreise stehen auf der Agenda der Kommission ganz weit oben. Bei der Tagung des Europäischen Rates vom 22. Mai 2013 wurde die Kommission aufgefordert, bis zum Ende des Jahres ausführlich über die europäischen Energiepreise zu berichten und dabei auch den globalen Kontext zu berücksichtigen.

Die Gaspreise haben letztes Jahr entsprechend dem globalen Trend steigender Energierohstoffpreise angezogen.

Es lässt sich nicht leugnen, dass in weiten Teilen Europas das Fehlen eines liquiden Großhandelsmarkts und die starke Abhängigkeit von einem einzigen Gaslieferanten das Entstehen eines Wettbewerbsumfeldes mit wettbewerbsorientierten Preisen nicht gerade fördern. Stattdessen sind die Preise in langfristigen Lieferverträgen oftmals an den Ölpreis gekoppelt.

Der fehlende Wettbewerb am Großhandelsmarkt macht auch den Wettbewerb am Endkundenmarkt schwierig. Um ihre Bürger zu schützen, greifen manche Mitgliedstaaten zur Regulierung der Energiepreise. Letztendlich wirkt sich jedoch eine solche Preisregulierung auf zu niedrigem Niveau negativ auf die Staatshaushalte aus und verhindert den Wettbewerb. Ein Gegensteuern gegen diese Effekte könnte der Grund für die Preisanstiege in einigen der von Ihnen genannten Ländern sein.

In Portugal war der Gaspreisanstieg zum größten Teil auf die Umsatzsteuererhöhung vom Oktober 2011 zurückzuführen ([1]). In der Tat kam es zu einer Senkung der Erdgaspreise um 7,8 %, aber in Slowenien und nicht in der Slowakei ([2]). Die Kommission steht in engem Kontakt zu den Regierungen und Regulierungsbehörden aller EU-Mitgliedstaaten, um die Situation auf dem Großhandelsmarkt und auf dem Endkundenmarkt zu überwachen.

Die beste Garantie für eine bezahlbare und sichere Energieversorgung ist ein funktionierender Erdgasbinnenmarkt. Wo funktionierende Märkte existieren, sind die Preise bereits niedriger als andernorts ([3]).

([1]) Von 6 % auf 23 %, eine im Finanzhilfeprogramm empfohlene Maßnahme. Entsprechend dem Programm werden in Portugal auch die regulierten Preise für Gas und Elektrizität schrittweise abgeschafft. Ein zu geringer Marktumfang, mangelnder Wettbewerb und die relative Isolation sind weitere Faktoren, die in Portugal zu hohen Gaspreisen führen könnten.

([2]) Dieser Preisrückgang wurde im folgenden Zeitraum verzeichnet: 2. Hälfte 2012/2. Hälfte 2011. Auf jährlicher Basis kam es jedoch auch bei den slowenischen Gaspreisen zu einem Anstieg, da der oben genannte Rückgang durch einen Anstieg im ersten Halbjahr mehr als ausgeglichen wurde.

([3]) Die Kommission veröffentlicht außerdem regelmäßige Berichte über die Erdgas- und Elektrizitätsmärkte in der EU, die über die Website der GD ENER abrufbar sind.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006570/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Rise in gas prices in the EU

At the end of May 2013 it emerged that gas prices in the EU rose by 10.3% on average during the first six months of 2012 compared with the same period in 2011. While the highest price increases were in Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria and Portugal, Slovakia was the only EU Member State in which the price of gas went down by 7.8%.

1. In the Commission's opinion, what has led to the rise in gas prices?

2. What view does it take of this rise in gas prices?

3. In its opinion, why have prices in Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria and Portugal risen particularly sharply compared with the other EU Member States?

4. Has the Commission analysed why the price of gas has fallen in Slovakia? If so, what reasons has it established for the fall in the gas price there? If not, does it intend to perform such an analysis?

5. What steps does it believe the other EU Member States should take in order to avoid further price rises?

6. What basic strategy is it pursuing in order to avoid a further rise in gas prices in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

High energy prices are at the top of the Commission's agenda. Following the European Council of 22 May 2013, the Commission aims at reporting extensively on European energy prices in a global context by the year's end.

Gas prices have increased over the last year following the global trend of rising energy commodity prices.

It is true however, that in large parts of Europe the absence of liquid wholesale markets and the strong dependence on a single gas supplier are not conducive to a competitive environment with competitive prices. Instead, often prices in long term supply contracts are linked to the oil price.

The absence of competition on the wholesale level makes competition on the retail level difficult. Attempting to protect their citizens, some Member States revert to regulating energy prices. Ultimately however, when prices are regulated at too low a level, governments budgets suffer and competition cannot occur. Countering those effects may be a reason for the price increases in some of the countries you mention.

In Portugal the biggest share of the gas price increase was due to the VAT increase in October 2011 ([1]). A reduction of 7.8% of natural gas prices did indeed occur but it happened in Slovenia, not Slovakia ([2]). The Commission is in close contact with the governments and regulatory authorities of all EU Member States to monitor the situation on both wholesale and retail level.

Ultimately, the best way of ensuring affordable and secure energy is to make the internal gas market work. Where markets are functioning, prices are already significantly lower than elsewhere ([3]).

([1]) From 6% to 23%, a measure recommended by the Financial Assistance Program. In line with the program Portugal is also phasing-out gas and electricity regulated prices. Lack of scale and competition and relative isolation are other factors that may be driving gas prices high in Portugal.

([2]) This decrease was registered in the following period: 2nd half of 2012/2nd half 2011. On an annual basis however, even Slovenian prices for natural gas registered an increase as a first half rise more than compensated the reduction mentioned above.

([3]) In addition, the Commission is publishing regular reports on gas and electricity markets in the EU available on the webpage of DG ENER.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006572/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Belebung der Modebranche durch die Kommission

Laut Medienberichten plant die Kommission, der europäischen Modebranche mit einer Vermittlungsagentur zu mehr Kreativität zu verhelfen. Es sollen Partnerschaften zwischen Designern und kleinen Modeherstellern identifiziert und gefördert werden.

1. Wer wählt die Projekte aus, die im Rahmen dieses Programmes eine Förderung erhalten sollen?

2. Auf der Basis welcher Kriterien werden die zu fördernden Projekte ausgewählt?

3. Sind auch für andere Sektoren, die unter die sogenannten kreativen Industrien fallen, ähnliche Programme geplant?

4. Wo soll die neue Agentur angesiedelt sein?

5. Für wie viele Jahre ist das Projekt vorgesehen?

6. Zu welchem Zeitpunkt wird die Agentur ihre Arbeit aufnehmen?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(23. Juli 2013)

Das Ziel des Pilotprojekts WORTH ist die Einrichtung und der Betrieb einer Plattform zur Auswahl und Organisation von Partnerschaftsvereinbarungen und zur Präsentation ihrer Ergebnisse. Die Partnerschaftsvereinbarungen, die Aspekte der Rechte an geistigem Eigentum umfassen müssen, werden von dem Auftragnehmer ([1]) einer Vorauswahl unterzogen und vorgeschlagen und vom Lenkungsausschuss des Pilotprojekts WORTH validiert. Designer (und andere Experten) müssen von der Kommission offiziell zugelassen werden.

Die Beurteilung der Partnerschaften erfolgt anhand der Konzepte und Vorschläge der Designer für Produkte mit Designanteil und der Bereitschaft der Hersteller, den Designanteil der Produkte zu steigern, neue Labels oder Marken zu entwickeln und zuzusagen, Muster, Kollektionsstücke und/oder in begrenzter Stückzahl hergestellte Produkte bei Ausstellungen oder Messen zu zeigen. Die Hersteller bzw. Handwerker sollen nur begrenzte oder keine Erfahrung bei der Arbeit mit Designern und der Entwicklung von Marken oder Mustern besitzen. Die Designer müssen über eine mindestens dreijährige Erfahrung verfügen und an zwei Modekollektionen mitgewirkt haben.

Das Pilotprojekt WORTH zielt ab auf die Verbrauchsgüter- und Modebranche wie Textil/Bekleidung, Schuhe, Pelzwaren, Leder und Ledererzeugnisse, Schmuck, Accessoires, Handtaschen, Wohnungsdekoration usw. Medieninhalte, Kunst und darstellungsbezogene kreative Branchen fallen nicht unter das Projekt, das auf zwei Jahre hin angelegt ist und nicht zur Einrichtung einer neuen Agentur führen soll. Die Frist für die Angebotsabgabe war der 28. Jun 2013. Wenn der Zuschlag erteilt und der Dienstleistungsvertrag unterzeichnet worden ist, wird die Arbeit voraussichtlich Ende 2013 aufgenommen.

([1]) Eine Ausschreibung zur Auswahl eines Auftragnehmers, der für die Durchführung des Pilotprojekts WORTH zuständig ist, wurde im Amtsblatt der Europäischen Union vom 30. April 2013 veröffentlicht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006572/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Revival of the fashion industry by the Commission

According to media reports, the Commission is planning to help ensure more creativity in the European fashion industry via an intermediary agency. Partnerships between fashion designers and small-scale fashion manufacturers are to be identified and funded.

1. Who selects the projects set to receive funding under this scheme?

2. What criteria are applied when selecting the projects to be funded?

3. Are similar schemes also planned for other sectors that come under the 'creative industries'?

4. Where is the new agency going to be based?

5. For how many years is the project scheduled to last?

6. When is the agency going to start its work?

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

The aim of the WORTH pilot project is to set up and run a platform to select and organise partnership agreements and showcase their deliverables. The partnership agreements, which must include intellectual property rights-related aspects, will be pre-selected and proposed by the contractor ([1]) and validated by the WORTH pilot project steering board. Designers (and other experts) have to be formally approved by the Commission.

The partnerships will be evaluated against the designers' concepts or proposals for products with design content and the manufacturer's willingness to increase design content of products, develop a new label or brand, and commit to showcase samples, collection pieces and/or limited series at trade fairs or exhibitions. Manufacturers or craftsmen shall have limited or no experience of working with designers, branding or label development. Designers must have at least three years of experience and have participated in two fashion-related seasons.

The WORTH pilot project is targeted at the consumer and fashionable goods industries such as textiles-clothing, footwear, fur, leather and leather products, jewellery, accessories, handbags, and home decoration, etc. Media content, arts and performance related creative industries fall outside the scope of this project. It is planned to last for two years and it does not aim at establishing a new agency. The deadline for the submission of tenders was 28 June 2013. Once the tenderer has been selected and the service contract signed, the work will start, tentatively by the end of 2013.

([1]) A call for tender to select a contractor in charge of implementing the WORTH pilot project was published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* dated 30 April 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006575/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Anstieg der Strompreise in der EU

Ende Mai 2013 wurde bekannt, dass die Strompreise in der EU im ersten Halbjahr 2012 gegenüber dem Jahr 2011 um 6,6 % gestiegen sind. In der Eurozone betrug die Steigerung 6,1 % gegenüber dem Vorjahr. Während in 23 EU-Staaten ein Anstieg der Strompreise zu verzeichnen war, konnte in Schweden, Ungarn und Finnland eine Verbilligung der Strompreise festgestellt werden.

1. Welche Gründe haben nach Ansicht der Kommission zum Anstieg der Strompreise in der EU geführt?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Anstieg der Strompreise?

3. Welche Gründe sieht die Kommission dafür, dass die Preise in der Eurozone weniger stark gestiegen sind als in der gesamten EU?

4. Hat die Kommission analysiert, warum sich die Strompreise in Schweden, Ungarn und Finnland verbilligt haben? Wenn ja, welche Gründe hat die Kommission für die Verbilligung der Strompreise in diesen Ländern ausgemacht? Wenn nicht, wird die Kommission eine solche Analyse durchführen?

5. Welche Pläne verfolgt die Kommission, um die Strompreise in der EU nicht weiter steigen zu lassen?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(30. Juli 2013)

1./2. Der in 23 Mitgliedstaaten zwischen 2011 und 2012 beobachtete Anstieg der Haushaltsstrompreise war in 10 Ländern in erster Linie auf eine Erhöhung der Netzkosten, in 5 Mitgliedstaaten auf Steuern und Abgaben und in 8 weiteren Mitgliedstaaten auf den Anstieg der Energierohstoffpreise zurückzuführen. Die Preissteigerungen hatten daher ganz unterschiedliche Gründe und lassen keine einfachen Schlüsse zu. Im Einklang mit den Schlussfolgerungen des Europäischen Rates vom Mai 2013 beabsichtigt die Kommission, einen Bericht über Energiepreise und -kosten und deren Ursachen zu erstellen.

3. Der Unterschied zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten innerhalb und außerhalb des Euroraums beträgt nur 0,5 Prozentpunkte und geht vor allem auf die Verringerung der nominalen Strompreise in Ungarn und Schweden zurück.

4./5. Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf den erwähnten geplanten Bericht über Energiepreise sowie auf ihre Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-6290/2013 (Frage 3) und E-002411-13 zur Vollendung des Binnenmarkts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006575/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Increase in electricity prices in the EU

It emerged at the end of May 2013 that electricity prices in the EU in the first half of 2012 were up 6.6% on 2011. In the euro area there was a 6.1% increase on the previous year. Whereas electricity prices recorded an increase in 23 of the EU Member States, electricity prices fell in Sweden, Hungary and Finland.

1. In the Commission's view, what reasons brought about this increase in electricity prices in the EU?

2. How does the Commission evaluate the increase in electricity prices?

3. In the Commission's view, what are the reasons for the prices in the euro area rising less than in the EU as a whole?

4. Has the Commission analysed why electricity prices fell in Sweden, Hungary and Finland? If so, what reasons has the Commission identified for the fall in electricity prices in these countries? If not, will the Commission be carrying out such analysis?

5. What plans is the Commission embarking on to ensure that electricity prices do not continue to rise in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

1-2. The household electricity prices increases observed in 23 Member States between 2011 and 2012 were caused in 10 countries mainly by increases in network costs, in 5 Member States due to taxes and levies and in 8 other Member States by the energy commodity prices. This shows that price increases were due to diverse set of reasons, which does not allow for a simple evaluation. In line with the conclusions of the European Council of May 2013, the Commission intends to prepare a report on energy prices and costs and their causes.

3. The difference between euro and non-euro Member States is only 0.5% points and this difference can mainly be attributed to the decrease of nominal electricity prices in Hungary and Sweden.

4-5. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the planned report on energy prices mentioned above and to its replies to Questions E-6290/2013 (subquestion 3) and E-002411-13 concerning the completion of the internal market.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006577/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Beitritt Islands zur Europäischen Union

Am 28. April 2013 wurde bei der Parlamentswahl in Island die bis dato regierende Mitte-Links-Koalition von einer EU-kritischen Regierung abgelöst, welche ein Referendum über den Beitritt Islands zur EU angekündigt hat.

Welche Konsequenzen hat diese Entwicklung aus Sicht der Kommission für die Beitrittsperspektiven Islands?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(17. Juli 2013)

Bei den Parlamentswahlen vom 27. April 2013 errangen die Fortschrittspartei und die Unabhängigkeitspartei zusammen 38 der 63 Sitze im Parlament und damit die Mehrheit.

Im Anschluss an die vom Vorsitzenden der Fortschrittspartei, Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, geführten Koalitionsgespräche bildeten die beiden Parteien eine Koalitionsregierung, die am 23. Mai 2013 vereidigt wurde.

In der Koalitionsvereinbarung wurde festgelegt, dass Island die Beitrittsverhandlungen mit der EU aussetzt und eine Bewertung zum Stand der Verhandlungen und den EU-internen Entwicklungen durchführt, die dem Parlament vorgelegt wird. Die Koalitionsvereinbarung sieht ebenfalls vor, dass bei den Beitrittsverhandlungen solange keine weiteren Schritte unternommen werden, bis ein Referendum abgehalten wurde. Für diese Schritte hat die Regierung keinen Zeitplan genannt.

Die Kommission respektiert diesen neuen Ansatz der isländischen Regierung im Hinblick auf die EU-Beitrittsverhandlungen. Der einstimmige Beschluss der Europäischen Union, diese Beitrittsverhandlungen zu führen, hat nichts von seiner Gültigkeit verloren. Die Kommission ist entschlossen, ihre privilegierte Zusammenarbeit mit Island auf allen Gebieten von beiderseitigem Interesse über unsere traditionelle Partnerschaft auf der Grundlage des Abkommens über den Europäischen Wirtschaftsraum sowie über unsere sonstigen bestehenden Kooperationsrahmen fortzusetzen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006577/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Iceland's accession to the European Union

In Iceland's parliamentary elections, held on 28 April 2013, the ruling centre-left coalition was replaced by a government critical of the EU, which has announced a referendum on Iceland's accession to the EU.

In the Commission's view, what are the consequences of this development for the prospects of Iceland's accession?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

With the parliamentary elections on 27 April 2013 the Progressive Party together with the Independence Party won a majority of 38 of the 63 seats in parliament.

Following coalition talks led by the leader of the Progressive Party, Mr Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, the two parties formed a coalition government that was sworn in on 23 May 2013.

The governmental platform indicates that Iceland's EU accession negotiations will be put on hold and an assessment will be made on the status of the negotiations and developments within the EU and presented to the parliament. The platform also indicates that no further steps will be taken in the accession negotiations until after a national referendum. No timing has been indicated by the government as regards these steps.

The Commission respects the new approach taken by the new Icelandic government with regard to the EU accession negotiation process. The unanimous decision of the European Union to hold accession negotiations remains valid. The Commission is committed to further pursue the privileged cooperation with Iceland in all areas of mutual interest through our traditional partnership within the framework of the European Economic Area Agreement, as well as through our other ongoing cooperation frameworks.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006578/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Erneuerung der Gas-Transitleitung in der Ukraine

Im März 2013 wurde bekannt, dass die Ukraine von der Europäischen Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung einen Kredit über 308 Mio. EUR erhält, um die wichtigste Transitleitung zu erneuern, die Gas von Russland nach Westeuropa befördert. Nun wurde bekannt, dass im Jahr 2012 mit 81 Milliarden Kubikmetern rund 20 % weniger Gas nach Westeuropa befördert wurde als im Jahr 2011.

Steht die Hohe Vertreterin mit der Ukraine in Verhandlungen, um die Versorgungslage im Vergleich zum Jahr 2012 wieder zu verbessern?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(31. Juli 2013)

In den letzten Jahren sind russische Gaslieferungen in die EU über die Ukraine aufgrund der derzeitigen wirtschaftlichen Situation, Änderungen auf den regionalen Gasmärkten und der Inbetriebnahme alternativer Versorgungsrouten wie der North-Stream-Pipeline zurückgegangen. Die Gasunternehmen in der EU erhalten jedoch die vertraglich vereinbarten Gasmengen, und die Ukraine erfüllt ihre Durchleitungsverpflichtungen.

Nach Ansicht der Kommission kann das ukrainische Gasfernleitungssystem nur dann zentraler Bestandteil der europaweiten Energienetze bleiben, wenn die Ukraine im Gassektor Reformen zur Modernisierung des Gasfernleitungssystems durchführt. Seit der Gemeinsamen Internationalen Investitionskonferenz hochrangiger Vertreter der EU und der Ukraine vom 23. März 2009 haben die EU und internationale Finanzinstitutionen die Modernisierung des ukrainischen Gastransportsystems aktiv unterstützt, indem sie dem Land Kredite der EBWE und der EIB angeboten haben. Konkret wird derzeit ein vorrangiges Investitionsprojekt in Höhe von 308 Mio. USD für eine beschleunigte Finanzierung durch die EBWE und die EIB in Betracht gezogen, das die erste Phase der Modernisierung zentraler Transit-Gaspipelines (Pipeline Urengoy-Pomary-Uzgherod) betrifft. Die Kommission wird weiter mit den internationalen Finanzinstitutionen an der Verwirklichung dieses Ziels arbeiten. Der Erfolg des Projekts wird jedoch von den Fortschritten der Ukraine bei der Umsetzung der vereinbarten Reformen im Gassektor abhängen.

Was die Beziehungen mit der Ukraine im Energiebereich angeht, arbeitet die Kommission eng mit dem Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst zusammen, auch hinsichtlich der Reformen des Gasmarktes, zu denen sich die Ukraine im Rahmen der Energiegemeinschaft verpflichtet hat, und des derzeitigen Modernisierungsprojekts. Die Mitgliedschaft der Ukraine in der Energiegemeinschaft bildet die Grundlage für Verhandlungen über die den Energiebereich betreffenden Teile des Assoziierungsabkommens und der weitreichenden und umfassenden Freihandelszone.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006578/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Renewal of the gas transit pipeline in Ukraine

In March 2013 it emerged that Ukraine is to receive a EUR 308 million loan from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to renew the main gas transit pipeline from Russia to Western Europe. Now it has emerged that 81 billion cubic metres of gas were pumped to Western Europe in 2012, i.e. some 20% less than in 2011.

Is the High Representative engaged in negotiations with Ukraine to ensure an improvement in the supply situation on 2012?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The supply of Russian gas to the EU via Ukraine has decreased in recent years due to the current economic situation, changes in regional gas markets and the coming on-stream of alternative routes such as North Stream. EU gas companies are however receiving the contracted gas volumes and Ukraine is fulfilling its transit obligations.

The Commission believes that, in order to ensure that the Ukrainian gas transmission system remains a key part of the pan-European energy networks, Ukraine needs to implement gas sector reforms aimed at modernisation of the gas transmission system. Since the high-level Joint EU-Ukraine International Investment Conference on 23 March 2009 the EU and International Financial Institutions have been actively supporting the modernisation of the Ukrainian gas transportation system by offering Ukraine loans from the EBRD and EIB. A concrete priority investment project of USD 308 million for the first phase of the modernisation of key transit gas pipelines, the Urengoy-Pomary-Uzgherod pipeline, is being considered for 'fast-track' financing by the EBRD and the EIB. The Commission will continue working with the International Financial Institutions towards this aim. The success of the project will however depend on Ukraine's progress in implementing the agreed gas sector reforms.

The Commission is working closely with the External Action Service on energy relations with Ukraine, including gas market reforms in accordance with Ukraine's Energy Community commitments and the current modernisation project. Ukraine's Energy Community membership has been the basis for negotiations of the energy parts of the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006580/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Assistance to women who have suffered miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal loss

Could the Commission please advise what, if any, European initiatives exist to assist in the management and treatment offered to women who have suffered miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal loss?

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

The organisation and delivery of health services and medical care is the exclusive competence of Member States.

The Commission has, through the second programme of Community action on the field of health (2008-2013), co-financed a European Perinatal Health Report, which was published in May 2013. ([1])

([1]) http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-006581/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(7 юни 2013 г.)

Относно: Либерализация на забраната за тютюнопушене на обществени места в България

В съответствие с усилията на европейско ниво за насърчаване на среда без тютюнев дим в Европейския съюз, през 2012 г. България прие нов закон за въвеждане на забрана за тютюнопушене на обществени места, който се спазва стриктно. Забраната цели намаляване на пасивното тютюнопушене и на броя на пушачите сред възрастните и младите хора. За съжаление либерализацията на забраната бе обявена като първа стъпка на новото българско правителство, формирано с мандата на Българската социалистическа партия (БСП) на 29 май 2013 г. Новото правителство пое обещанието да направи остър завой в политиката, насочена към ограничаване на вредните ефекти от пасивното тютюнопушене. Това действие е в противоречие с множество научни изследвания за различните вредни последствия от пасивното тютюнопушене върху човешкото здраве и е в пълно несъответствие с позицията на Световната здравна организация, на Европейската комисия, на Европейския парламент и здравните политики в много от държавите членки.

В тази връзка бих искала да попитам Комисията дали либерализацията на забраната за тютюнопушене на обществени места в България е в противовес на европейските усилия да се осигури среда без тютюнев дим за европейските граждани. Какви стъпки ще предприеме Комисията, за да предотврати възможно либерализиране на тази забрана в една от държавите — членки на ЕС? Може ли Комисията да предостави статистически данни на европейско ниво и за отделните държави членки по отношение на вредните ефекти от тютюнопушенето върху здравния статус на европейските граждани, и по-специално върху младите хора?

Отговор, даден от г-н Borg от името на Комисията
(23 юли 2013 г.)

До знанието на Комисията беше доведено, че новото българско правителство обмисля облекчаване на пълната забрана на тютюнопушенето на обществени места в България.

Комисията няма да приветства тези действия, които противоречат на усилията, полагани на равнище ЕС за създаване на среда без тютюнев дим на обществени места.

В съответствие с Рамковата конвенция на СЗО за контрол на тютюна, на 30 ноември 2009 г. Съветът прие препоръка относно среда без тютюнев дим (2009/C 296/02), с която приканва държавите членки да въведат мерки за защита на своите граждани срещу вторичния тютюнев дим не по-късно от ноември 2012 г.

Комисията докладва за напредъка, постигнат от държавите членки през февруари тази година и конкретно посочи значителния напредък, постигнат в България. ([1]) Препоръката на Съвета не е правно обвързваща. България е страна по Рамковата конвенция за контрол на тютюна, която е обвързващ международен договор с разпоредби, по силата на които страните по конвенцията се задължават да защитават своите граждани от тютюнопушенето на закрити работни места, в обществения транспорт, закрити обществени места и, както е целесъобразно, други обществени места.

Комисията не събира систематично данни на равнище ЕС или на национално равнище за вредните последици от тютюнопушенето върху здравето на европейските граждани и особено на младите хора. Комисията финансира някои проучвания, като например проучването ASPECT. ([2]) Изчислено е, че тютюнът е причината за близо 700 000 случая на преждевременна смърт в ЕС всяка година. ([3]) Съгласно консервативни оценки, през 2002 г. в ЕС са починали 79 000 възрастни, сред които 19 000 непушачи, поради излагане на тютюнев дим у дома (72 000) и на работното си място (7 300). ([4])

([1]) Доклад за изпълнението на препоръката на Съвета от 30 ноември 2009 г. относно среда без тютюнев дим (2009/C 296/02)
http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/smoke-free_implementation_report_en.pdf

([2]) Консорциум ASPECT Тютюн или здраве в Европейския съюз. 2004
http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_determinants/life_style/tobacco/documents/tobacco_fr_en.pdf

([3]) Peto R, LOPEZ AD, Boreham J, Thun M. Смъртност от пушене в развитите страни 1950-2010 г.
Фонд за изследване на рака, Световна здравна организация Oxford, Oxford University Press (виж http://www.ctsu.ox.ac.uk/~tobacco/) цитиран в SWD(2012) 452 final: http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/com_2012_788_ia_en.pdf

([4]) Jamrozik K. Оценка на смъртните случаи, дължащи се на пасивното пушене в Европа. В „Партньорство за среда без тютюнев дим. Повдигане на димната завеса: 10 причини за Европа без тютюнев дим.“ Брюксел, ERSJ Ltd., 2006 г.; pp.17-41
http://dev.ersnet.org/uploads/Document/46/WEB_CHEMIN_1554_1173100608.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006581/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Liberalisation of the smoking ban in public areas in Bulgaria

In line with EU-level efforts to promote a smoke-free environment across the Union, Bulgaria adopted in 2012 a new law introducing a smoking ban in public places, which has been strictly observed thereafter. The ban aims to cut the number of adult and young smokers and to reduce second-hand smoke exposure. Regrettably, the new Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) government, which took office on 29 May 2013, has announced plans to relax this ban. The new government pledged to reverse the existing policy limiting the harmful effects of exposure to second-hand smoke. Not only does this run contrary to numerous scientific studies showing the various risks of second-hand smoke to human health, but it is also in complete disregard of the positions of the World Health Organisation, the Commission, Parliament and the health policies enacted in a number of Member States.

In this regard, I would like to ask the Commission whether liberalisation of the smoking ban in Bulgaria contradicts EU-level efforts to safeguard a smoke-free environment for EU citizens. What steps will the Commission take to block a possible relaxation of the smoking ban in one of the EU Member States? Could the Commission provide statistical data, at EU-level and by Member State, on the harmful effects of smoking on the health of European citizens and specifically young people?

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

It has been brought to the attention of the Commission that the new Bulgarian government is considering a relaxation of the comprehensive ban on smoking in public places in Bulgaria.

The Commission would not welcome this development which counters efforts made at EU-level aiming at establishing a smoke-free environment in public places.

In line with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the Council adopted on 30 November 2009 a recommendation on Smoke-free Environments (2009/C 296/02) calling on Member States to introduce measures to protect their citizens against second hand smoke no later than November 2012.

The Commission reported on progress made by the Member States in February this year and specifically mentioned the significant progress achieved in Bulgaria ([1]). However, the Council Recommendation is not legally binding. Bulgaria is a Party to the framework Convention on Tobacco Control which is an internationally binding Treaty with provisions whereby parties to the Convention shall protect their citizens from smoking in indoor workplaces, public transport, indoor public places and, as appropriate, other public places.

The Commission does not systematically collect data at EU or national level on the harmful effects of smoking on the health of European citizens and specifically young people. The Commission funded certain studies, such as the ASPECT study ([2]). It is estimated that tobacco accounts for nearly 70 0000 premature deaths in the EU each year ([3]). Furthermore, according to conservative estimates, over 79 000 adults, including 19 000 non-smokers, have died in the EU in 2002 due to exposure to tobacco smoke at home and in their workplace ([4]).

([1]) Report on the implementation of the Council Recommendation of 30 November 2009 on Smoke-free Environments (2009/C 296/02) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/smoke-free_implementation_report_en.pdf

([2]) The Aspect Consortium. Tobacco or health in the European Union. 2004 http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_determinants/life_style/tobacco/documents/tobacco_fr_en.pdf

([3]) Peto R, Lopez AD, Boreham J,Thun M. Mortality from Smoking in Developed Countries 1950-2010. Imperial Cancer Research Fund, World Health. Organisation. Oxford, Oxford University Press (see http://www.ctsu.ox.ac.uk/~tobacco/) Quoted in SWD(2012) 452 final: http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/com_2012_788_ia_en.pdf

([4]) Jamrozik K. An estimate of deaths attributable to passive smoking in Europe. In: Smoke free Partnership. Lifting the smokescreen: 10 reasons for a smoke free Europe. Brussels, ERSJ Ltd, 2006; pp.17-41 http://dev.ersnet.org/uploads/Document/46/WEB_CHEMIN_1554_1173100608.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006582/13
to the Commission
Nigel Farage (EFD)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Austrian aviation case

In Austria a court case is under way regarding the safety of certain aircraft which may have led to the deaths of several people. In November 2009 VERSA, the Austrian civil aviation safety investigation authority, requested that the court-appointed expert (for Millen vs. Diamond Aircraft Industries) delay his report whilst the 'Sperr Study' was being completed. This study is a 466-page report written by Dr Walter Sperr on reliability and safety occurrences for DA40DTI and DA42 aircraft worldwide.

However, due to delays from VERSA and at the direct request of the judge presiding over the case, VERSA declined to provide a copy of the report. The court-appointed expert was finally allowed to see the report, but was told to destroy all his notes before he could leave the building. VERSA did state at the time that it would only hand over the report under a criminal procedure, as opposed to a civil one. I am informed that in Austria there is no distinction between the two if a request for information is made by a civil court.

However, a criminal complaint was filed in Wiener Neustadt, Austria, against two directors of Diamond Aircraft Industries. Despite a request for a copy of the full report, only an 8-page document, already known in the civil case, was supplied. The criminal complaint is still ongoing.

1. Is VERSA in breach of Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 if it does not provide the 466-page 'Sperr Study', regardless of whether the request is with regard to a criminal or a civil case?

2. Does Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 make a distinction between civil and criminal judicial inquiries?

3. Will European Aviation Safety Agency be making its own inquiries into the 'Sperr Study' if it were not known to it before?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

In accordance with Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 ([1]), drafts of preliminary or final reports or interim statements shall not be made available unless the national authority competent to decide on the disclosure of records decides that the benefits of the disclosure of this report for any other purposes permitted by law outweigh the adverse domestic and international impact such action may have on that or any future safety investigations. Therefore, there is no obligation to transmit this record according to Regulation (EU) No 996/2010.

Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 does not regulate judicial investigations and does not make a distinction between civil and criminal judicial inquiries. It only contains a number of rules regarding the coordination of judicial and safety investigations.

According to Regulation (EU) No 996/2010, only the Member States' national civil aviation safety investigation authorities have the right to conduct safety investigations. The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) can be invited to participate as an advisor within the scope of its competence, but the Agency has no competency to conduct a safety investigation or to evaluate an investigation report.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:295:0035:0050:EN:PDF.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006583/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή Απορρήτου Στατιστικών Στοιχείων

Η Ελληνική Στατιστική Αρχή (ΕΛΣΤΑΤ) σε έγγραφό της με αριθμό πρωτοκόλλου 5049/Α1-3549, επικαλείται τον κανονισμό 223/2009 σχετικά με τις Ευρωπαϊκές Στατιστικές και τον Κώδικα Ορθής Πρακτικής (ΚΟΠ) για τις Ευρωπαϊκές Στατιστικές (αρχή 5), προκειμένου να απαιτήσει από τους υπαλλήλους της να υπογράψουν «Δήλωση Τήρησης Στατιστικού Απορρήτου». Στη συγκεκριμένη «δήλωση», προβλέπονται εξοντωτικές ποινές, που φτάνουν μέχρι του σημείου της απόλυσης του υπαλλήλου, εάν τυχόν γίνει χρήση εκ μέρους των υπαλλήλων απόρρητων και εμπιστευτικών στατιστικών στοιχείων ακόμα και όταν αυτά αφορούν «τη χρήση τους σε οποιαδήποτε διαδικασία ενώπιον φορολογικών, δικαστικών, αστυνομικών, στρατιωτικών ή άλλων διοικητικών αρχών».

Για το συγκεκριμένο θέμα, ο Επίτροπος Semeta, δήλωσε στην ελληνική Βουλή (Επιτροπή Θεσμών και Διαφάνειας) ότι υπάρχει μεν πρόβλεψη στον κανονισμό περί στατιστικού απορρήτου, αλλά δήλωσε άγνοια σχετικά με την εξειδίκευση αυτού από την ΕΛΣΤΑΤ.

Με δεδομένο ότι η ελληνική δικαιοσύνη διερευνά υπόθεση σχετικά με την ΕΛΣΤΑΤ, για την οποία ασφαλώς θα χρειαστούν μαρτυρίες υπαλλήλων της ΕΛΣΤΑΤ και επειδή είναι αδιανόητο να εμποδίζουν κάποιοι δικαστικούς, αλλά και φορολογικούς, έλεγχους, επικαλούμενοι τους ευρωπαϊκούς κανονισμούς, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Συνάδει η παραπάνω Δήλωση Τήρησης Στατιστικού Απορρήτου με τον κανονισμό 223/2009 και τον Κώδικα Ορθής Πρακτικής;

— Γνωρίζει εάν υπάρχει άλλη χώρα της ΕΕ, όπου η προστασία του στατιστικού απορρήτου αφορά και δικαστικές και φορολογικές έρευνες; Ο ειδικός εμπειρογνώμονας που διορίστηκε από την Επιτροπή και ο οποίος έχει πρόσβαση σε όλα τα στατιστικά στοιχεία, έχει υπογράψει την ανωτέρω Δήλωση Τήρησης Στατιστικού Απορρήτου;

— Μπορεί η Επιτροπή, με απόλυτα κατηγορηματικό τρόπο, να δηλώσει ότι στον κανονισμό 223/2009 για το στατιστικό απόρρητο και τον Κώδικα Ορθής Πρακτικής, η προστασία του στατιστικού απορρήτου δεν άφορα σε έρευνες δικαστικών ή/και φορολογικών αρχών;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Ιουλίου 2013)

— Η νομοθεσία της Ένωσης επιβάλει στο προσωπικό των εθνικών στατιστικών αρχών την υποχρέωση να προστατεύουν το στατιστικό απόρρητο. Η υπογραφή από το εν λόγω προσωπικό δήλωσης τήρησης του στατιστικού απορρήτου είναι σύμφωνη με τον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 223/2009 και με τον κώδικα ορθής πρακτικής για τις ευρωπαϊκές στατιστικές.

— Η νομοθεσία της Ένωσης προβλέπει επίσης τον βασικό κανόνα ότι τα δεδομένα που συλλέγονται για στατιστικούς σκοπούς θα πρέπει να χρησιμοποιούνται μόνο για τους εν λόγω σκοπούς. Χαρακτηριστικό παράδειγμα αποτελεί η αιτιολογική σκέψη 27 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 223/2009, στην οποία επισημαίνεται ότι θα πρέπει να απαγορεύεται αυστηρά η χρήση απόρρητων στοιχείων για σκοπούς που δεν είναι αποκλειστικά στατιστικοί όπως οι διοικητικοί, νομικοί ή φορολογικοί σκοποί, ή για ελέγχους στις στατιστικές μονάδες. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι, σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη, το προσωπικό της εθνικής στατιστικής υπηρεσίας υπογράφει δήλωση τήρησης του στατιστικού απορρήτου και ότι, σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη, το πεδίο εφαρμογής της υποχρέωσης για την προστασία του στατιστικού απορρήτου προβλέπεται ρητώς από το εθνικό νομικό πλαίσιο.

Οι εμπειρογνώμονες που υποστηρίζουν την Ελληνική Στατιστική Αρχή, στο πλαίσιο του συγκεκριμένου κοινού συνολικού ελληνικού στατιστικού σχεδίου δράσης (JOSGAP), το οποίο καταρτίστηκε μεταξύ των ελληνικών αρχών και της Επιτροπής το 2010, είναι υποχρεωμένοι να τηρούν τον εμπιστευτικό χαρακτήρα κάθε πληροφορίας που λαμβάνουν κατά την άσκηση των καθηκόντων τους, σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις των σχετικών συμβάσεων με την Επιτροπή.

— Δεν μπορεί να δηλωθεί απερίφραστα ότι η προστασία του στατιστικού απορρήτου υπερισχύει πάντοτε στην περίπτωση που τα στοιχεία που συλλέγονται για στατιστικούς σκοπούς παρουσιάζουν ενδιαφέρον στο πλαίσιο δικαστικών ερευνών σύμφωνα με την εθνική νομοθεσία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006583/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Implementation of Statistical Confidentiality

The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), in Document 5049/A1-3549, is invoking Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European Statistics and the European statistics Code of Practice (COP) (Principle 5), in order to demand that its employees sign a 'Statement of Compliance with Statistical Confidentiality'. The 'Statement' stipulates harsh penalties, up to an employee's dismissal, if employees use private and confidential statistical data, even when such data are 'used in any procedure before tax, judicial, police, military or other administrative authorities'.

In relation to this matter, Commissioner Šemeta stated in the Greek Parliament (Committee on Institutions and Transparency) that the regulation on statistical confidentiality does provide for this, but claimed ignorance as to how ELSTAT was applying the regulation.

As the Greek authorities are investigating a case relating to ELSTAT, concerning which witness statements will be needed from ELSTAT employees, of course, and as it is inconceivable that anyone might be able to hinder judicial and tax investigations by invoking European regulations, will the Commission say:

— Is the above Statement of Compliance with Statistical Confidentiality consistent with Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and the Code of Practice?

— Is it aware of any other country in the EU where the protection of statistical confidentiality also applies to tax and judicial investigations? Has the special expert appointed by the Commission, who has access to all statistical data, signed the above Statement of Compliance with Statistical Confidentiality?

— Can the Commission state unequivocally that judicial and/or tax authority investigations are not subject to the protection of statistical confidentiality under Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on statistical confidentiality and the Code of Practice?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

— The obligation on staff of national statistical authorities to protect statistical confidentiality is established in Union legislation. The signature by such staff of a commitment to respect the statistical confidentiality is consistent with Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and the European Statistics Code of Practice.

— The basic rule that data collected for statistical purposes shall be used only for such statistical purposes is also established in Union legislation. This is exemplified in Recital 27 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 where it is noted that the use of confidential data for purposes that are not exclusively statistical, such as administrative, legal or tax purposes, or for the verification against the statistical units, should be strictly prohibited. The Commission is aware, that in some Member States a commitment to respect statistical confidentiality is signed by the staff of the National Statistical Institute and, that in some Member States the scope of the obligation to protect the statistical confidentiality is explicitly part of the national legal framework.

The experts supporting the Hellenic Statistical Authority in the context of the specific Joint Overall Statistical Greek Action Plan (JOSGAP), established between the Greek authorities and the Commission in 2010, are obliged to respect the confidentiality of all information that they may receive in the performance of their tasks, in accordance with provisions in the underlying contracts with the Commission.

— It cannot be unequivocally stated that the protection of statistical confidentiality always prevails in cases where data collected for statistical purposes are relevant for investigations by jurisdictions according to national legislation.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006584/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πώληση της ΑΤΕ και δικαιώματα δανειοληπτών

Επειδή η ερώτησή μου E-001405/2013, σχετικά με τη διατήρηση των παράνομων προνομίων της Αγροτικής Τράπεζας της Ελλάδας δεν έγινε κατανοητή, θέλω να θυμίσω ότι, σε παλαιότερη σχετική ερώτηση συναδέλφου (E-1451/2006) για τα παράνομα προνόμια της ΑΤΕ και ιδιαίτερα για την καταγγελία της εταιρίας «Τυποποιητήρια Θήβας ΑΕ» (καταγγελία 2003/5273), η Επιτροπή απάντησε ότι «τα περισσότερα από τα προνόμια που παραχωρούσε ο νόμος 4332/1929 έχουν καταργηθεί».

Πρόσφατα, μετά τη μεταβίβαση της ΑΤΕ στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς, ψηφίστηκε από το ελληνικό κοινοβούλιο ο νόμος 4141/ΦΕΚ 81 Α/05.04.2013, στο άρθρο 29 του οποίου, περιγράφεται ο τρόπος μεταβίβασης των ενυπόθηκων δανείων της ΑΤΕ στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς.

Με τη διάταξη αυτή, έγινε σαφές ότι το προνόμιο της ΑΤΕ να εγγράφει υποθήκες χωρίς δικαστική απόφαση ή ειδικό πληρεξούσιο έγγραφο, χωρίς τη συναίνεση του κυρίου του ακινήτου και χωρίς καν ενημέρωσή του, εξακολουθούσε, παρά τις διαβεβαιώσεις της Επιτροπής, να ισχύει μέχρι τη διάλυσή της, με αποτέλεσμα ως την ημέρα μεταβίβασης να έχουν υποθηκευθεί παρανόμως πολλά ακίνητα δανειοληπτών. Τα παρανόμως λοιπόν, υποθηκευμένα ακίνητα, με την εν λόγω διάταξη, μεταβιβάστηκαν στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς, η οποία προφανώς θα τα διεκδικήσει από τους δανειολήπτες.

Με δεδομένο λοιπόν ότι το προνόμιο της ΑΤΕ, που προέκυπτε από το άρθρο 12 του Νόμου 4332/1929, να εγγράφει υποθήκες χωρίς δικαστική απόφαση ή ειδικό πληρεξούσιο έγγραφο, χωρίς τη συναίνεση του κυρίου του ακινήτου και χωρίς καν ενημέρωσή του, δεν είχε καταργηθεί μέχρι την ημέρα πώλησής της, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Τι προτίθεται να πράξει για να προστατεύσει τα δικαιώματα των δανειοληπτών, που βάναυσα παραβιάζονται με τη διαδικασία που υιοθετήθηκε;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η καταχώρηση πράξεων υποθήκευσης δεν αποτελεί αντικείμενο ρύθμισης σε επίπεδο ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε τον Μάρτιο του 2011 πρόταση οδηγίας σχετικά με τις συμβάσεις πίστωσης για ακίνητα κατοικίας. Τον περασμένο Απρίλιο επιτεύχθηκε πολιτική συμφωνία στο πλαίσιο τριμερών διαπραγματεύσεων και χρειάζεται να εγκριθεί επισήμως από τους δυο συννομοθέτες.

Το σχέδιο οδηγίας επισημαίνει στην αιτιολογική παράγραφο ότι «όσον αφορά τη διάθεση και επικύρωση μιας σύμβασης πίστωσης, τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν να προβλέπουν ότι ο εκτιμητής ή η εκτιμήτρια εταιρεία και/ή οι συμβολαιογράφοι μπορούν να επιλέγονται με κοινή συμφωνία των μερών».

Η οδηγία, η οποία θα ισχύει μόνο για νέες συμβάσεις πίστωσης, αναμένεται να τεθεί σε ισχύ είκοσι ημέρες μετά τη δημοσίευσή της. Τα κράτη μέλη έχουν περιθώριο 24 μηνών για να μεταφέρουν τις διατάξεις της στο εθνικό τους δίκαιο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006584/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: ATE sell-off and borrowers' rights

Since my question E-001405/2013 on retention of the illegal privileges enjoyed by the Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE) was not understood, I would like to remind you that the Commission replied to an earlier question from an MEP (E-1451/2006) concerning ATE's illegal privileges and, in particular, the complaint from the firm Tipopiitiria Thivas A.E. (complaint No 2003/5273) that 'most of the privileges conceded by Law 4332/1929 have been abolished'.

Following the transfer of ATE to the Bank of Piraeus, the Greek Parliament recently passed law 4141/FEK 81 A/05.04.2013, Article 29 of which specifies how the mortgage loans of ATE are to be transferred to the Bank of Piraeus.

The measure in question makes it clear that ATE's privilege of registering mortgages without a court decision or special document conferring power of attorney, without the property owner's consent, and without the owner even being informed, continued in force, despite the Commission's assurances, up to its dissolution, with the result that many borrowers' properties were illegally mortgaged up to the date of its transfer. Properties mortgaged illegally as a result of this measure have therefore been transferred to the Bank of Piraeus, which will obviously claim them from the borrowers.

Given that ATE's privilege under Article 12 of Law 4332/1929 to register mortgages without a court decision or special document conferring power of attorney, without the consent of the property owner, and without the owner even being informed, had not been abolished up to the bank's sell-off date, will the Commission say:

— What action does it intend to take in order to protect borrowers' rights, which are being flagrantly violated by the procedure adopted?

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

The registration of mortgage deeds is not regulated at EU level. The Commission has adopted in March 2011 a proposal for a directive on Credit Agreements Relating to Residential Property. A political agreement has been reached in trilogue negotiations last April and it needs the formal adoption by the two co-legislators.

The draft directive stipulates in a recital that, 'in relation to the supply and formalisation of a credit agreement, Member States may provide that the appraiser or appraisal company and/or notaries may be chosen by mutual agreement of the parties'.

The directive, which will only apply to new credit agreements, is supposed to enter into force 20 days after its publication. Member States will have 24 months to transpose its provisions into national law.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006585/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πώληση υποκαταστημάτων κυπριακών τραπεζών στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς

Σοβαρές καταγγελίες για την πώληση στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς των παραρτημάτων των κυπριακών τραπεζών στην Ελλάδα, έγιναν κατά τη διάρκεια της συνεδρίασης της Επιτροπής Θεσμών της Κυπριακής Βουλής (συνεδρίαση 4 Ιουνίου 2013).

Πιο συγκεκριμένα, ο ίδιος ο διοικητής της Κεντρικής Τράπεζας της Κύπρου υποστήριξε ότι «οι τράπεζες "Κύπρου" και "Λαϊκή" ήταν φερέγγυες μέχρι τη στιγμή που πωλήθηκαν τα υποκαταστήματά τους στην Ελλάδα». Τόνισε μάλιστα ότι επρόκειτο για μία πολιτική απόφαση, το πλαίσιο της οποίας είχε τεθεί ήδη από το Νοέμβριο του 2012, σύμφωνα με την οποία οι καταθέτες της Κύπρου θα επιβαρύνονταν με τις ζημιές των υποκαταστημάτων της Ελλάδας, προκειμένου ο συστημικός κίνδυνος από πιθανή κατάρρευση των κυπριακών τραπεζών, να περιοριστεί μόνο στην Κύπρο. Υπάρχει μάλιστα, σύμφωνα με τον ίδιο, και σχετικό έγγραφο της τρόικα, με ημερομηνία 13.3.2013.

Στο ίδιο πνεύμα, ο πρόεδρος της Κοινοβουλευτικής Επιτροπής Θεσμών δήλωσε ότι από την πώληση των υποκαταστημάτων η Κύπρος υπέστη τεράστια οικονομική ζημιά, ενώ αντίστοιχα ήταν τα κέρδη για την Τράπεζα Πειραιώς. Την άποψη αυτή ενστερνίστηκε και ο Πρόεδρος της Επιτροπής Οικονομικών, σύμφωνα με τον οποίο, οι κύπριοι καταθέτες και μέτοχοι «έχασαν 3,4 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ, ποσό το οποίο κέρδισε η Τράπεζα Πειραιώς».

Κατόπιν των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Συμφωνεί με το διοικητή της Κεντρικής Τράπεζας Κύπρου ότι «οι τράπεζες "Κύπρου" και "Λαϊκή" ήταν φερέγγυες μέχρι τη στιγμή που πωλήθηκαν τα υποκαταστήματά τους στην Ελλάδα»; Τι ανέφερε το έγγραφο της τρόικα με ημερομηνία 13.3.2013;

— Πώς δικαιολογεί την πώληση των παραρτημάτων των κυπριακών τραπεζών στην Ελλάδα, η οποία είχε ως αποτέλεσμα η κυπριακή οικονομία να υποστεί ζημιά 3,4 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, ποσό που καταγράφηκε ως κέρδος για την Τράπεζα Πειραιώς;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η πώληση των ελληνικών επιχειρηματικών δραστηριοτήτων της Τράπεζας Κύπρου και της Λαϊκής Τράπεζας Κύπρου στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς εγκρίθηκε από τις εποπτικές αρχές του τραπεζικού τομέα της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου, προκειμένου να προστατευθεί η σταθερότητα τόσο του ελληνικού όσο και του κυπριακού τραπεζικού συστήματος.

Είναι καθήκον της σχετικής εποπτικής αρχής να εξασφαλίσει ότι η πράξη αυτή δεν θα επηρεάσει την κεφαλαιακή θέση της Τράπεζας Πειραιώς. Η πώληση των ελληνικών επιχειρηματικών δραστηριοτήτων πραγματοποιήθηκε σε τιμή η οποία περιλάμβανε πρόβλεψη για μελλοντικές αναμενόμενες ζημίες, σύμφωνα με τις εκτιμήσεις που έγιναν κατά τη διάρκεια του ανεξάρτητου ελέγχου ποιότητας των στοιχείων του ενεργητικού, που διενεργήθηκε από την Pimco.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006585/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Sale of Cypriot bank branches to Piraeus Bank

Serious complaints about the sale to the Bank of Piraeus of branches of Cypriot banks in Greece were voiced during a session of the Cypriot parliament's Committee on Institutions (session of 4 June 2013).

More specifically, the Governor of the Central Bank of Cyprus claimed that 'the Bank of Cyprus and Laiki Bank were solvent up to the moment when their branches in Greece were sold'. He even pointed out that this was a political decision, the framework of which was already in place in November 2012, under which losses of the branches in Greece would be shouldered by Cypriot savers, so that the systemic risk from a possible collapse of the Cypriot banks would be contained within Cyprus. According to the governor, there is a Troika document to this effect, dated 13 March 2013.

In the same spirit, the Chair of the Parliament's Committee on Institutions stated that Cyprus suffered a huge financial loss through the sale of the branches, with corresponding gains for the Bank of Piraeus. This view was also endorsed by the Chair of the Finance Committee, according to whom, Cypriot savers and shareholders 'lost EUR 3.4 billion, which the Bank of Piraeus gained'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Does it agree with the Governor of the Central Bank of Cyprus that 'the Bank of Cyprus and Laiki Bank were solvent up to the moment when their branches in Greece were sold'? What did the Troika document of 13 March 2013 say?

— How does it justify the sale of the Cypriot bank branches in Greece, which resulted in a EUR 3.4 billion loss for the Cypriot economy, and a corresponding gain for the Bank of Piraeus?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

The sale of the Greek operations of Bank of Cyprus and Cyprus Popular Bank to Piraeus Bank was approved by the Greek and Cypriot banking sector supervisors, in order to protect the stability of both the Greek and Cypriot banking system.

It is the task of relevant supervisor to make sure that this will not have an effect on the capital position of Piraeus. The sale of the Greek operations was carried out at a price that provisioned for the future expected losses as estimated by the independent asset quality review performed by Pimco.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006587/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Origem de pescado vendido na União Europeia

Segundo um acordo finalizado recentemente em Bruxelas, a origem do pescado vendido na UE vai passar a ser identificada com maior precisão a partir de 2014.

Pode a Comissão indicar as principais novidades alcançadas com este acordo?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(17 de julho de 2013)

O recente acordo político sobre a organização comum de mercado dos produtos da pesca e da aquicultura prevê novas regras em matéria de informação dos consumidores, que serão aplicáveis a partir de 13 de dezembro de 2014.

As regras de rotulagem incidem na denominação comercial da espécie e no seu nome científico, no método de produção, na zona em que o produto foi capturado ou cultivado, na categoria de arte utilizada na captura e no eventual descongelamento do produto e na sua data de durabilidade mínima.

Estas novas disposições devem aplicar-se tanto aos produtos pré-embalados como aos não pré-embalados. No caso destes últimos, as informações podem ser fornecidas por meio de informações comerciais, como painéis ou cartazes.

No que diz respeito à proveniência do pescado, as novas regras devem prever uma indicação mais precisa da zona em que o peixe foi capturado, do seguinte modo:

a) No caso dos produtos da pesca capturados no mar, o nome, por escrito, da subzona ou divisão constante da lista de zonas de pesca da FAO, bem como o nome dessa zona expresso de modo compreensível para o consumidor, ou um mapa ou pictograma que mostre essa zona. Em derrogação do que precede, para os produtos da pesca capturados em águas que não as do Atlântico do Nordeste (zona de pesca 27 da FAO) e do Mediterrâneo e mar Negro (zona de pesca 37 da FAO), a indicação do nome da zona de pesca da FAO é suficiente;

b) No caso dos produtos da pesca capturados em água doce, a menção da massa de água de origem no Estado-Membro ou país terceiro de proveniência do produto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006587/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Origin of fish sold in the EU

The origin of fish sold in the EU will be identified more accurately as of 2014, under an agreement recently concluded in Brussels.

Can the Commission indicate the main innovations of this agreement?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

The recent political agreement on the common market Organisation in Fishery and Aquaculture products provides for new rules on information to consumers.These rules should apply from 13 December 2014.

Labelling requirements cover the commercial designation of the species and its scientific name; the production method; the area where the product was caught or farmed; the category of gear used in capture fisheries; whether the product has been defrosted and the date of minimum durability.

These new provisions are supposed to apply to both prepacked and non-prepacked products. In the case of the latter, the information could be provided by way of commercial information such as bill boards or posters.

As regards provenance of the fish, the new rules are supposed to provide for a more precise indication of the area where the fish was caught as follows:

(a) in the case of fishery products caught at sea, the name in writing of the sub-area or division listed in the FAO Fishing Areas as well as the name of such zone expressed in terms understandable to the consumer, or a map or pictogram showing that zone. By way of derogation, for fishery products caught in waters other than the Northeast Atlantic (FAO Fishing Area 27) and the Mediterranean and Black Sea (FAO Fishing Area 37), the indication of the name of the FAO fishing area shall be sufficient;

(b) in the case of fishery products caught in freshwater, a reference to the body of water of origin in the Member State or third country of provenance of the product.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006588/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Bruxelas quer acabar com o «roaming»

A Comissão pretende acabar com os custos acrescidos pelo uso do telemóvel noutro Estado-Membro («roaming») no prazo de um ano, estando já a preparar legislação nesse sentido.

Quando prevê a Comissão que seja apresentado o pacote legislativo que inclui estas medidas?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(17 de julho de 2013)

O Conselho Europeu da primavera de 2013 sublinhou a importância do mercado único digital para o crescimento e incluiu nas suas conclusões a necessidade de a Comissão apresentar medidas concretas para que o Conselho Europeu de outubro estabeleça um mercado único das tecnologias da informação e das comunicações o mais rapidamente possível. Uma vez plenamente realizado o mercado único dos serviços de telecomunicações, nada justificará os custos acrescidos pelo uso do telemóvel em roaming. A Comissão tenciona apresentar as suas propostas no início de setembro de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006588/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Brussels wishes to scrap 'roaming'

The Commission wants to scrap added charges for using mobile phones in other Member States ('roaming') within a year, and is already preparing legislation in this regard.

When does the Commission expect the legislative package that includes these measures to be presented?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

The 2013 Spring European Council stressed the importance of the digital single market for growth and, in its conclusions, included the need for concrete measures to be presented by the Commission in time for the October European Council to establish a Single Market for Information and Communications Technology as early as possible. Once the Single Market in Telecoms is complete, there will be no justification for roaming surcharges. The Commission is aiming to present its proposals in early September 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006589/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Leite de vaca introduzido demasiado cedo na alimentação dos bebés

Cerca de 20 % das famílias portuguesas da zona norte de Portugal introduzem o leite de vaca demasiado cedo na alimentação das crianças, ou seja, antes dos 12 meses — revelou recentemente um estudo realizado em Portugal. Segundo o estudo efetuado, o leite de vaca tem uma composição nutricional inadequada para esta idade, com um baixo teor de ferro e um elevado teor proteico, e nunca deve ser utilizado, pelo menos, no primeiro ano de vida.

Dispõe a Comissão de dados que permitam confirmar o resultado do estudo acima referido?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(16 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia não tem conhecimento do estudo referido pelo Senhor Deputado. A Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos, na sequência de um mandato da Comissão, está presentemente a elaborar pareceres científicos sobre bebidas à base de leite e produtos semelhantes destinados a lactentes e a crianças pequenas. Neste contexto, até outubro de 2013, a Autoridade prestará igualmente aconselhamento sobre as necessidades nutritivas dos lactentes e das crianças pequenas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006589/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Cow's milk introduced too early into babies' diets

Around 20% of Portuguese families in northern Portugal introduce cow's milk too early into children's diets — before they are 12 months old — according to a study recently conducted in Portugal. The study found that the nutritional composition of cow's milk, which is low in iron and high in protein, is unsuitable for children of this age, and that it should not be used until children are at least one year old.

Does the Commission have any data to confirm the findings of this study?

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

The European Commission is not aware of the specific study mentioned by the Honourable Member. The European Food Safety Authority, following a mandate from the Commission, is currently preparing scientific opinions on milk-based drinks and similar products intended for infants and young children. In this context, the Authority will also provide advice by October 2013 on the nutritional requirements of infants and young children.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006590/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Registo de abusadores sexuais

A Convenção do Conselho da Europa para a Proteção das Crianças contra a Exploração Sexual e os Abusos Sexuais, mais conhecida como Convenção de Lanzarote, entrou em vigor em Portugal a 1 de dezembro de 2012. A Convenção de Lanzarote menciona de forma pormenorizada os factos e circunstâncias que as leis nacionais devem prever e punir, e preconiza também um conjunto de procedimentos a nível penal e processual que garantam prioridade à investigação deste tipo de crimes.

A vice-presidente do Instituto de Apoio à Criança defendeu recentemente que devem ser tomadas «medidas no sentido de vigiar os condenados por causa da elevada reincidência», e defendeu a criação de um registo que permita «uma maior vigilância» dos abusadores.

Pode a Comissão indicar que medidas estão inscritas na sua agenda para garantir que se dê prioridade à investigação deste tipo de crimes?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(19 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão remete a atenção do Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-011397/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006590/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Sex offenders' register

The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, better known as the Lanzarote Convention, entered into force in Portugal on 1 December 2012. The Lanzarote Convention details the facts and circumstances which national laws should make provision for and punish, and also recommends a set of legal and judicial procedures to ensure that priority is given to investigating such crimes.

The Vice-President of the Portuguese Child Support Agency recently called for measures to monitor those convicted due to high levels of reoffending, as well as for the creation of a register to enable greater surveillance of offenders.

What measures is the Commission planning to ensure that priority is given to investigating such crimes?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011397/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006591/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Má nutrição

Entre 2010 e 2012, mais de 870 milhões de pessoas passavam fome no mundo, e a Organização das Nações Unidas para a Alimentação e a Agricultura (FAO) estima que 2 mil milhões de pessoas sofram de deficiências nutricionais. Um estudo publicado pela FAO apresentou os custos da má nutrição, cujos cálculos têm por base os custos relativos à perda de produtividade e os gastos com a saúde causados por uma alimentação insuficiente. As contas feitas pela FAO indicam que a má nutrição custa ao mundo cerca de 382 euros por pessoa, o que equivale a 2,6 mil milhões de euros.

Pode a Comissão indicar de que forma a UE tem contribuído para o combate a este flagelo?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

Reconhecendo o elevado ónus económico e social que representa a subnutrição, a Comissão tem centrado progressivamente a sua ação em intervenções sensíveis e específicas no domínio da nutrição, assegurando, nomeadamente, que os programas nas áreas da segurança alimentar, da saúde, do abastecimento de água e do saneamento exercem impacto na nutrição. A Comissão tem reforçado as suas intervenções tanto no domínio do desenvolvimento como no domínio humanitário. São exemplos o Programa Temático de Segurança Alimentar (PTSA), em cujo contexto a nutrição constitui um dos principais elementos da programação indicativa plurianual para 2011-2013, a iniciativa «Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio», que financia projetos no domínio da segurança alimentar e da nutrição em países nos quais a concretização do ODM 1c regista um atraso crítico, o reforço das intervenções diretas no setor da saúde e a Facilidade Alimentar da UE, que, no período 2009-2011, beneficiou 59 milhões de pessoas em 49 países, com a execução de 232 projetos, 35 % dos quais incluíram uma componente de nutrição.

A Comissão promoveu também o diálogo político aos níveis nacional e internacional, tendo procurado garantir que a nutrição seja considerada uma prioridade nacional nos países com taxas de raquitismo elevadas. A Comissão desenvolve uma estreita cooperação com o movimento *Scaling-Up Nutrition* (SUN), os países parceiros e os doadores, com o objetivo de manter a nutrição no topo da agenda do desenvolvimento e das atividades humanitárias.

Recentemente, foi adotado um quadro de ação da UE sobre nutrição materna e infantil, que inclui objetivos ambiciosos destinados a contribuir para a redução do raquitismo e do desperdício. Durante o evento *Nutrition for Growth*, organizado em junho pelo Reino Unido, no âmbito da Presidência do G8, a UE comprometeu-se ainda a desembolsar, no próximo período de programação (2014-2020), 3,5 mil milhões de euros em intervenções sensíveis e específicas no domínio da nutrição.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006591/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Malnutrition

Between 2010 and 2012, more than 870 million people worldwide went hungry, and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimates that 2 billion people suffer from nutritional deficiencies. A study published by the FAO outlines the costs of malnutrition, the calculations of which are based on costs related to lost productivity and healthcare expenses caused by an inadequate diet. The FAO's calculations indicate that malnutrition costs the world around EUR 382 per person, which equates to EUR 2.6 billion.

Can the Commission say how the EU has helped to combat this scourge?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

Recognising the high economic and social burden of undernutrition, the Commission has increasingly focused on nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions, ensuring that notably food security, health, and water and sanitation programmes have an impact on nutrition. The Commission has been scaling-up its interventions both in the development and humanitarian spheres. This includes the Food Security Thematic Programme, with nutrition as one of the key features of the Multiannual Indicative programming for 2011-2013; the Millennium Development Goals Initiative financing projects targeting food security and nutrition in countries where MDG 1c is critically lagging behind, increased direct nutrition interventions in the health sector, and the EU Food Facility that benefited 59 million people in 49 countries in the period 2009-2011 with 232 projects, 35% of which included a nutrition component.

The Commission has also reinforced political dialogue at national and international level. It has tried to ensure that nutrition is considered a national priority in countries where stunting rates are high. The Commission is working closely with the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, partner countries and donors on keeping nutrition at the top of the development and humanitarian agenda.

An EU policy framework on maternal and child nutrition was adopted recently with ambitious objectives to contribute to the reduction in both stunting and wasting. The EU has furthermore committed itself, during the Nutrition for Growth event organised by the UK in June during their G8 Presidency, to spending EUR 3.5 billion on nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific interventions during the forthcoming programming period (2014-2020).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006593/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Grávidas — Suplemento de iodo

De acordo com os estudos mais recentes, as grávidas têm falta de iodo, o que pode ter implicações nas capacidades intelectuais das crianças. Os médicos portugueses vão passar a prescrever um suplemento de iodo, para ser administrado a todas as grávidas, sob a forma de prescrição médica, no contexto das consultas de vigilância pré-natal programadas. O diretor-geral da Saúde explica que «esta nova medida visa não só proteger a grávida, mas sobretudo fazer com que as crianças nascidas não possam ter os efeitos da deficiência do iodo».

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento dos referidos estudos?

2. Como os avalia a Comissão?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(16 de julho de 2013)

É da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros acompanhar a situação nutricional da população e decidir se pretende ou não aplicar medidas que deem resposta à ingestão insuficiente de nutrientes essenciais. Alguns Estados-Membros abordaram a carência de iodo na população com a fortificação alimentar com iodo voluntária ou obrigatória. A Comissão foi notificada de tais medidas de fortificação obrigatória de acordo com o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1925/2006 ([1]) relativo à adição de vitaminas, minerais e determinadas outras substâncias aos alimentos.

No que se refere aos níveis recomendados de consumo de iodo em diferentes grupos da população, a Comissão solicitou à Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos (AESA) que emitisse um parecer em matéria das doses de referência de micronutrientes nos regimes alimentares da população, o que inclui o iodo, no contexto de uma alimentação equilibrada que, quando inseridos num estilo de vida globalmente saudável, contribuem para uma boa saúde através de uma nutrição ideal. A AESA ainda não concluiu os seus trabalhos sobre o iodo, mas a publicação do seu parecer final está prevista para o primeiro semestre de 2014.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 1925/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 20 de dezembro de 2006, relativo à adição de vitaminas, minerais e determinadas outras substâncias aos alimentos (JO L 404 de 31.12.2006, p. 26).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006593/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Pregnant women — iodine supplement

According to the latest studies, pregnant women suffer from an iodine deficiency, which may have implications for children's intellectual capacity. Portuguese doctors will now prescribe iodine supplements to all pregnant women during scheduled prenatal check-ups. The Director-General of Health explained that this new measure aims not only to protect pregnant women but, above all, to ensure that the children born do not suffer the effects of iodine deficiency.

1. Is the Commission aware of these studies?

2. What is its assessment of them?

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

It is the responsibility of Member States to monitor the nutritional situation of the population, and to decide whether or not they wish to introduce measures to address insufficient intake of essential nutrients. Some Member States have addressed iodine deficiency in the population by voluntary or mandatory food fortification with iodine. The Commission is notified of; such mandatory fortification measures according to Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006 ([1]) on the addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances to foods.

With regard to the recommended levels of iodine intake in different population groups, the Commission has asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to advise on population reference intakes of micronutrients in the diet, which includes advice on iodine, in the context of a balanced diet which, when part of an overall healthy lifestyle, contribute to good health through optimal nutrition. EFSA has not yet completed its work on iodine but the publication of their final opinion is expected in the first half of 2014.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on the addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances to foods, OJ L 404, 31.12.2006, p. 26.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006594/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(7 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Schimbarea indirectă a destinației terenurilor agricole

Până în anul 2020, statele membre ale Uniunii Europene trebuie să înlocuiască 10% din energia utilizată în transporturi cu energie din surse regenerabile, cea mai mare parte fiind constituită din biocarburanți. Criteriile actuale nu conțin însă metode de calcul pentru emisiile masive de carbon provocate de extinderea suprafețelor agricole datorată cererii mari de biocarburanți.

Politicile UE au determinat o creștere a cererii pentru biocarburanți, care a provocat, la rândul ei, o cerere pentru terenuri agricole la nivel global. Pentru a face față acestei cereri de noi terenuri, ecosisteme fragile — care constituie și depozite de carbon — precum pădurile, turbăriile sau pășunile sunt convertite în terenuri agricole. Acest fenomen provoacă o pierdere a biodiversității și o creștere substanțială a emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră, determinate de distrugerea vegetației și de lucrările agricole.

Schimbarea destinației terenului, provocată de creșterea cererii de biocarburanți, în scopul atingerii țintelor fixate de UE, determină defrișarea pădurilor și distrugerea terenurilor mlăștinoase și a pășunilor. Abundența Medie a Speciilor (un mod de a măsura biodiversitatea) în zonele transformate în teren agricol va scădea cu aproape 85%.

Care este opinia Comisiei Europene cu privire la schimbările indirecte ale destinației terenurilor agricole și la implicațiile pe care le pot avea acestea la nivel european și mondial?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(26 iulie 2013)

Atât Directiva privind energia din surse regenerabile, cât și Directiva privind calitatea carburanților ([1]) invită Comisia să reexamineze impactul schimbării indirecte a utilizării terenurilor asupra emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră. O asemenea schimbare indirectă a utilizării terenurilor implică transformarea terenurilor cu stocuri mari de carbon, cum sunt pădurile. Aceasta poate duce la o creștere semnificativă a nivelului emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră și poate contrabalansa parțial sau total reducerile de emisii de gaze cu efect de seră obținute datorită folosirii diferiților biocombustibili.

Deși majoritatea materiilor prime pentru biocombustibili sunt produse în UE, se preconizează că emisiile estimate de gaze cu efect de seră cauzate de schimbarea indirectă a utilizării terenurilor se vor produce cu precădere în afara UE, unde este probabil ca producția suplimentară să fie realizată cu cele mai mici costuri.

Factorii care determină schimbarea indirectă a utilizării terenurilor sunt în principal cererea sporită de culturi agricole ca urmare a utilizării mai intense a biocombustibililor, alături de gestionarea incoerentă a utilizării terenurilor în zonele cu terenuri care au stocuri mari de carbon, precum și de absența unor reguli de contabilitate exhaustive și a unor obiective privind emisiile, referitoare la schimbarea utilizării terenurilor la nivel global.

În octombrie 2012, Comisia a propus modalități pentru reducerea la minimum a impactului schimbării indirecte a utilizării terenurilor asupra emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră, cu respectarea în același timp a investițiilor existente efectuate în sectorul producției de biocombustibili ([2]).

([1]) 2009/28/CE și 98/70/CE.
([2]) COM(2012)595 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006594/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Indirect change of land use for agricultural land

By 2020, EU Member States must replace 10% of the energy they use in transport with energy from renewable sources, mostly consisting of biofuels. However, the current criteria do not include methods for calculating the massive carbon emissions caused by the expansion of agricultural areas due to the high demand for biofuels.

EU policies have led to an increase in demand for biofuels, which in turn has led to a greater demand for agricultural land globally. To cope with this demand for new land, fragile ecosystems — that are also carbon deposits — such as forests, peat bogs or pasture lands, are converted into agricultural land. This phenomenon causes a loss of biodiversity and a substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions due to the destruction of vegetation and agricultural operations.

The change in land use, due to the increase in demand for biofuels to meet the targets set by the EU, leads to deforestation and the destruction of marshlands and pasture land. The Mean Species Abundance (a way to measure biodiversity) in areas transformed into agricultural land will fall by almost 85%.

What is the Commission's opinion on indirect changes of land use for agricultural land and the implications this can have at European and global level?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

Both the Renewable Energy and the Fuel Quality Directives ([1]) invite the Commission to review the impact of indirect land-use change on greenhouse gas emissions. Such indirect land-use change involves the conversion of high carbon stock land such as forests. It can lead to significant greenhouse gas emissions and could negate some or all of the greenhouse gas savings of individual biofuels.

While most biofuel feedstock is being produced in the EU, the estimated indirect land-use change emissions are mostly expected to take place outside the EU where the additional production is likely to be realised at the lowest cost.

The drivers behind indirect land-use change can be summarised as the increased demand for crops resulting from increased biofuel use coupled with poor land-use governance in areas with high carbon stock land and lack of complete accounting rules and emission targets for land-use change globally.

The Commission has proposed ways to minimise the impact of indirect land-use change on greenhouse gas emissions whilst respecting existing investments made in biofuels production in October 2012 ([2]).

([1]) 2009/28/EC and 98/70/EC.
([2]) COM(2012)595 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006595/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Previsões da Comissão sobre a variação do PIB para Portugal

A Comissão previu, há um mês, a contração do PIB de Portugal, em variação homóloga, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em 3,7 %. Hoje, 5 de junho de 2013, o boletim «Contas Nacionais Trimestrais», publicado pelo INE de Portugal, refere que o PIB teve uma contração homóloga de 4 %.

1. Pode a Comissão indicar o que tem contribuído para os constantes erros nas previsões por si anunciadas?

2. Não considera a Comissão que será de equacionar a alteração dos modelos econométricos que calculam as previsões, para não se continuarem a verificar estas discrepâncias?

3. Não considera a Comissão que os erros nas previsões podem levar os países a adotar medidas erradas no que respeita às respostas a dar à crise?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(6 de agosto de 2013)

A ligeira diferença entre o resultado efetivo e as previsões da Comissão para o crescimento do PIB em Portugal no primeiro trimestre de 2013 foi provocada por uma contração do investimento (o investimento no setor da construção, em especial, diminuiu 25 % numa base anual) bem como do consumo público, para além de uma grande contribuição negativa da variação de existências. Deve notar-se que este agregado é muito instável e frequentemente absorve os erros efetuados na estimativa das outras componentes. Ao mesmo tempo, outros elementos, como o crescimento do investimento em equipamento ou o crescimento das exportações, registaram uma evolução mais favorável do que o previsto.

A Comissão avalia regularmente o seu desempenho a nível de previsões. A avaliação mais recente, efetuada no ano passado, concluiu que as previsões da Comissão são razoavelmente exatas ([1]). O historial da Comissão é considerado bom, tanto medido por indicadores estatísticos como em comparação com outras instituições internacionais e as previsões consensuais. Estes resultados verificam-se igualmente nas previsões relativas a Portugal — em especial, não se deteta aí a existência de erros sistemáticos. A Comissão continuará a avaliar regularmente o seu desempenho a nível de previsões.

Importa igualmente salientar que a incerteza aumenta em tempos de mudanças estruturais, o que pode provocar temporariamente erros de previsão maiores do que em tempos «normais». Por conseguinte, é essencial basear as decisões políticas em testes de robustez, uma prática comum no aconselhamento político prestado pela Comissão.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/economic_paper/2012/pdf/ecp476_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006595/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: The Commission's forecasts of the change in Portugal's GDP

One month ago, the Commission forecast that Portugal's year-on-year GDP would contract by 3.7% in the first quarter of 2013. On 5 June 2013, the bulletin 'Quarterly National Accounts', which is published by Portugal's National Statistical Institute, stated that the country's GDP had suffered a year-on-year contraction of 4%.

1. Can the Commission state what factors lie behind the constant errors in its forecasts?

2. Should it not consider changing the econometric models used to calculate its forecasts so that these discrepancies do not continue?

3. Does it accept that mistakes in its forecasts could result in countries adopting erroneous measures in response to the crisis?

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

The slight difference between the actual outcome and the Commission's forecast for GDP growth in Portugal in the first quarter of 2013 was driven by a larger-than-expected contraction of investment (construction investment, in particular, fell by 25% year-on-year) and public consumption, on top of a very large negative contribution of changes in inventories. It is to be noted that the latter aggregate is very volatile and often absorbs the errors which are made in estimating other components. At the same time, other items such as equipment investment growth or exports growth performed better than forecast.

The Commission is regularly assessing their forecasting performance. The most recent assessment carried out last year reports that the Commission's forecasts are reasonably accurate ([1]). 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 — in particular, there is no evidence for systematic forecast errors in the Portuguese forecasts. The Commission will continue monitorig its forecasting perfomance.

It should also be emphasised that in times of structural change uncertainty increases, which may temporarily lead to larger forecast errors than in 'normal' times. It is therefore paramount to base policy decisions on robustness tests, which is a common practice underlying the Commission's policy advice.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/economic_paper/2012/pdf/ecp476_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006596/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Proposta franco-alemã contra o desemprego

Pela primeira vez, França e Alemanha vão apresentar uma posição comum na cimeira europeia de 27 e 28 de junho focada no crescimento, na competitividade e na luta contra o desemprego, particularmente dos jovens.

François Hollande já tinha dado recentemente as linhas gerais da iniciativa franco-alemã contra o desemprego, que visa liberar créditos para a criação de empresas e propor cursos profissionalizantes aos jovens, e deve ser oficializada na cimeira europeia.

Qual a posição da Comissão relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A contribuição da Comissão Europeia para a cimeira do Conselho Europeu de 27-28 de junho de 2013 encontra-se resumida na sua Comunicação «Apelo à ação contra o desemprego dos jovens» ([1]). A Comissão apelou para a tomada de medidas urgentes em matéria de desemprego dos jovens, incluindo a implementação da iniciativa «Garantia para a Juventude»; o recurso ao Fundo Social Europeu; a aplicação acelerada da «Iniciativa para o Emprego dos Jovens»; um apoio à mobilidade da mão de obra intra-UE com a EURES; o apoio às PME; e medidas para facilitar a transição do ensino para o trabalho, através de aprendizagens e estágios. O Conselho Europeu assumiu compromissos importantes a este respeito.

A Comissão Europeia congratula-se com as iniciativas adotadas pelos Estados-Membros destinadas a explorar canais adicionais, que permitam reforçar o apoio ao emprego dos jovens e a implementação da «Garantia para a Juventude». O «New Deal» anunciado por Alemanha e França coincide com uma série de medidas também propostas pela Comissão Europeia. Por exemplo, a Comissão está a trabalhar com o Banco Europeu de Investimento e o Banco Central Europeu, no intuito de desenvolver novos mecanismos para atenuar as restrições financeiras que dificultam atualmente o crescimento das PME e a criação de emprego e estágios de aprendizagem.

([1]) COM(2013) 447 final, de 19 de junho de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006596/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Franco-German proposal to fight unemployment

At the EU summit on 27-28 June, which will focus on growth, competition and the fight against unemployment, particularly among the young, France and Germany intend to present a common front for the first time.

The Franco-German initiative against unemployment, which was recently outlined by François Hollande and must be formalised at the EU summit, aims to release credit in order to create companies and offer vocational courses to young people.

What is the Commission's view of this matter?

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

The European Commission's input to the European Council summit on 27-28 June 2013 is summarised in its communication 'Call to Action on Youth Unemployment' ([1]). It calls for urgent action on youth unemployment including the implementation of the Youth Guarantee; the use of the European Social Fund; the front-loading of the Youth Employment Initiative; support to intra-EU labour mobility through EURES; support for SMEs; and measures to ease the transition from education to work through apprenticeships and traineeships. The European Council took strong commitments in this respect.

The European Commission welcomes initiatives by Member States to explore additional channels to enhance the support to youth employment and the youth guarantee implementation. The 'New Deal' announced by Germany and France coincides with a number of measures also proposed by the European Commission. For example, the Commission is working with the European Investment Bank and the European Central Bank to develop new mechanisms to alleviate the financial constraints currently hindering SME growth and job and apprenticeship creation.

([1]) COM(2013) 447 final of 19 June 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006598/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Desaparecimento de um terço das abelhas dos EUA no último inverno

Recentemente, num inquérito realizado pelo Departamento de Agricultura dos EUA (USDA), foi revelado que no inverno 2012/2013 desapareceu um terço das colónias de abelhas dos EUA. Desde a campanha 2006/2007, desapareceu uma média anual de 30,7 % das colónias. Estes dados foram conhecidos uns dias depois de o USDA e a Agência de Proteção do Meio Ambiente (EPA) terem publicado um relatório sobre a saúde das abelhas. O referido relatório, que foi encomendado em outubro de 2012 à Universidade da Pensilvânia, recolhe todos os fatores que podem influir na saúde das abelhas.

Considerando que:

A varroa é o principal fator relacionado com a perda de colónias nos EUA e noutros países;

Uma inadequada nutrição das colmeias as torna mais sensíveis a enfermidades;

É preciso aumentar a diversidade genética entre as abelhas para melhorar a termorregulação, a resistência a enfermidades e a produtividade;

Há que melhorar as práticas de gestão das colmeias e da sanidade das mesmas e aumentar a investigação sobre a exposição das abelhas aos pesticidas;

São vários os estudos sobre a ação das abelhas no meio ambiente que evidenciam a extraordinária contribuição das mesmas para a preservação da vida vegetal e também da variabilidade genética;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento da situação descrita? Sabendo da importância destes insetos na maioria dos ecossistemas mundiais, como um dos principais polinizadores, de que forma poderia a UE conjugar esforços com os EUA de forma criar um plano conjunto de proteção das abelhas?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(18 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do relatório e da situação de mortalidade das abelhas nos Estados Unidos.

A UE e os Estados Unidos da América cooperam neste domínio a vários níveis. Por exemplo, a cooperação entre cientistas da UE e dos EUA resultou num amplo alinhamento de pareceres científicos e revelou lacunas, sendo necessário prosseguir com a investigação. O programa recentemente concluído Coloss ([1]) (um projeto COST ([2]) cofinanciado pela Comissão), constitui outro exemplo desta cooperação. Conseguiu criar uma rede mundial e gerar uma massa crítica de cientistas e pareceres científicos relevantes. A cooperação em matéria de saúde das abelhas também ocorre nas instâncias internacionais ([3]).

Note-se, contudo, que existem diferenças significativas entre a situação dos EUA e a europeia, em especial no que se refere às necessidades de polinização e à forma como as abelhas e os seus respetivos ambientes são geridos. Por último, é importante ter em mente que a polinização é um serviço essencial do ecossistema, que depende tanto de populações de polinizadores domésticos como de selvagens ([4]).

([1]) http://www.coloss.org/
([2]) http://www.cost.eu/
([3]) Ex.: A Organização de Cooperação e de Desenvolvimento Económicos (OCDE).
([4]) http://www.step-project.net/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006598/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Disappearance of a third of bees in the United States last winter

An inquiry carried out recently by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) revealed that a third of bee colonies in the United States disappeared in the winter of 2012/13. Since the 2006/07 campaign, an average of 30.7% of colonies have disappeared each year. These figures came to light a few days after the USDA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a report on the health of bees. This report, which the University of Pennsylvania was asked to produce in October 2012, examines all of the factors that might influence the health of bees.

Varroa is the main factor associated with the loss of colonies in the United States and in other countries;

Inadequate nourishment makes beehives more vulnerable to disease;

The genetic diversity of bees must be increased in order to improve thermoregulation, resistance to disease and productivity;

The management and health of beehives must be improved and more research must be carried out into the exposure of bees to pesticides;

Several studies on the influence of bees on the environment demonstrate the extraordinary contribution that they make to plant life and genetic diversity.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? Given the importance of these insects as one of the main pollinators of the world's ecosystems, how can the EU and the United States work together to create a joint plan to protect bees?

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

The Commission is aware of the report and the situation of honeybee mortality in the United States.

The EU and the United States cooperate in this field on several levels. For example, the cooperation between EU and US scientists has resulted in a broad alignment of scientific views and has shown gaps where further research is needed. The recently completed COLOSS ([1]) programme (a COST ([2]) project co-financed by the Commission) is another example of such cooperation. It succeeded in creating a worldwide network and generating a critical mass of scientists and relevant scientific opinion. Cooperation on bee health also takes place in international fora ([3]).

It should be noted, however, that there are significant differences between the US and the European situation, particularly concerning pollination needs and how bees and their environments are managed. Finally it is important to keep in mind that pollination is an essential ecosystem service that depends on both domesticated and wild pollinator populations ([4]).

([1]) http://www.coloss.org/
([2]) http://www.cost.eu/
([3]) E.g. the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
([4]) http://www.step-project.net/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006599/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego na Alemanha

Segundo dados recentes da agência Bloomberg, a maior economia da zona euro continua a ser penalizada pela crise da dívida soberana na região e o desemprego cresceu pelo quarto mês consecutivo.

Em maio, o desemprego na Alemanha subiu mais de quatro vezes do que era estimado pelos economistas consultados pela agência Bloomberg.

O desemprego avançou pelo quarto mês consecutivo na maior economia da zona euro e superou as previsões do consenso dos economistas. Os especialistas ouvidos pela Bloomberg antecipavam um crescimento de cinco mil pessoas.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como avalia o crescimento aparentemente inesperado do desemprego na Alemanha?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(18 de julho de 2013)

A Agência de Emprego Federal (Bundesagentur für Arbeit — BA) apresenta relatórios mensais sobre a situação do mercado de trabalho na Alemanha.

O último comunicado de imprensa a que a Bloomberg se refere é de 29 de maio de 2013 ([1]). Este comunicado de imprensa resume o relatório mensal global de maio de 2013, que apresenta uma visão pormenorizada não só da evolução do mercado do trabalho, mas também dos instrumentos de segurança social para os desempregados, do mercado da formação profissional e da utilização das medidas ativas do mercado de trabalho ([2]) . Em resumo, o desemprego registado com ajuste sazonal aumentou 21 000 em maio de 2013, devido à muito modesta recuperação da primavera que pode ter sido atrasada pelo longo período de temperaturas baixas. No entanto, as condições fundamentais do mercado de trabalho continuam a ser sólidas, com elevados níveis de emprego e com a segunda taxa de desemprego mais baixa da União Europeia.

De acordo com as previsões da primavera da Comissão de 2013, a taxa de desemprego da Alemanha deverá diminuir para 5,3 % em 2014 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/nn_426140/EN/zentraler-Content/Presse/Presse-13-030-EN-786166.html
([2]) http://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Navigation/Statistik/Arbeitsmarktberichte/Monatsbericht-Arbeits-Ausbildungsmarkt-Deutschland/Monatsbericht-Arbeits-Ausbildungsmarkt-Deutschland-Nav.html
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_germany_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006599/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Unemployment in Germany

According to figures released recently by the Bloomberg agency, the largest economy in the euro area is still being hit by the sovereign debt crisis in the region and unemployment has risen for the fourth consecutive month.

In May, unemployment in Germany rose by over four times more than had been forecast by economists consulted by Bloomberg.

Unemployment rose for the fourth consecutive month in the largest economy in the euro area, surpassing the rise of five thousand people that experts had predicted.

What is the Commission's view of the apparently unexpected rise in unemployment in Germany?

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

The Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit — BA) reports on a monthly basis on the labour market situation in Germany.

The latest press release Bloomberg is referring to is dated 29 May 2013 ([1]). This press release summarises the comprehensive May 2013 monthly report which gives a detailed overview not only on the labour market developments but also on social security for unemployed, the vocational training market and the use of active labour market instruments ([2]): In summary, seasonally adjusted registered unemployment increased by 21 000 in May 2013 due to the very moderate spring revival which might have been delayed by the long period of cold weather. However, the fundamental conditions of the labour market remain sound with high employment levels and the second lowest unemployment rate in the European Union.

According to the Commission's 2013 spring forecast, Germany's unemployment rate is expected to decrease further to 5.3% in 2014 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/nn_426140/EN/zentraler-Content/Presse/Presse-13-030-EN-786166.html
([2]) http://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Navigation/Statistik/Arbeitsmarktberichte/Monatsbericht-Arbeits-Ausbildungsmarkt-Deutschland/Monatsbericht-Arbeits-Ausbildungsmarkt-Deutschland-Nav.html
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_germany_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006600/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Vacina antimalária

A malária é uma doença transmitida por mosquitos e, segundo a Organização Mundial da Saúde (OMS), mata anualmente cerca de 650 000 pessoas, na maioria crianças africanas menores de cinco anos.

Uma equipa de cientistas japoneses da Universidade de Osaka afirma ter criado uma vacina que reduz em mais de dois terços o risco de desenvolvimento da malária em seres humanos.

A BK-SE36 é uma vacina de pó seco feita a partir de uma proteína geneticamente modificada encontrada no interior do parasita e tem um efeito «maior do que os até agora conhecidos de outras vacinas antimalária».

A vacina já foi testada em adultos no Japão e numa zona do norte do Uganda onde a malária é endémica, entre 2010 e 2011, não tendo sido constatados problemas de segurança.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento da referida vacina?

Está em condições de confirmar os resultados alcançados?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos dados recentes recolhidos sobre o candidato a uma potencial vacina desenvolvido pelos cientistas japoneses na universidade de Osaka ([1]). Estudos pré-clínicos demonstraram segurança, potente imunogenicidade e eficácia em primatas não humanos ([2]).

Com base nos dados obtidos até agora, a vacina candidata obteve resultados encorajadores. No entanto, só foi submetida à fase I de ensaios clínicos em seres humanos. As próximas fases devem mostrar os resultados relativos à segurança e à imunogenicidade e fornecer conclusões fiáveis sobre a sua eficácia.

([1]) Yeoh S. et al. Cell. 2007: 131(6), 1072-83.
([2]) Tougan T. et al., HUM Vaccin Immunother. 2013: 4; 9 (2).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006600/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Anti-malaria vaccine

Malaria is a mosquito-borne disease which, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), kills around 650 000 people every year, mostly African children under the age of five.

A team of Japanese scientists at Osaka University claims to have created a vaccine that cuts the risk of malaria developing in humans by more than two thirds.

BK-SE36 is a dry-powder vaccine made from a genetically modified protein found inside the parasite and has an effect that is 'greater than those hitherto reported of any other anti-malaria vaccines'.

The vaccine has already been tested on adults in Japan and in a malaria-endemic area in northern Uganda between 2010 and 2011. Neither study found any safety problems.

Is the Commission aware of this vaccine?

Can it confirm the validity of the results achieved?

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

The Commission is aware of the recent findings on the potential vaccine candidate developed by Japanese scientists at the Osaka University ([1]). Pre-clinical studies have demonstrated safety, potent immunogenicity and efficacy in nonhuman primates ([2]).

On the basis of the results obtained so far the candidate vaccine has obtained encouraging results. However it has only undergone phase I of clinical trials in humans. The next phases should show the results related to safety and immunogenicity and provide reliable findings on its efficacy.

([1]) Yeoh S et al. Cell. 2007 Dec 14; 131(6):1072-83.
([2]) Tougan T et al., Hum Vaccin Immunother. 2013:4; 9(2).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-006602/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(7. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Verfügbarkeit von Mitteln aus dem Europäischen Solidaritätsfonds

Gemäß den am 6.6.2013 bekannt gewordenen Aussagen von Kommissionsmitglied Janusz Lewandowski sieht sich die Europäische Kommission derzeit nicht im Stande, verzögerungsfrei Mittel aus dem Europäischen Solidaritätsfonds für die von der Hochwasserkatastrophe betroffenen Staaten in Mitteleuropa zur Verfügung zu stellen. Dies steht in gravierendem Widerspruch zur Ankündigung von Kommissionsmitglied Hahn vom 3.6.2013, dass den Betroffenen Staaten Mittel aus dem Solidaritätsfonds zugänglich gemacht werden sollen.

1. Wie ist es möglich, dass Kommissionsmitglied Hahn am 3.6.2013 Mittel aus dem Solidaritätsfonds für die von der Flutkatastrophe betroffenen Staaten in Aussicht stellt und das für den Haushalt zuständige Mitglied der Kommission, Janusz Lewandowski, die Verfügbarkeit dieser Mittel am 6.6.2013 bestreitet?

2. Welche Anstrengungen unternimmt Präsident der Kommission, José Barroso, um dieses Kommunikationsdesaster zu klären und die Menschen in den betroffenen Flutgebieten nicht weiter zu versunsichern, sondern ihnen Hilfe zuteilwerden zu lassen?

3. Welche der beiden gegensätzlichen Aussagen der Kommissionsmitglieder Hahn und Lewandowski ist zutreffend?

4. Ist es zutreffend, dass derzeit keine Mittel im EU-Solidaritätsfonds zur Verfügung stehen?

5. Warum stehen rechtswirksam in einem Haushalt beschlossene und zweckgebundene Mittel nicht zur Verfügung? Wurden diese Mittel zweckfremd verwendet, und wenn ja, wofür?

6. Welche Konsequenzen zieht die Kommission, insbesondere Präsident Barroso, aus dem offenkundig mangelhaften Haushaltsvollzug?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(14. August 2013)

Die Kommission möchte klarstellen, dass angesichts der Tatsache, dass es sich beim Solidaritätsfonds um ein Instrument außerhalb des mehrjährigen Finanzrahmens der EU handelt, die Mittel gemäß der Interinstitutionellen Vereinbarung über die Haushaltsdisziplin und die wirtschaftliche Haushaltsführung für den Finanzrahmen 2007-2013 von Fall zu Fall aus zusätzlichen über den EU-Haushalt hinausgehenden Beiträgen der Mitgliedstaaten bereitgestellt werden müssen. In den vergangenen Jahren hat eine Reihe von Mitgliedstaaten allerdings immer wieder gefordert, dass keine neuen Gelder für Zahlungen des Solidaritätsfonds bereitgestellt werden sollten, sondern die Kommission Mittel aus nicht ausgeschöpften Haushaltslinien übertragen soll. Die Kommission ist dieser Forderung — wann immer möglich — nachgekommen, insbesondere wenn kleinere Beträge beantragt wurden.

Kommissionsmitglied Lewandowski wies vor kurzem darauf hin, dass es aufgrund der extrem angespannten Haushaltslage 2013 praktisch unmöglich ist, diese Möglichkeit zu nutzen. Insofern kommt für eine Bereitstellung von Mitteln aus dem Solidaritätsfonds für die von der Hochwasserkatastrophe betroffenen Länder nur die in der Interinstitutionellen Vereinbarung vorgesehene Möglichkeit in Betracht, d. h. die Bereitstellung zusätzlicher Beiträge durch die Mitgliedstaaten.

2013 ist bislang lediglich ein kleiner Teil des jährlichen Höchstbetrags von 1 Mrd. EUR im Rahmen des Solidaritätsfonds in Anspruch genommen worden (15 Mio. EUR), so dass durchaus auf den Fonds zurückgegriffen werden kann.

Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen einen Antrag auf Unterstützung durch den Solidaritätsfonds einreichen; ohne vorherige Bewertung und Billigung eines Antrags kann die Kommission keinen Vorschlag für die Bereitstellung von Mitteln aus dem Fonds unterbreiten. Unterstützung kann gewährt werden, wenn die neuen (noch zu stellenden) Anträge in Zusammenhang mit der Hochwasserkatastrophe in Mitteleuropa die Kriterien für die Inanspruchnahme des Fonds erfüllen und wenn das Parlament und der Rat die entsprechenden Haushaltsmittel durch einen Berichtigungshaushaltsplan genehmigen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006602/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Availability of appropriations from the European Solidarity Fund

According to statements by Member of the Commission Janusz Lewandowski which became known on 6 June 2013, the Commission does not currently consider itself to be able to make funding from the European Solidarity Fund available without delay for the States in Central Europe which have been stricken by the flood disaster. This flagrantly contradicts the announcement by Commissioner Hahn on 3 June 2013 to the effect that the States concerned should be given access to money from the Solidarity Fund.

1. How is it possible that on 3 June 2013 Commissioner Hahn promised money from the Solidarity Fund for the States affected by the flood disaster and on 6 June 2013 the Budget Commissioner, Janusz Lewandowski, denied that this funding was available?

2. What efforts is the President of the Commission, José Barroso, making to clarify this communication disaster, to avoid creating further uncertainty for people in the flooded areas and instead to help them?

3. Which of the two contradictory statements by Commissioners Hahn and Lewandowski is correct?

4. Is it true that at present no appropriations are available in the EU Solidarity Fund?

5. Why are appropriations unavailable which have been entered in the budget legally and assigned for a specific purpose? Have these appropriations been used for a purpose for which they were not intended and if so, what?

6. What action will the Commission, and particularly Mr Barroso, take in response to this clearly inadequate implementation of the budget?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2013)

The Commission wishes to clarify that, as the Solidarity Fund (SF) is an instrument outside the EU's Multi-annual Financial Framework, appropriations must be raised on a case by case basis from additional Member State contributions over and above the EU budget, in line with the Inter-Institutional Agreement on Budgetary Discipline and Sound Financial Management (IAA) for the 2007-2013 financial framework. In recent years, contrary to this, a number of Member States have regularly demanded that no fresh money be raised for SF payments but that the Commission transfers funds from under-spending budget lines. The Commission has done this when possible, particularly if the required amounts were small.

In his recent statement, Commissioner Lewandowski made clear that the extremely tight situation of the 2013 budget makes it practically impossible to use this option. As such, the only option to make SF money available for the countries affected by the floods would be the one laid down in the IIA i.e. additional contributions from the Member States.

In 2013, only a small part of the annual maximum amount of 1 billion has so far been mobilised under the SF (EUR 15 million) so that the SF could also be mobilised

Member States must apply for SF support — the Commission cannot propose its mobilisation without assessing and approving an application. Support can be given provided that the new applications relating to the Central Europe flooding (yet to be submitted) are found to meet the criteria to mobilise the Fund and that the Parliament and the Council approve the corresponding budgetary means through an amending budget.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-006603/13
alla Commissione
Susy De Martini (ECR)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Contratti online e tutela dei consumatori

Durante l'ultima riunione del gruppo di lavoro UNICITRAL, Composizione delle liti causate da contratti online, tenutasi a New York dal 20 al 24 maggio 2013, la Commissione avrebbe sostenuto l'«approccio a doppio binario»: una doppia disciplina di applicazione (i) per i contratti online che coinvolgono consumatori europei per i quali non è consentito l'arbitrato precontenzioso e (ii) per i contratti online in cui non sono coinvolti consumatori europei, per i quali è previsto l'arbitrato precontenzioso.

La Commissione sembra aver scelto questa posizione per convincere i consumatori europei (i) ad acquistare prodotti da produttori e commercianti con sede nell'UE e (ii) per proteggere i consumatori, garantendo loro il pieno accesso ai tribunali nazionali nell'UE. Si dice che la posizione della Commissione sia stata vigorosamente contestata e respinta, in primo luogo da parte delle delegazioni di Stati Uniti, Cina, Israele, Singapore, Colombia e Giappone. Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Qual è la logica dell'«approccio a doppio binario» della Commissione, per i contratti online?

2. Qual è la base giuridica della Commissione per escludere l'inserimento di una clausola compromissoria di arbitrato precontenzioso nei contratti online? Detta impostazione è compatibile con i principi fondamentali sanciti dagli articoli 3, paragrafo 2, e 3, paragrafo 3, del trattato sull'Unione europea e dall'articolo 14 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea? e perché?

3. Come può la Commissione garantire che l'esclusione di una tale clausola non limiti la scelta dei consumatori e non ostacoli il completamento del mercato unico digitale?

4. Quali misure ha preso o intende prendere la Commissione, per evitare effetti collaterali derivanti da questo approccio che possano minacciare la competitività delle aziende europee di trading online in quanto parte del mercato digitale globale?

5. Quali impegni intende includere la Commissione negli accordi commerciali per l'ambiente digitale, in modo da garantire una concorrenza leale tra i fornitori di contratti online e i loro concorrenti non UE?

Risposta di Neven Mimica a nome della Commissione
(12 luglio 2013)

Conformemente al mandato conferitole dal Consiglio, la Commissione ha sostenuto il cosiddetto «approccio a doppio binario», secondo il quale 1) il processo di risoluzione delle controversie online (ODR) prospettato dalle deliberazioni del gruppo di lavoro dell'UNCITRAL sulla risoluzione delle controversie online non comprende solo una procedura che termina con l'arbitrato («binario dell'arbitrato»), ma anche una procedura che non termina con l'arbitrato («binario del non-arbitrato») e 2) il testo relativo al binario dell'arbitrato tiene conto del fatto che, a livello mondiale, in una serie di ordinamenti giuridici le convenzioni arbitrali precontenzioso in materia di consumo non sono vincolanti per i consumatori oppure possono essere impugnate da questi ultimi.

Tale approccio è stato ampiamente sostenuto dal gruppo di lavoro dell'UNCITRAL (eccetto un numero limitato di delegazioni che vi si sono opposte). Il presidente del gruppo di lavoro ha pertanto concluso che le prossime deliberazioni si baseranno su tale approccio. L'approccio a doppio binario è interamente conforme al trattato sull'Unione europea e al trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea. Esso rispetta la legislazione dell'Unione relativa al mercato interno, in particolare la legislazione recentemente adottata dall'Unione sulla risoluzione alternativa delle controversie, (ADR) ([1]) e sull'ODR ([2]), volta ad incrementare la fiducia dei consumatori e delle imprese nel mercato unico, soprattutto nel mercato unico digitale. L'approccio a doppio binario contribuisce a garantire che il processo ODR previsto dall'UNCITRAL soddisfi le aspettative delle imprese e dei consumatori europei. Tale approccio contribuisce inoltre ad ampliare le possibilità di scelta dei consumatori e a potenziare la competitività delle imprese europee nel mercato unico digitale e nel mercato digitale mondiale, senza avere alcun impatto sugli accordi commerciali.

([1]) Directive 2013/11/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on alternative dispute resolution for consumer disputes and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 and Directive 2009/22/EC (Directive on consumer ADR), OJ L 165, 18.6.2013, p.63.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 524/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on online dispute resolution for consumer disputes and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 and Directive 2009/22/EC (Regulation on consumer ODR), OJ L 165, 18.6.2013, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006603/13
to the Commission
Susy De Martini (ECR)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Online contracts and consumer protection

At the last meeting of the UNICITRAL Online Dispute Resolution working group, held in New York from 20 to 24 May 2013, the Commission allegedly supported the 'double-track approach': a double discipline applying (i) to online contracts involving European consumers for which pre-dispute arbitration is not allowed, and (ii) to online contracts not involving European consumers for which pre-dispute arbitration is provided for.

The Commission seems to have adopted this position in order to persuade European consumers (i) to buy products from producers and traders domiciled in the EU and (ii) to protect consumers by guaranteeing them full access to national courts in the EU. The Commission's position is also said to have been vigorously contested and rejected, primarily by the delegations of the United States, China, Israel, Singapore, Colombia and Japan. In light of the above, could the Commission clarify the following points:

1. What is the rationale of the Commission's 'double-track approach' to online contracts?

2. What is the Commission's legal base for precluding the inclusion of a pre-dispute arbitration clause in online contracts? Is this approach compatible with the fundamental principles enshrined in Articles 3(2) and 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union, and Article 14 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and why?

3. How can the Commission ensure that exclusion of such a clause will neither restrict consumer choice nor hamper the completion of the digital single market?

4. What measures has the Commission taken, or does it intend to take, to prevent any side-effects stemming from this approach from threatening the competitiveness of European companies trading online as part of the global digital market?

5. What commitments does the Commission intend to include in trade agreements on the digital environment so as to ensure fair competition between European online contract providers and their non-EU competitors?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

In line with the mandate conferred upon the Commission by the Council, the Commission has defended a so-called 'two-track approach', whereby (1) the standard ODR process envisaged in the deliberations of UNCITRAL's Working Group on Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) would not only provide for a procedure ending in arbitration ('arbitration track'), but also for a procedure not ending in arbitration ('non-arbitration track') and (2) the text relating to the arbitration track would respect that in a number of jurisdictions worldwide, pre-dispute consumer arbitration agreements are not binding on consumers or can be cancelled by them.

That approach attracted broad support in the UNCITRAL Working Group (with only a limited number of delegations opposing it). The President of the Working Group therefore concluded that the future deliberations will be based on that approach. The two-track approach is fully in line with the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It fully respects the Union's internal market legislation, in particular the recently adopted Union legislation on alternative dispute resolution (ADR) ([1]) and ODR ([2]) that aims to boost consumer and business confidence in the single market and, in particular, the digital single market. The two-track approach contributes to ensuring that the ODR process envisaged by UNCITRAL meets the expectations of European consumers and businesses. It thus helps to increase consumer choice and the competitiveness of European businesses in the digital single market and in the global digital market and it does not have any impact on trade agreements.

([1]) Directive 2013/11/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on alternative dispute resolution for consumer disputes and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 and Directive 2009/22/EC (Directive on consumer ADR), OJ L 165, 18.6.2013, p. 63.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 524/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on online dispute resolution for consumer disputes and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 and Directive 2009/22/EC (Regulation on consumer ODR), OJ L 165, 18.6.2013, p. 1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-006604/13
à la Commission
Françoise Castex (S&D)
(7 juin 2013)

Objet: Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Amendment Act et données personnelles des citoyens de l'Union européenne

Selon le quotidien britannique *The Guardian*, dans son édition du vendredi 7 juin 2013, l'Agence nationale de sécurité américaine (NSA) et le FBI auraient accès aux serveurs de neuf géants américains de l'Internet, dont Microsoft, Yahoo!, Google et Facebook, pour y surveiller les activités d'étrangers.

1. La Commission confirme-t-elle l'existence de telles pratiques? En était-elle informée?

2. Quelle démarche la Commission envisage-t-elle d'adopter face à la toute-puissance du Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Amendment Act (FISAA), afin de protéger la vie privée des ressortissants de l'Union européenne, en particulier sur le «cloud»?

3. Dans l'Union européenne, quels organismes disposent de dérogations similaires à la législation européenne sur la protection des données personnelles?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(6 septembre 2013)

Les récentes révélations sur les activités de surveillance et de collecte de données, exercées par les États-Unis au titre de programmes comme PRISM, ainsi que les lois permettant de mener de tels programmes constituent un motif de préoccupation pour la Commission. La Commission a demandé des éclaircissements aux États-Unis à propos de ces rapports, notamment concernant les incidences sur les droits fondamentaux des Européens. À ce sujet, la Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se référer à sa réponse à la question écrite E-007934/2013.

Par le passé, nous avons déjà abordé avec nos homologues américains la question des lois permettant d'accéder directement à des données en provenance de l'UE et détenues par des sociétés, et cela reste un sujet de discussion, surtout dans le cadre des négociations relatives à un accord-cadre sur la protection des données pour le secteur du maintien de l'ordre.

La proposition de réforme du cadre européen de la protection des données revêt également une importance particulière:

— elle établit que les sociétés non européennes, lorsqu'elles proposent des biens et services aux consommateurs européens, devront respecter scrupuleusement la législation de l'UE en matière de protection des données;

— elle prévoit des sanctions appropriées, proportionnées et dissuasives pour faire en sorte que la législation de l'UE soit respectée;

— elle précise les obligations des responsables du traitement de données et des sous-traitants, y compris lorsque des données provenant d'Européens sont transférées hors de l'UE;

— elle instaurera des règles claires et exhaustives pour le traitement des données à caractère personnel aux fins de l'application du droit pénal.

De plus, la Commission soutient les activités de recherche sur les méthodes avancées de chiffrement qui peuvent être employées pour protéger l'envoi, le stockage et le traitement des données à caractère personnel dans le nuage informatique. Les logiciels *open source* contribuent aussi à accroître la sécurité du nuage car ils offrent plus de transparence quant aux vulnérabilités. Il est important d'agir en ce sens pour être en mesure de relever les défis de la sécurité électronique.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006604/13
to the Commission
Françoise Castex (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Amendment Act and EU citizens' personal data

The British daily newspaper, *The Guardian*, reported on Friday, 7 June 2013 that the American National Security Agency (NSA) and the FBI had allegedly accessed the servers of nine US Internet giants, including Microsoft, Yahoo!, Google and Facebook, to monitor foreign Internet traffic.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether such practices are going on? Was it aware of the situation?

2. Faced as it is with the all-powerful Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Amendment Act (FISAA), what steps does it intend to take to protect the privacy of EU citizens, in particular, cloud-stored personal data?

3. In the European Union, which bodies have been granted similar derogations from EU legislation on the protection of personal data?

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

The Commission is concerned by recent revelations on the US surveillance and data gathering operations under programmes such as PRISM and the laws on the basis of which such programmes are authorised. The Commission has requested clarifications from the US regarding these reports, in particular on the impact on Europeans' fundamental rights. On these aspects, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007934/2013.

The issue of laws providing for direct access to data originated from the EU held by companies was raised with the US counterparts in the past, and continues to be raised, most notably within the framework of the negotiations for a data protection 'umbrella' agreement for the law enforcement sector.

The proposed reform of the EU data protection framework is also of particular relevance:

— Non-European companies, when offering goods and services to European consumers, will have to apply EU data protection law in full;

— It provides for effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions to make sure EC law is respected;

— It clarifies the obligations of data controllers and processors, including when data of Europeans is transferred outside the EU;

— It will establish clear and comprehensive rules for the processing of personal data for the purposes of criminal law enforcement.

Furthermore, the Commission supports research on advanced encryption that can be used to protect the sending, storing and processing of personal data in the cloud. Open source software is also part of a more secure cloud, as it provides for more transparency on vulnerabilities. The development of such measures is important to develop capacities to meet the challenges of electronic security.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006606/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Nuovi sequestri di giocattoli cinesi non a norma

Dall'inizio del 2013 in Italia sono stati sequestrati migliaia di giocattoli di provenienza cinese che non sono a norma. Il 7 maggio scorso sono stati individuati a Padova 3 500 tra giocattoli, palloni e parrucche che non rispettavano le norme di legge sui prodotti importati. Tutti i pezzi non riportavano i dati relativi al fabbricante, all'importatore e all'età minima dell'utilizzatore, oltre a non essere provvisti di avvertenze in lingua italiana. Un altro sequestro è avvenuto il 5 giugno scorso a Cagliari. In un deposito, che serviva da punto di rifornimento per molti negozianti cinesi della Sardegna, sono stati trovati 30 000 giocattoli, per un valore complessivo di 160 000 euro, contenenti dispositivi elettrici privi del marchio CE o con marchio contraffatto, senza indicazioni in lingua italiana sulle precauzioni d'uso e sui dati relativi all'importatore.

La Commissione:

— è a conoscenza di questi ultimi fatti?

— in base al regolamento (CE) n. 765/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 9 luglio 2008, con particolare riferimento all'articolo 24 sulla cooperazione tra gli Stati membri e la Commissione, ritiene opportuno adottare eventuali misure per supportare le autorità di vigilanza nazionali nell'esercizio delle attività di controllo?

— considerando l'articolo 41 del suddetto regolamento, che conferisce agli Stati membri libertà circa le sanzioni applicabili agli operatori economici in caso di infrazione, non valuterebbe l'ipotesi di introdurre un sistema sanzionatorio uniforme a livello UE?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(23 luglio 2013)

La Commissione non ha ancora ricevuto alcuna informazione dalle autorità italiane in merito ai sequestri cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento.

La recente proposta di regolamento sulla vigilanza del mercato dei prodotti ([1]) mira a sostenere le autorità di sorveglianza del mercato ed a potenziare le loro attività di ispezione, andando oltre i principi di cooperazione di cui all'articolo 24 del regolamento n. 765/2008. La Commissione ha inoltre adottato un piano d'azione pluriennale per il controllo dei prodotti nell'UE ([2]) che contempla venti azioni atte a rendere i prodotti più sicuri e conformi; tra queste ultime figura anche il finanziamento di attività di vigilanza del mercato svolte congiuntamente dalle autorità in diversi Stati membri.

La proposta di regolamento sulla vigilanza del mercato dei prodotti impone altresì agli Stati membri di stabilire norme relative alle sanzioni applicabili nel caso in cui gli operatori economici violino la legislazione vigente in materia. Le sanzioni devono essere effettive, proporzionate e dissuasive e possono essere inasprite se l'operatore economico interessato ha già commesso una violazione analoga. Se adottata, tale proposta permetterà agli Stati membri di applicare sanzioni più adeguate ai rispettivi contesti giuridici senza dover ricorrere ad un sistema uniforme.

([1]) COM(2013)75 definitivo. (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0075:FIN:IT:PDF).
([2]) COM(2013)76 definitivo. (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0076:FIN:IT:PDF).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006606/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Further seizures of sub-standard Chinese toys

Since the start of 2013, thousands of toys from China which do not meet the relevant standards have been seized in Italy. On 7 May 2013 in Padua, 3 500 toys, balls and wigs were found not to comply with legislation on imported goods. None of the products indicated information about the manufacturer, importer or the minimum user age, or provided warnings in Italian. More goods were seized on 5 June 2013 in Cagliari: 30 000 toys, worth EUR 160 000 in total, were found in a warehouse where many Chinese shopkeepers in Sardinia would come to pick up new stock. The toys contained electric devices without the CE mark or bearing a counterfeit mark, with no operating instructions or information on the importer in Italian.

— Is the Commission aware of these latest events?

— In accordance with Regulation No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008, with particular reference to Article 24 on cooperation between the Member States and the Commission, does the latter believe it appropriate to adopt measures to support the national surveillance authorities in the performance of their inspection activities?

— Taking into consideration Article 41 of the above Regulation which grants freedom to the Member States with regard to the penalties applicable to economic operators in the event of an infringement, will the Commission evaluate the possibility of introducing a uniform system of penalties at EU level?

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

The Commission has no information as yet from the Italian authorities about the seizures the Honourable Member is referring to.

The recently proposed Regulation on the Market Surveillance of Products ([1]) is clearly meant to support market surveillance authorities and strengthen their inspection activities, beyond the principles of cooperation given in Article 24 of Regulation No 765/2008. Furthermore, the Commission adopted a Multiannual Action Plan for the Surveillance of Products in the EU ([2]), which sets out 20 actions for safer and compliant products, including the funding of market surveillance actions carried out jointly by authorities in several Member States.

The proposal for a regulation on the Market Surveillance of Products also obliges Member States to lay down rules on penalties for economic operators who infringe product legislation. The penalties must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive and may be increased if an economic operator has previously committed a similar infringement. The proposal, if adopted, will allow Member States to impose penalties that are best tailored to their national legal environment, without the need to fall back on a uniform system.

([1]) COM(2013) 75 final: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0075:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) COM(2013) 76 final: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0076:FIN:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006608/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Antiparassitari: nuove strategie per la lotta contro i parassiti, quali i benefici da chimica e natura

Quando le piante sono infestate da parassiti, lo strumento di difesa più efficace è certamente il ricorso ad antiparassitari chimici. Tuttavia, la loro indubbia utilità per mantenere la fertilità del suolo e tenere sotto controllo i parassiti comporta anche una dispersione nell'ambiente circostante e, spesso, porta ad allontanare gli insetti «buoni» utili all'ecosistema. Ad oggi sono state compiute diverse ricerche per trovare nella natura gli alleati giusti, sfruttando appieno la flora e la fauna, e rispettando la biodiversità del suolo. Recenti studi hanno dimostrato che facendo uso di antiparassitari naturali si possono prevenire proprio questa serie di svantaggi legati all'utilizzo di pesticidi e antiparassitari chimici. Alcuni esempi di antiparassitari naturali sono: la birra contro la presenza delle lumache, l'aglio contro acari, afidi, ruggine e muffa grigia, grazie alla presenza di zolfo e alle proprietà antibatteriche. La stessa solanina, un alcaloide di cui sono ricche tutte le solanacee (patate, pomodoro, tabacco, melanzane, peperoni) rappresenta una forma di difesa delle piante dagli attacchi dei parassiti animali (dorifora) e vegetali (fusarium). Da questi esempi è nata l'idea di utilizzare preparati vegetali per la difesa delle piante, un impiego oggi riscoperto dall'agricoltura biologica.

Si tenga presente che in agricoltura biologica spesso si evita l'uso di insetticidi e fungicidi artificiali per il controllo di parassiti; l'UE ha sviluppato un quadro normativo completo sui prodotti fitosanitari al fine di prevenire e limitare qualsiasi contaminazione dei prodotti alimentari e preservare l'ambiente dal loro uso in agricoltura; nel 2006 è stata lanciata la Strategia tematica per l'uso sostenibile dei pesticidi (COM(2006)0372) unitamente ad una direttiva (COM(2006)0373), al fine di predisporre una direttiva quadro per l'azione comunitaria volta a conseguire un uso sostenibile dei pesticidi; con la direttiva 2009/128/CE è stato rivisto l'approccio dell'UE in materia di prodotti fitosanitari in modo da ridurre i rischi ambientali e sanitari, pur mantenendo la produttività delle colture.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quale posizione assume rispetto ai risultati di ricerche sistematiche che aprono la strada a nuove metodologie nella ricerca dei pesticidi?

2. Intende effettuare uno studio per valutare il livello di efficacia degli antiparassitari naturali?

3. Intende promuovere l'uso di buone pratiche mettendo a disposizione fondi per la ricerca applicata e la formazione, per le coltivazioni naturali o a basso uso di pesticidi?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(23 luglio 2013)

1. Attraverso i programmi quadro di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (PQ) sono stati finanziati una serie di progetti di ricerca volti all'individuazione di prodotti alternativi ai pesticidi chimici. La valutazione dell'efficacia degli antiparassitari naturali viene spesso effettuata in occasione dei vari esperimenti previsti dai progetti. Una recente pubblicazione dell'UE ([1]) relativa alla ricerca sull'agricoltura biologica e a basso impiego di fattori di produzione presenta cinquanta progetti beneficiari di un contributo CE complessivo di 150 milioni di EUR. Tra altri progetti, PURE ([2]) è volto a fornire soluzioni per la gestione integrata delle specie nocive (IPM) e gli strumenti per la loro attuazione nei sistemi di produzione agricola dell'UE. CO-FREE ([3]) mira ad individuare alternative ai pesticidi a base di composti di rame. Altri due progetti IPM ([4]) sono stati inoltre selezionati nell'ambito dell'ultimo invito a presentare proposte del 7° PQ ([5]).

([1]) «A decade of EU-funded, low-input and organic agricultural research (2000-2012)»: http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/a-decade-of-eu-funded-low-input-and-organic-agriculture-research-2000-2012--pbKI3012840/;pgid=y8dIS7GUWMdSR0EAlMEUUsWb0000JiyU1Ckg

([2]) Progetto PURE — Pesticide Use-and-risk Reduction in European farming systems with integrated pest management: http://www.pure-ipm.eu/project

([3]) Progetto CO-FREE — Innovative strategies for copper-free low input and organic farming systems: www.co-free.eu

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/ShowDoc/Extensions+Repository/General+Documentation/All+work+programmes/2013/Cooperation/b-wp-201301_en.pdf — pagina 17 e pagina 29.

([5]) Settimo programma quadro di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013).

2. Tutte le sostanze e i prodotti devono dare prova della loro efficacia quando immessi sul mercato come prodotti fitosanitari. Nel regolamento UE relativo all'immissione sul mercato dei prodotti fitosanitari ([6]) non vi è una definizione di «pesticidi naturali». Come indicato sopra, sono stati condotti numerosi studi su prodotti alternativi ai pesticidi chimici.

3. Inoltre, la direttiva 2009/128/CE ([7]) sull'uso sostenibile dei pesticidi include disposizioni in materia di formazione professionale. In particolare, gli Stati membri dovranno garantire che tutti i professionisti del settore abbiano accesso ad una formazione adeguata — relativa in particolare alle strategie IPM, all'agricoltura biologica e ai metodi di controllo biologico dei parassiti ([8]) — impartita da organismi designati. Inoltre, l'attuale e futura politica di sviluppo rurale dell'UE offre sostegno alla formazione e servizi di consulenza che potrebbero essere applicati ai metodi di gestione delle specie nocive. Lo sviluppo di nuove pratiche o tecnologie agricole e la verifica della loro utilità in diversi contesti potrebbero anche essere condotti all'interno (o all'esterno) del partenariato europeo per l'innovazione sull'agricoltura (EIP-A) ([9]).

([6]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009 relativo all'immissione sul mercato dei prodotti fitosanitari. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0001:0050:IT:PDF

([7]) Direttiva 2009/128/CE relativa all'utilizzo sostenibile dei pesticidi: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:it:PDF

([8]) Le materie specifiche oggetto di formazione sono elencate nell'allegato I della direttiva 2009/128/CE.

([9]) Partenariato europeo per l'innovazione «Produttività e sostenibilità dell'agricoltura»: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eip/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006608/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Pesticides: new strategies for pest control, what benefits from chemistry and nature

When plants are infested with parasites, the most effective means of defence is, without doubt, the use of chemical pesticides. However, their undoubted usefulness in maintaining soil fertility and controlling pests is offset by dispersion in the surroundings, thus often ending up by repelling 'good' insects which are useful to the ecosystem. To date, several studies have been carried out to find the right allies in nature, taking full advantage of the flora and fauna, and respecting soil biodiversity. Recent studies have shown that using natural pesticides can prevent this series of drawbacks associated with the use of chemical pesticides. Examples of natural pesticides include beer against snails, garlic against mites and aphids, and rust and grey mould, due to its sulphur content and its antibacterial properties. Even solanine, an alkaloid found in great quantities in the Solanaceae (potato, tomato, tobacco, aubergine, bell peppers) is a form of plant defence against attacks by both animal (Colorado potato beetle) and plant pests (fusarium). These examples led to the idea of using herbal preparations for plant protection, a use that has today been rediscovered by organic farmers.

Please note that organic farming often avoids the use of artificial insecticides and fungicides for pest control. The EU has developed a comprehensive regulatory framework for plant protection products in order to prevent and minimise any contamination of food products and to protect the environment by limiting their use in agriculture. In 2006, the Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (COM(2006) 0372) was launched, together with a directive (COM(2006) 0373), aiming to establish a framework directive for Community action to achieve sustainable use of pesticides. Directive 2009/128/EC revised the EU's approach to plant protection products in order to reduce the environmental and health risks, while maintaining crop productivity.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What position does it take regarding the results of systematic research projects that open up the possibility of new methods of pesticide research?

2. Will it carry out a study to assess the level of effectiveness of natural pesticides?

3. Will it promote the use of best practices by providing funds for applied research and training, for natural or low-pesticide crops?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2013)

1. A number of research projects have been funded through the framework Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP) on finding alternatives to chemical pesticides. Assessing the effectiveness of natural pesticides is often part of projects' experiments. A recent EU publication ([1]) on 'low-input and organic agricultural research' features 50 projects with a total EC contribution of EUR 150 million. Among other projects, PURE ([2]) will provide integrated pest management (IPM) solutions and a toolbox for their implementation in EU farming systems. CO-FREE ([3]) seeks alternatives to copper pesticides. Two further IPM projects ([4]) were also selected under the last FP7 ([5]) call.

2. All substances and products have to prove their efficacy when put on the market as plant protection products. In the EU Regulation on placing of plant protection products on the market ([6]), there is no definition of 'natural pesticides'. As indicated above, numerous studies have been carried out on alternatives to chemical pesticides.

([1]) 'A decade of EU-funded, low-input and organic agricultural research (2000-2012)': http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/a-decade-of-eu-funded-low-input-and-organic-agriculture-research-2000-2012--pbKI3012840/;pgid=y8dlS7GUWMdSR0EAlMEUUsWb0000JiyU1Ckg
([2]) PURE Project — Pesticide Use-and-risk Reduction in European farming systems with integrated pest management: http://www.pure-ipm.eu/project
([3]) CO-FREE Project — Innovative strategies for copper-free low input and organic farming systems: www.co-free.eu
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/ShowDoc/Extensions+Repository/General+Documentation/All+work+programmes/2013/Cooperation/b-wp-201301_en.pdf — page 17 and page 29
([5]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([6]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 on placing of plant protection products on the market: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0001:0050:EN:PDF

3. Moreover, Directive 2009/128/EC ([7]) on the sustainable use of pesticides includes provisions on training. In particular, Member States will have to ensure that all related professionals have access to appropriate training — including IPM strategies, organic farming and biological pest control methods ([8]) — by designated bodies. In addition, the current and future EU's rural development policy offers support for training and advisory services that could relate to methods of pest management. Developing new farming practices or technologies and testing their utility in different contexts could also be carried out within (or outside) the European Innovation Partnership on Agriculture (EIP-A) ([9]).

([7]) Directive 2009/128/EC on sustainable use of pesticides: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:en:PDF

([8]) Specific subjects of training are listed in Annex 1 of Directive 2009/128/EC.

([9]) European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability': http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eip/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006609/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Sicurezza alimentare nei paesi in via di sviluppo: nuove prospettive per le linee fondamentali dell'intervento dell'UE

Aiutare i paesi in via di sviluppo (PVS) ad affrontare i problemi della sicurezza alimentare e dimezzare, entro il 2015, il numero delle persone che soffrono la fame sono solo alcuni degli obiettivi che l'UE si è prefissata firmando il Patto internazionale delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti economici, sociali e culturali, il cui articolo 11 sancisce in particolare il diritto all'alimentazione. Tuttavia, il quadro internazionale mostra ancora una situazione preoccupante: in molti paesi in via di sviluppo, infatti, la recessione economica globale, l'aumento e la volatilità del prezzo dei prodotti alimentari, le agitazioni politiche interne (ad esempio in Mali, Siria, etc.) e situazioni climatiche estreme (si pensi alla Corea del Nord, che dopo un periodo di siccità nel maggio-giugno 2012 è stata poi interessata da inondazioni nei due mesi successivi), hanno aggravato la crisi alimentare mondiale. L'UE ha utilizzato per la prima volta lo strumento alimentare per arginare le ripercussioni della crisi dei prezzi alimentari 2007-2008, apportando per il valore di 1 miliardo di euro benefici diretti a oltre 59 milioni di persone in 49 paesi in via di sviluppo.

In un contesto in cui, negli ultimi 5 anni, la serie di crisi economiche, finanziare e alimentari ha provocato un rallentamento, se non addirittura causato una battuta di arresto delle politiche globali volte a ridurre la fame e la povertà mentre l'attuale volatilità dei prezzi e gli shock climatici hanno contribuito a minare alla base il raggiungimento di tali obiettivi, la promozione della resilienza e dell'adattamento dei mezzi di sussistenza e il raggiungimento della sicurezza alimentare devono rientrare nelle linee programmatiche dell'UE.

Alla luce della comunicazione COM(2010)0127 definitivo, completata dalla strategia sull'aiuto alimentare umanitario, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— quali nuove azioni intende realizzare nel quadro della programmazione geografica 2014/2020 per gli aiuti in materia di agricoltura e sicurezza alimentare nei PVS?

— Quali ulteriori strategie intende adottare per l'aiuto d'urgenza, la ricostruzione e lo sviluppo e la riduzione del rischio di catastrofi?

— Come intende massimizzare l'efficacia degli investimenti rafforzando le iniziative di cooperazione regionale sulla nutrizione?

— Intende individuare le regioni e i paesi tra i quali ripartire gli strumenti alimentari in base ai vantaggi comparati, nonché coordinare le azioni sotto la guida di un donatore principale?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(23 luglio 2013)

La sicurezza alimentare e il potenziamento della resilienza sono due delle priorità della Commissione europea in materia di sviluppo e assistenza umanitaria. Una serie di programmi geografici garantiranno una maggiore coerenza con i fondi tematici integrando interventi a favore della sicurezza alimentare nella programmazione nazionale e regionale 2014-2020. Dai dati preliminari risulta che diversi paesi sono orientati a concentrarsi su questo settore nella prossima fase di programmazione. Ciò comporterà un approccio strutturale e di lunga durata incentrato sulla sostenibilità nel suo senso più ampio, con un forte dialogo tra tutte le parti interessate.

La Commissione ha approvato nel 2012 ([1]) e nel 2013 ([2]) due comunicazioni sulla resilienza e sulla nutrizione. L'obiettivo di tali comunicazioni era spostare l'attenzione dagli effetti immediati della crisi alle sue cause. Si è così voluto che tutte le parti interessate comprendessero l'importanza di affrontare l'iponutrizione attraverso un approccio multisettoriale, unendo risposte di tipo umanitario a misure di cooperazione allo sviluppo. Migliorare gli investimenti per ridurre il rischio di catastrofi fa parte della strategia delineata. Inoltre, nel Corno d'Africa e nel Sahel, la Commissione europea ha sovvenzionato iniziative specifiche sotto forma di iniziative prioritarie per la resilienza con lo scopo di rafforzare la collaborazione tra tutte le parti coinvolte nel processo umanitario e di sviluppo.

([1]) COM(2012)586.
([2]) COM(2013)141.

Queste iniziative hanno spianato la strada all'elaborazione di tabelle di marcia regionali incentrate sul potenziamento della resilienza contro crisi e disagi, in particolare crisi alimentari.

Le tabelle di marcia regionali sono il risultato di un'approfondita discussione incentrata sulle priorità da affrontare che ha visto la partecipazione di tutti i partner. Attualmente alcuni operatori nazionali le stanno adattando alle realtà dei rispettivi paesi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006609/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Food security in developing countries: new prospects for EU intervention guidelines

Helping developing countries to tackle food security problems and to halve the number of people suffering from hunger by 2015 are just some of the objectives that the EU set itself when it signed the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 11 of which establishes in particular the right to food. The international situation, however, still gives cause for concern: in many developing countries, the global economic recession, increased volatility in food prices, internal political unrest (in Mali and Syria for example) and extreme weather conditions (such as in North Korea, which suffered a drought between May and June 2012 followed by floods for the next two months), have intensified the global food crisis. The EU used the food facility for the first time to mitigate the repercussions of the food price crisis of 2007-2008, earmarking EUR 1 billion in direct aid for over 59 million people in 49 developing countries.

In a situation where the succession of economic, financial and food crises in the last five years has led to a slowdown, if not a total halt, in global policies to reduce hunger and poverty, while the current price volatility and freak weather conditions have helped undermine achievement of those objectives, fostering resilience, adapting the means of subsistence and achieving food security must be part of EU policy.

In view of Communication COM(2010) 0127 final, together with the humanitarian food assistance strategy:

— What new action will the Commission take as part of its geographical programming for 2014-2020 in terms of assistance for agriculture and food security in developing countries?

— What other strategies will it adopt for emergency aid, reconstruction and development, and disaster risk reduction?

— How does it plan to maximise the effectiveness of investments by reinforcing regional cooperation initiatives on nutrition?

— Does it plan to identify the regions and countries among which food facilities will be divided based on comparative advantage, as well as to coordinate actions under the guidance of a lead donor?

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

Food and nutrition security, resilience building are clear priorities for the European Commission for both development and humanitarian assistance. Geographical programmes will improve coherence with thematic funds by integrating food and nutrition security interventions in country and regional programming 2014-2020. Preliminary data indicates that several countries are oriented to focus on this sector for the next programming phase. This will entail to having a long term and structural approach focusing on sustainability in its broader sense, with strong dialogue between all stakeholders.

The Commission approved in 2012 ([1]) and 2013 ([2]) Communications on resilience and on nutrition. The scopes of those Communications were to move the focus from addressing the immediate effects of crises to responding to their underlying causes. Thereby, the main aim is to increase attention of all stakeholders to the importance of addressing undernutrition through a multi-sectoral approach, linking humanitarian and development responses. Improving investments in disaster risk reduction is part of the strategy outlined. Moreover, in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, specific initiatives have been supported by the European Commission as resilience flagship initiatives to strengthen cooperation between all parties involved in the humanitarian and development process. These initiatives paved the way for the elaboration of regional roadmaps focusing on building resilience to shocks and stresses, in particular food and nutrition crises. The regional roadmaps are the result of a thorough discussion focusing on priorities to be addressed involving all partners. The regional roadmaps are now being translated at country level by national stakeholders.

([1]) COM(2012) 586.
([2]) COM(2013) 141.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006610/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Politica della pesca tra UE e Paesi terzi

Nonostante le fonti comunitarie e la numerosa normativa peraltro di recente modificata, che forniscono il quadro giuridico europeo per il mercato della pesca, nonché il richiamo agli accordi internazionali intercorsi con i Paesi in via di sviluppo, assistiamo ad una perdita di competitività del mercato ittico a danno dei Paesi terzi, a causa del fatto che spesso i loro sistemi di pesca sono obsoleti. Un altro fattore decisivo per la crisi del mercato ittico internazionale è costituito dall'abuso della pesca e dal mancato rispetto dell'ecosistema marino; tali situazioni generano un esaurimento di alcune specie marine, creando, nelle popolazioni locali, un cambiamento drastico della loro alimentazione (basata sulle proteine e sulle sostanze nutritive del pesce) e aggravando peraltro le loro condizioni di salute e nutrizione già precarie.

Considerato che vi è stata di recente l'approvazione della riforma sulla pesca; che, nonostante gli accordi internazionali, i Paesi terzi hanno subito una perdita di competitività sul mercato; che lo sfruttamento delle risorse ittiche nei Paesi terzi rappresenta spesso un ostacolo al loro sviluppo economico e sociale; che vi sono stati recenti episodi di crisi diplomatiche che hanno interessato i mari dell'Asia orientale e sudorientale, causate dai pescatori che, consapevoli delle loro azioni, si avventurano in acque internazionali in cerca di pesce, visto che nelle loro acque le riserve stanno finendo,

si chiede alla Commissione:

— quali azioni e strategie intende promuovere al fine di garantire il rispetto degli accordi tra PVS e UE?

— Come intende sviluppare più efficienti sistemi di cooperazione e controllo del mercato ittico verso i Paesi terzi per evitarne lo sfruttamento?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(15 luglio 2013)

L'UE ha concluso accordi di partenariato nel settore della pesca (APP) con una serie di paesi terzi al fine di garantire alle sue navi il diritto di pesca nelle ZEE di altri Stati in cambio di contributi finanziari e di sostegno alle loro politiche nazionali nel settore della pesca e allo sviluppo del mercato ittico locale. Questi accordi comportano degli obblighi per entrambe le parti, obblighi che vengono monitorati regolarmente durante gli incontri di una commissione mista.

Come stabilito dalla comunicazione della Commissione sulla dimensione esterna della PCP ([1]), il rafforzamento della governance nel settore della pesca è uno degli obiettivi fondamentali dell'azione esterna dell'UE. La Commissione sta pertanto lavorando a diversi livelli per integrare politiche corrette e osservanza delle misure di gestione e controllo, e per assicurare lo sfruttamento sostenibile delle risorse ittiche. In particolare, lavora soprattutto nel quadro delle ORGP ([2]), per garantire che i paesi in via di sviluppo facciano proprio il lavoro svolto nell'ambito di tali organismi e attuino le rispettive misure di gestione e di controllo. Altrettanto importante è che il sostegno settoriale nell'ambito degli APP sostenibili dell'UE sia concepito in maniera tale da generare miglioramenti concreti nel modo in cui i paesi partner gestiscono e controllano la loro attività di pesca. Inoltre, la cooperazione con paesi terzi nell'ambito dell'attuazione del regolamento INN dell'UE ha portato a notevoli miglioramenti in molti di essi. Infine, la Commissione sta stabilendo contatti con le principali nazioni pescherecce con lo scopo di aumentare la trasparenza dei loro accordi bilaterali e può anche adottare misure commerciali nei confronti di paesi terzi, qualora essi non gestiscano le risorse condivise in modo sostenibile.

([1]) COM(2011)424.
([2]) Organizzazioni regionali per la pesca.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006610/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Fisheries policy between the EU and third countries

Despite the EU sources and numerous regulations, which have recently even been amended, and which provide the legal framework for the EU market in fisheries products, as well as the reference to international agreements with countries in the developing world, we are witnessing a loss of competitiveness of the fisheries market to the detriment of third countries, due to the fact that their fisheries systems are often obsolete. Another decisive factor in the crisis facing the international fish market is fisheries abuse and lack of respect for the marine ecosystem. Such situations deplete numbers of several marine species, leading to drastic changes in the feeding habits of local populations (originally based on fish-based protein and nutrients), as well as aggravating already precarious conditions of health and nutrition.

Given that there has been recent approval of fisheries reforms; that, despite international agreements, third countries have been suffering a loss of competitiveness on the market; that the exploitation of fisheries resources in third countries is often an obstacle to their economic and social development; that there have been recent incidents of diplomatic crises affecting the seas of East and South-East Asia, caused by fishermen who, fully aware of their own actions, venture into international waters in search of fish, given that stocks are running out in their home waters;

Will the Commission say:

— What actions and strategies it intends to promote in order to ensure that the agreements between developing countries and the EU are respected?

— how it intends to develop more efficient fisheries cooperation and control systems vis-à-vis third countries, so as to prevent them from being exploited?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The EU has concluded Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs) with a number of third countries to give EU vessels the right to fish in other countries' EEZs in return for financial contributions and to support the third countries' national fisheries governance and local fisheries development. These agreements imply obligations for both parties which are being regularly monitored in Joint Committee meetings.

As laid down in the Commission Communication on the external dimension of the CFP ([1]), strengthening of fisheries governance is one of the key objectives of the EU's external action. Accordingly, the Commission is working at different levels to mainstream good governance and compliance with management and control measures and to ensure the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources. It does so notably in the framework of RFMOs ([2]) making sure that developing countries take ownership of the work undertaken in these bodies and implement the respective management and control measures. Equally important is that sectorial support under the EU's Sustainable FPAs is designed in a way that leads to concrete improvements in the way partner countries manage and control their fisheries. Moreover, cooperation with third countries in the framework of the implementation of the EU IUU Regulation has led to substantial improvements in many of them. Finally, the Commission is reaching out to important fishing nations to increase transparency on their bilateral agreements, and can also apply trade measures to third countries if shared resources are not managed by them in a sustainable way.

([1]) COM(2011) 424.
([2]) Regional Fisheries Management Organisations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006611/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Prodotti ittici in commercio con etichettature errate: nuovi rischi per la salute del consumatore

Gli scandali alimentari non riguardano solo la carne: basti pensare che anche il pesce è commercializzato sotto falso nome. La denuncia arriva da un'associazione ambientalista che di recente con un'indagine a tutto campo ha analizzato il DNA di 1.215 campioni di pesce raccolti in 674 punti vendita di 21 Stati. I risultati sono allarmanti: in un terzo dei casi la specie non corrispondeva a quella segnalata sul cartellino e spesso non faceva neanche parte delle specie messe in commercio.

Ad esempio, solo per la famiglia dei Lutjanidae (c.d. snappers) comprendente moltissimi pesci pregiati per usi alimentari, nell'87 % dei casi esaminati la specie indicata sul campione non era quella corretta e in tre quarti dei casi si è trattato addirittura di pesci appartenenti ad altre famiglie, soprattutto Tilapia e Sebastidae. La percentuale di etichettature scorrette riguarda anche i campioni di tonno (59 %) e di altri pesci molto apprezzati dai consumatori, come l'halibut, la cernia e il merluzzo, per cui la fascia di errore si colloca tra il 19 e il 38 %. Alcune delle frodi puntano a sostituire pesci selvaggi con specie di allevamento di minor valore commerciale, altre a mettere in commercio specie protette o che non dovrebbero essere pescate, altre ancora potrebbero causare problemi di salute. Complessivamente il 44 % dei punti vendita esaminati offriva pesci con etichettature errate: il record negativo spetta ai locali dove si serve sushi (74 %) seguiti da ristoranti (38 %) e pescherie (18 %) con una distribuzione abbastanza uniforme nei vari Stati. Questi dati mettono in evidenza che le frodi nel settore ittico sono tuttora numerose anche negli Stati dove vige un sistema avanzato di controlli.

Considerato che il regolamento (CE) n. 853/2004 e successive modifiche stabilisce norme specifiche in materia di igiene degli alimenti di origine animale per gli operatori del settore alimentare, disponendo inoltre, che vengano immessi in commercio nell'UE prodotti che soddisfano i requisiti prescritti a tutela della salute del consumatore; che tali disposizioni si estendono anche a determinati prodotti della pesca, inclusi i prodotti consumati crudi; che alcuni prodotti ittici possono essere immessi sul mercato solo se confezionati o imballati e devono essere opportunamente etichettati al fine di informare i consumatori sui rischi alla salute connessi.

Può la Commissione riferire:

— se è a conoscenza della menzionata indagine;

— se esistono sufficienti dati di monitoraggio per determinate specie ittiche;

— se ritiene di dover aggiornare i criteri per valutare a quali condizioni i prodotti della pesca non presentano rischi per la salute pubblica?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(2 agosto 2013)

1. Anche se la Commissione non è al corrente della specifica indagine descritta dall'on. parlamentare, è informata sulle possibili frodi che si verificano nel settore della pesca.

2. Gli Stati membri sono tenuti ad adottare un sistema di controlli ufficiali volti a verificare il rispetto, da parte degli operatori, dei requisiti previsti dalla legislazione sulla catena alimentare. I controlli ufficiali, compresi quelli sui prodotti della pesca, devono essere effettuati con regolarità, sulla base di una valutazione dei rischi e con frequenza appropriata, in modo tale da minimizzare i rischi per gli esseri umani e gli animali, garantire pratiche eque e proteggere gli interessi dei consumatori.

La Commissione non raccoglie dati sui risultati dei controlli ufficiali effettuati dagli Stati membri in rapporto a specifiche specie ittiche.

3. La Commissione non ritiene che sia necessaria una revisione delle norme sull'igiene. Le norme vigenti sono sufficienti a proteggere i consumatori nella misura in cui siano debitamente applicate dagli Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006611/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Mislabelled fishery products: new risks to consumer health

Food scandals do not only concern meat: fish is also being marketed under a false name. The complaint has been made by an environmental association which recently carried out a full-scale investigation analysing the DNA of 1 215 samples of fish taken from 674 retail outlets in 21 States. The findings are alarming: in a third of cases, the species was not that indicated on the label, and often it was not even among species offered for sale.

For example, in the *Lutjanidae* (snappers) family alone, which includes a large number of fish species prized as food, in 87% of cases tested the species indicated on the sample was incorrect, and in 75% of cases the fish belonged to another family, especially *Tilapia* and *Sebastidae*. The percentage of mislabelling also concerns samples of tuna (59%) and other fish highly regarded by consumers, such as halibut, grouper and cod, where the degree of error ranged from 19% to 38%. Some cases of fraud aim to substitute wild fish with farmed fish of lower commercial value; other cases aim to put on the market protected species or those which should not be caught; other cases could cause health problems. Overall, 44% of retail outlets examined was selling mislabelled fish: the worst offenders were sushi venues (74%), followed by restaurants (38%) and fishmongers (18%), with a fairly uniform distribution of this trend throughout the various States. These data highlight that fraud in the fish sector is still widespread, even in States where an advanced control system is in place.

Given that regulation (EC) No 853/2004 and subsequent amendments lays down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin for food business operators, and furthermore specifies that products placed on the market in the EU must satisfy consumer health protection requirements; that these provisions also cover certain fishery products, including those consumed raw; that certain fishery products may be placed on the market only if they are wrapped or packaged and must be labelled appropriately in order to inform consumers of the associated health risks,

can the Commission state:

— whether it is aware of the above investigation;

— whether there are sufficient monitoring data for given fish species;

— whether it believes it necessary to update the criteria used to evaluate the conditions under which fishery products do not pose a risk to public health?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

1. Although the Commission is not aware of the specific investigation described by the Honourable Member it is informed about possible fraud occurring in the fish sector.

2. Member States are required to establish a system of official controls to verify compliance by operators with requirements deriving from food chain legislation. Official controls, including on fishery products, should be carried out regularly, on a risk basis and with appropriate frequency so as to tackle risks to humans and animals, guarantee fair practices, and protect consumer interests.

The Commission is not collecting data on the outcome of official controls carried out by Member States in relation to specific fish species.

3. The Commission does not believe that a revision of the hygiene rules is needed. Existing rules are sufficient to protect consumers as long as they are properly enforced by Member States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006612/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Situazione del comparto siderurgico europeo: quali misure dopo i recenti scandali dei prodotti provenienti dall'India

Tra il 2012 e la prima parte del 2013 in Italia, come in altri Stati membri, si sono riscontrati casi di stoviglie e materiali da cucina prodotti in India con alti livelli di radioattività. La tematica in questione, oltre a riguardare direttamente la sicurezza dei prodotti importati e la tutela della salute dei cittadini europei, concerne anche la situazione economica del settore siderurgico europeo che deve attualmente fronteggiare la dura concorrenza di paesi emergenti, prima fra tutti proprio l'India.

Orbene, l'India è il quarto produttore di acciaio a livello mondiale con un totale annuo che nel 2012 ha sfiorato le 80 milioni di tonnellate, cifra in costante crescita se si considera che tra i primi 10 paesi produttori l'India detiene il secondo più alto tasso di crescita (4,3 % tra 2011 e 2012) dopo la Turchia; il tessuto produttivo indiano è costituito in via quasi esclusiva da grandi aziende di proprietà sia pubblica (con un ministero all'interno del Governo indiano dedicato alla produzione di acciaio) sia privata (stante che il maggiore gruppo siderurgico mondiale ha sede in India) poco inclini all'osservanza delle normative ambientali e all'efficientamento dell'utilizzo di risorse, come si evince dal rapporto di un centro studi indiano effettuato su un campione di aziende; i numeri del settore siderurgico europeo dicono che nell'ultimo lustro la produzione è calata del 17 % e vi è una sovracapacità produttiva delle acciaierie europee; diverse migliaia di posti di lavoro sono a rischio, soprattutto nei due Stati membri maggiori produttori di acciaio (Germania e Italia); in diversi paesi nel mondo sono in vigore misure protezionistiche sull'esportazione delle materie prime, come il ferro, o sull'importazione di prodotti finiti, mentre in Europa vi è un regime di libero scambio con il risultato che le aziende comunitarie devono fronteggiare l'ulteriore ostacolo dei dazi doganali rispetto ai concorrenti extra-UE.

Preso atto che la Commissione intende redigere un apposito piano per il settore siderurgico e è ancora in discussione un Free Trade Agreement tra Europa e India, può essa far sapere:

— se e come intende tenere conto della qualità dei prodotti, dell'efficienza energetica e del consumo di risorse che la lavorazione dell'acciaio implica in paesi terzi quali, ad esempio, l'India;

— se intende introdurre limitazioni alla vendita dei rottami, possibile materia prima alternativa al ferro, sovente non viene trattata adeguatamente nei paesi ove sono destinati;

— se e quali ammortizzatori sociali intende prevedere?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(23 luglio 2013)

Nell'ambito della sua strategia commerciale globale la Commissione si serve di vari strumenti di intervento per garantire condizioni di equità agli operatori europei. Per quanto riguarda l'accordo di libero scambio attualmente in discussione con l'India l'Unione europea mira a introdurre disposizioni rigorose in tema di commercio e sviluppo sostenibile, le quali affrontino anche la questione del rispetto delle principali norme ambientali convenute a livello internazionale. La Commissione è inoltre impegnata in un dialogo costante con i suoi partner commerciali principali, India compresa, per discutere riguardo alla situazione del mercato mondiale dell'acciaio e per evitare tensioni commerciali. Tali incontri del gruppo di contatto dell'acciaio (*Steel Contact Group*) danno la possibilità di affrontare tutte le questioni relative a tale materiale, quali efficienza delle risorse e metodi di produzione sostenibili.

La recente comunicazione della Commissione [COM(2013)407/3] «Piano d'azione per una siderurgia europea competitiva e sostenibile» mette in risalto l'importanza dei rottami per gli sviluppi futuri dell'industria siderurgica. L'impiego di rottami comporta vantaggi sia economici sia ambientali. La comunicazione sopra menzionata definisce una serie di provvedimenti volti ad accrescere la disponibilità dei suddetti rottami in Europa. Tali provvedimenti mirano a rafforzare il rispetto del regolamento sulle spedizioni di rifiuti, tenendo sotto controllo il mercato dei rottami e mantenendo i contatti con i principali paesi produttori di acciaio non appartenenti all'UE al fine di avere un quadro d'insieme del settore in questione e di elaborare approcci comuni alle problematiche da affrontare in tale ambito.

Secondo la valutazione dell'impatto sulla sostenibilità nell'ambito dell'accordo di libero scambio tra UE e Repubblica dell'India, il saldo commerciale tra UE e India per quanto riguarda ferro e acciaio è solo leggermente negativo. È possibile fornire assistenza ai lavoratori licenziati nell'UE mediante il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione a condizione di rispettare le condizioni di cui al pertinente regolamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006612/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Situation in the European steel industry: action required following the recent scandals concerning goods produced in India

Highly radioactive crockery and kitchenware made in India was found in Italy and in other Member States in 2012 and early 2013. In addition to having a direct effect on the safety of imported goods and the protection of EU citizens' health, the issue in question is also affecting the economic situation of the European steel industry which is currently faced with strong competition from the emerging countries, especially India.

India is the fourth largest steel producer in the world, producing almost 80 million tonnes in 2012, an annual total which is continuing to rise considering that among the leading 10 steel-producing countries, India has the second highest growth rate after Turkey (4.3% between 2011 and 2012); India's production base consists almost exclusively of large companies in both the public sector (with an Indian ministry devoted to steel production), and the private sector (the leading global steel group is based in India) which are reluctant to comply with environmental legislation or to use resources efficiently, as shown by a report on a sample of companies published by an Indian research centre; European steel industry figures indicate that during the last five-year period, production fell by 17% and there is overcapacity in EU steelworks; several thousand jobs are at risk, especially in the two largest steel-producing Member States (Germany and Italy); various countries in the world have put in place protectionist measures on the export of raw materials, such as iron, or on the import of finished products, whereas in Europe there is a free trade system with the result that EU companies face the additional obstacle of customs duties, which non-EU competitors do not have.

Having noted that the Commission plans to draw up a special plan for the steel industry and that a free trade agreement between Europe and India is still being negotiated, can it state:

— whether and how it intends to take into account the quality of goods, energy efficiency and consumption of resources which steel working entails in third countries such as India;

— whether it intends to introduce limits on the sale of scrap metal, a raw material that is a possible alternative to iron, which is often not adequately treated in countries to which it is sent;

— whether it plans to provide any social safety nets and if so, which ones?

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

Within its comprehensive trade strategy, the Commission uses various policy tools to secure a level playing field for European operators. Concerning the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) currently under negotiation with India, the European Union aims at including robust provisions on trade and sustainable development, which would also address adherence to core internationally agreed environmental rules. The Commission is also engaged in a regular dialogue with its main trading partners, including India, to discuss the situation on the global steel market and to avoid trade frictions. These Steel Contact Group meetings offer the opportunity to discuss all steel related issues includuing resources efficiency and sustainable production methods.

The recently adopted Commission's Communication (COM(2013) 407/3) Action plan for a competitive and sustainble steel industry in Europe, highlights the importance of scrap for the future of the European steel industry. The use of scrap entails both economic and environmental advantages. The communication sets out a number of measures to increase its availability in Europe. These include better enforcement of the Waste Shipment Regulation, monitoring of scrap markets and engaging with the main non-EU steel producing countries to have an overview of the sector and to develop common approaches to the challenges that it is facing.

According to the Sustainability Impact Assessment for the FTA between the EU and the Republic of India, EU-India iron and steel trade balance is only slightly negative. Support to workers made redundant in the EU can be made available by the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGAF) if the conditions laid down in the respective Regulation are met.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006613/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Violazioni degli accordi di Schengen e di Dublino

Il Parlamento svizzero chiede ufficialmente che vengano intensificati i controlli al confine con l'Italia poiché ha registrato un aumento del passaggio di immigrati. La risoluzione adottata sostiene che Roma non applica in maniera corretta i trattati di Schengen e di Dublino, concernente le richieste di asilo politico. Sotto accusa c'è la linea di frontiera tra la Lombardia e il Canton Ticino.

La preoccupazione è aumentata dopo che l'Italia ha dichiarato chiusa l'emergenza seguita agli sbarchi di Lampedusa. Da quel momento si è cominciato a registrare un duplice fenomeno: da un lato, l'aumento degli stranieri che arrivavano in Svizzera attraverso il valico ferroviario di Chiasso e una volta qui chiedevano asilo politico; dall'altro i passaggi clandestini della linea di confine.

Il recente afflusso di immigrati nordafricani ha dimostrato che gli accordi di Schengen e di Dublino non funzionano correttamente: tutti gli immigrati entrano in Svizzera attraverso l'Italia, ma non si riesce a rimandarli verso la Penisola. L'obiettivo della risoluzione è reintrodurre controlli intensi sui treni in arrivo dall'Italia e verifiche almeno parziali sulle auto in transito. Aderendo al trattato di Schengen la Svizzera aveva di fatto introdotto la libera circolazione delle persone, ma il medesimo trattato stabilisce che uno degli Stati aderenti può ripristinare i controlli alle frontiere se vede minacciata la sua sicurezza interna.

Quale provvedimento la Commissione intende adottare per porre fine a questa situazione di frontiera esterna dell'UE che risulta bucata come «gruviera» e intensificare i controlli per contrastare l'immigrazione clandestina?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(19 luglio 2013)

Il 12 giugno 2013 il Parlamento ha approvato il testo concordato con il Consiglio sull'istituzione di un nuovo meccanismo di valutazione Schengen che consentirà alla Commissione di verificare se le norme dell'acquis di Schengen — alla base di un efficace controllo delle frontiere — sono applicate correttamente presso le frontiere esterne dell'UE e di raccomandare i miglioramenti che si rendano necessari. Una verifica rigorosa ed efficace delle valutazioni Schengen porrà rimedio a eventuali carenze.

Il ripristino dei controlli alle frontiere interne scatterebbe solo come misura estrema in circostanze eccezionali, tali da compromettere il funzionamento complessivo dello spazio Schengen, causate da carenze gravi e persistenti relative al controllo delle frontiere esterne, e nella misura in cui tali circostanze rappresentino una minaccia grave per l'ordine pubblico o la sicurezza interna dello spazio Schengen.

Frontex, l'Agenzia europea per la gestione della cooperazione operativa alle frontiere esterne degli Stati membri, offre sostegno operativo agli Stati membri nella lotta contro i flussi migratori irregolari.

Infine, il Fondo per le frontiere esterne sostiene finanziariamente gli sforzi che gli Stati membri mettono in atto al fine di realizzare un controllo alle frontiere esterne di massimo livello.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006613/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Violations of the Schengen and Dublin Agreements

The Swiss Parliament is officially calling for controls on the border with Italy to be stepped up since it has recorded an increase in the number of immigrants crossing the border. The adopted resolution states that the Italian Government is not applying the Schengen and Dublin Agreements correctly, with regard to requests for political asylum. The border section between Lombardy and the Canton of Ticino is being blamed.

Concerns heightened after Italy declared that the emergency following the landings of illegal immigrants in Lampedusa was over. From then on, two things began happening: on the one hand, an increase in the number of foreigners arriving in Switzerland via the Chiasso rail crossing who asked for political asylum once there; on the other, illegal crossings of the border.

The recent influx of North African immigrants shows that the Schengen and Dublin Agreements are not working properly: all the immigrants enter Switzerland via Italy, but Switzerland is unable to send them back there. The aim of the resolution is to reintroduce intensive controls on trains arriving from Italy and at least partial checks on cars crossing the border. By acceding to the Schengen Agreement, in practice Switzerland introduced the free movement of persons, but the same agreement lays down that an acceding State may reinstate border controls if its national security is threatened.

What action will the Commission take to end this situation whereby the EU's external border is as porous as Swiss cheese, and to step up controls to combat illegal immigration?

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

On 12 June 2013, Parliament voted its support for the text agreed with the Council on a new Schengen evaluation mechanism. This will enable the Commission to check if the rules of the Schengen acquis, the cornerstone of an effective border control, are correctly applied at the EU's external border and to recommend improvements where necessary. A stringent and efficient follow up of the Schengen evaluations shall remedy possible weaknesses.

The reintroduction of internal border controls would be triggered only as a last resort measure in exceptional circumstances, where the overall functioning of the Schengen area is put at risk, as a result of persistent serious deficiencies related to external border control, and insofar as these circumstances constitute a serious threat to public policy or internal security within the Schengen area.

Frontex, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States, offers operational support to the Member States in tackling irregular migration.

Finally, the External Border Fund provides financial support for Member States' efforts to reach the highest standard in external border control.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006614/13
alla Commissione
Giovanni La Via (PPE) e Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(7 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Tutela della concorrenza nei mercati dei servizi retail aeroportuali

Con interrogazione scritta in data 30 novembre 2012 i deputati Mauro e Pittella si rivolgevano alla Commissione per chiedere quali iniziative intendesse intraprendere al fine di garantire, anche nel mercato dei servizi retail aeroportuali, il principio per cui le società controllate da enti pubblici e titolari di affidamenti diretti nei mercati di origine devono svolgere la loro attività, in modo esclusivo o di gran lunga prevalente, a servizio degli enti che le controllano, evitando ingressi distorsivi della concorrenza in mercati diversi.

Con risposta in data 5 marzo 2013, il Commissario alla Concorrenza, Almunia, comunicava che non sussistevano i presupposti per l'avvio di procedimenti di applicazione di norme antitrust con riferimento alle subconcessioni per servizi retail nelle aree aeroportuali e, altresì, che in relazione alle subconcessioni di servizi a soggetti terzi, i gestori aeroportuali sono obbligati a rispettare i principi e le norme del Trattato in materia di trasparenza, non potendo quindi procedere ad affidamenti diretti a società controllate solo nel rispetto delle generali norme europee in materia di «in house providing».

L'affermazione di principio della Commissione sopra ricordata — che gli attuali interroganti pienamente condividono — non è, allo stato, unanimemente condivisa in tutti gli Stati membri e da tutti gli enti di gestione aeroportuale.

Considerato che:

— la presenza di differenze applicative nei diversi Stati membri è causa di distorsioni della concorrenza e che, pertanto, sarebbe assai opportuna una formale iniziativa della Commissione volta al riavvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia, sì da realizzare una piena uniformità nell'applicazione delle suddette regole di trasparenza;

— è attualmente all'esame del Parlamento europeo la proposta di direttiva sull'aggiudicazione dei contratti di concessione, che non menziona espressamente i servizi retail aeroportuali;

può la Commissione far conoscere le iniziative che intende intraprendere mediante un'indicazione a chiarimento posta all'interno dell'emananda direttiva ovvero mediante un'apposita raccomandazione o comunicazione, al fine di realizzare l'obiettivo del pieno rispetto delle regole di trasparenza in materia di affidamento dei servizi al passeggero da parte dei gestori aeroportuali?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(7 agosto 2013)

La Commissione desidera informare gli onorevoli deputati che le attività riguardanti lo sfruttamento di un'area geografica al fine della messa a disposizione di aeroporti e altri terminali di trasporto ai vettori aerei di cui al punto 5 dell'allegato III della proposta di direttiva riguardante l'aggiudicazione dei contratti di concessione riguardano anche i servizi forniti ai passeggeri quali la vendita al dettaglio, i servizi di ristoro e i parcheggi. Questo aspetto è stato ulteriormente chiarito nella proposta di direttiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006614/13
to the Commission
Giovanni La Via (PPE) and Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Safeguarding competition in airport retail services

In their written question dated 30 November 2012, Mr Mauro and Mr Pittella contacted the Commission to ask what initiatives it intended to take in order to defend the principle whereby, in the market for airport retail services as elsewhere, undertakings controlled by public bodies and holders of directly assigned concessions in home markets should be run exclusively or very largely as a service to the bodies controlling them, without competition-distorting forays into different markets.

In his answer on 5 March 2013, the European Commissioner responsible for competition, Mr Almunia, stated that there were no prerequisites for initiating procedures under the anti-trust rules regarding sub-licensing of retail services in airport areas; moreover, regarding sub-licensing of services to third parties, airport operators must respect the Treaty principles and rules of transparency, and may not therefore directly assign concessions to subsidiaries, as set out by general European standards governing in-house provision.

The abovementioned principle expressed by the Commission — with which we fully agree — is not currently shared on a unanimous basis in all Member States and by all airport operators.

Given that:

— the differences of application in various Member States cause distortions of competition and that, therefore, it would be highly appropriate for the Commission to introduce a formal initiative aimed at approximation of the laws of the Member States in this area, so as to achieve complete uniformity in the application of the above transparency rules;

— a proposal for a directive on awarding concession contracts, which does not expressly mention airport retail services, is currently before the European Parliament;

can the Commission say what steps it intends to take, either by clarifying within the upcoming directive or by issuing a special recommendation or communication, in order to achieve the goal of full compliance by airport operators with the rules of transparency governing the assignment of passenger services concessions?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that activities relating to the exploitation of a geographical area for the purpose of the provision of airports or other terminal facilities to carriers by air referred to in the point 5 of Annex III of the draft Directive on the award of concession contracts covers also services provided to passengers such as retailing, public catering and car parking. This has been further clarified in the proposal for the directive.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006615/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(7 juni 2013)

Betreft: Deelname commissarissen aan Bilderberg-conferentie

Van 6 tot 9 juni vindt in het Grove-hotel in Hertfordshire de conferentie van de Bilderberggroep plaats. Naast Commissievoorzitter Barroso staat ook commissaris Viviane Reding op de lijst van de deelnemers.

Eén van de agendapunten luidt „politics of the European Union". Ook andere punten houden verband met EU-beleid. Zijn de aanwezige leden van de Commissie bereid — ondanks de sfeer van geheimzinnigheid die de Bilderberg-conferenties kenmerkt — de tekst van hun toespraken openbaar te maken, in het kader van de openbaarheid van bestuur?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(2 augustus 2013)

De voorzitter van de Commissie en de vicevoorzitter voor Justitie, grondrechten en burgerschap hebben deelgenomen aan de Bilderberg-conferentie, die in juni 2013 plaatsvond in het Grove-hotel in Hertfordshire.

Zij waren op persoonlijke uitnodiging en als deelnemers op de bijeenkomst aanwezig. Zij hebben niet deelgenomen als vertegenwoordigers van de Commissie, aangezien de Commissie geen specifieke band heeft met de Bilderberg-conferentie.

Er is over de discussies die tijdens de conferentie zijn gevoerd aan de Commissie geen verslag uitgebracht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006615/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Participation of Commissioners in the Bilderberg conference

The conference of the Bilderberg Group is taking place in the Grove Hotel in Hertfordshire from 6 to 9 June. As well as Commission President Barroso, Commissioner Viviane Reding is also on the guest list.

One of the items on the agenda is the 'Politics of the European Union', while there are also other items connected with EU policy. Are the attending Members of the Commission prepared — despite the atmosphere of secretiveness that characterises Bilderberg conferences — to publish the text of their addresses, within the spirit of open government?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

The President of the Commission and the Vice-President responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship attended the Bilderberg conference, which took place in the Grove Hotel in Hertfordshire in June 2013.

They attended the meeting as participants, on a personal invitation. The President and Vice-President did not represent the Commission at the Conference, as the Commission has no particular link with the Bilderberg conference.

There was no report to the Commission on the discussions held during the conference.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006618/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Frankfurt — Manifestantes bloquearam sede do BCE

A imprensa alemã noticiou recentemente que manifestantes bloquearam a sede do Banco Central Europeu (BCE), em Frankfurt, na Alemanha, em protesto contra as políticas de austeridade e empobrecimento na Zona Euro.

O «bloqueio» ao BCE durou cerca de três horas e foi convocado pela coligação anticapitalista Blockupy em protesto contra uma «devastadora política de empobrecimento» e em «solidariedade com os povos do Sul da Europa», segundo fontes da organização citadas pela imprensa germânica.

Na ação de protesto participaram cerca de 3 000 pessoas, segundo a organização, mas as autoridades alemãs referem que no local estiveram pouco mais de mil manifestantes.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como interpreta o recente bloqueio ao BCE?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(19 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a sua resposta à questão escrita E-9107/2012 formulada pela Senhora Deputada Angelika Werthmann ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-009107&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006618/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Frankfurt — Protesters block ECB headquarters

The German press recently reported that protesters had blocked the European Central Bank (ECB) headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany, in protest against austerity and poverty policies in the euro area.

The 'blockade' at the ECB lasted around three hours and was organised by the anti-capitalist Blockupy coalition in protest against a 'devastating poverty policy' and in 'solidarity with the people in southern Europe', according to sources within the organisation quoted by the German media.

The organisation says that around 3 000 people participated in the protest, although German authorities claim that little more than a thousand protesters were at the site.

How does the Commission view the recent blockade at the ECB?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to the written questions E-9107/2012 by Angelika Werthmann ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-009107&language=EN

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006619/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Síria: Rússia e EUA trocam acusações

A Rússia e os EUA têm visões diferentes para solucionar a guerra na Síria. Embora tenham chegado a acordo para promoverem em conjunto uma conferência de paz em Genebra, marcada para o mês de junho, o ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros russo, Serguei Lavrov, acusou o Governo de Washington de «torpedear as possibilidades de paz ao insistir na criação de uma zona de exclusão aérea sobre a Síria, o que a Rússia não aceita».

Segundo a ONU, a guerra na Síria dura há 26 meses e já matou aproximadamente 90 mil pessoas.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Qual tem sido o papel da UE relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(31 de julho de 2013)

A UE tem desenvolvido ao longo de todo este tempo ações diplomáticas tendo em vista uma resolução pacífica para o conflito na Síria. Antes dos planos anunciados para a realização da Conferência de Genebra sobre a Síria, em 7 de maio de 2013, a AR/VP debateu as questões relativas a este país nas suas reuniões com o Secretário do Estado norte-americano, Jonh Kerry, e o Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros russo, Sergey Lavrov, em fevereiro de 2013. O Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros de maio de 2013 acolheu o Representante Especial Conjunto Lakhdar Brahimi para debater iniciativas políticas. Na sequência da reunião, a UE intensificou ainda os contactos com a Rússia e os EUA a nível de altos funcionários. Mais recentemente, a situação da Síria foi discutida, com a presença da UE ao mais alto nível, na Cimeira do G8 e na Cimeira UE-Rússia.

A União Europeia prossegue o seu empenhamento diplomático e não poupará esforços para tornar possível a organização com êxito da Conferência de Genebra sobre a Síria. A Comissão e a AR/VP adotaram, em 24 de junho de 2013, uma comunicação conjunta, que define uma abordagem global da UE em resposta aos conflitos e suas consequências, tanto na Síria como nos seus países vizinhos ([1]).

([1]) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/130624_1_comm_native_join_2013_22_communication_from_commission_to_inst_en_v10_p1_7332751.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006619/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Syria: Russia and United States at loggerheads

Russia and the United States have differing views on how to resolve the war in Syria. Although they have reached an agreement to jointly promote a peace conference in Geneva, scheduled to take place in June, the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, has accused the government in Washington of torpedoing the chances of peace by insisting on the creation of a no-fly zone over Syria, which Russia does not accept.

According to the UN, the war in Syria has lasted 26 months and has already killed around 90 000 people.

What role has the EU played in this matter?

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

The EU has been engaged in diplomatic actions to bring a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Syria all along. Before the announced plans to hold the Geneva Conference on Syria on 7 May 2013, the HR/VP discussed Syria-related matters in her meetings with Secretary Kerry and Minister Lavrov in February 2013. The May 2013 Foreign Affairs Council hosted JSR Brahimi to discuss political initiatives. Following the meeting, the EU has further intensified contacts with Russia and the US on the senior officials level. Most recently, the Syria situation was debated, with the highest level of EU presence, at the G8 meeting and the EU-Russia summit.

The EU continues its diplomatic engagement and will spare no efforts to bring about the successful convening of the Geneva Conference on Syria. The Commission and the HR/VP adopted, on 24 June 2013, a joint communication, mapping out a comprehensive EU approach in response to the conflict and its consequences both in Syria and its neighbouring countries ([1]).

([1]) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/130624_1_comm_native_join_2013_22_communication_from_commission_to_inst_en_v10_p1_7332751.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006620/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Moscovo fornece armamento a Damasco

Moscovo deixou bem claro que apoiará sem reservas o Presidente da Síria, Bashar al Assad. Serão enviados para Damasco mísseis S-300 russos e o sistema de radares que os acompanha. Segundo explicou a BBC online, este sistema de defesa antiaéreo russo é o equivalente ao sistema americano Patriot, usado pela NATO.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como interpreta o referido fornecimento de tecnologia sofisticada de defesa antiaéreo à Síria?

Não considera que o apoio inequívoco da Rússia ao Presidente da Síria venha agudizar a instabilidade naquela região?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

A UE continua a pedir à Rússia que se abstenha de fornecer armas ao regime sírio. Estas entregas contribuem para reforçar a determinação do regime em prosseguir a sua repressão violenta do povo sírio, afastando-se de uma solução política do conflito. São igualmente incompatíveis com os esforços dos EUA-Rússia no âmbito da conferência de paz.

A União Europeia apoia inteiramente a iniciativa de uma conferência de paz para a Síria, promovida pelos Estados Unidos e a Rússia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006620/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Moscow supplying weapons to Damascus

Moscow has made it very clear that it will unreservedly support President Assad of Syria. Russia will be sending S-300 missiles and the accompanying radar system to Damascus. According to BBC Online, this Russian anti-aircraft defence system is equivalent to the US Patriot system that NATO uses.

How does the Commission interpret Russia supplying Syria with such a sophisticated anti-aircraft defence system?

Does it agree that Russia's unequivocal support for the Syrian President will make regional instability more acute?

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

The EU continues to call on Russia to refrain from delivering arms to the Syrian regime. Such deliveries contribute to strengthening the regime's resolve to continue its violent repression of the Syrian people, while moving away from a political settlement of the conflict. They are also inconsistent with the US-Russia effort at a peace conference.

The EU fully supports the initiative of a peace conference for Syria, developed by the United States and Russia.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006621/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Manipulação genética em mosquitos

Recentemente, num artigo da revista Nature, uma equipa de cientistas norte-americanos revelou que é possível, graças a uma manipulação genética, desorientar os mosquitos, tornando-os incapazes de distinguir o cheiro humano do de outros animais.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta recente descoberta? Como a avalia, tendo em conta que a mesma possa ser determinante para o fabrico de uma nova geração de repelentes e a redução das doenças associadas?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(17 de julho de 2013)

1. A resposta à pergunta do Senhor Ministro é afirmativa.

2. A Comissão apoia a investigação e a inovação se forem seguras e, em particular, se apresentarem benefícios para a saúde humana e animal e para o ambiente. Cabe à Comissão garantir a aplicação de procedimentos adequados para avaliar a segurança de possíveis pedidos futuros para a autorização de animais geneticamente modificados GM na UE e assim, solicitou à Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos (AESA) a elaboração de um parecer de avaliação, tanto para os riscos dos géneros alimentícios e alimentos para animais que contenham, sejam constituídos por, ou produzidos a partir de animais GM (no quadro do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1829/2003 ([1]), relativo a géneros alimentícios e alimentos para animais GM), como para a avaliação dos riscos ambientais dos animais geneticamente modificados. A AESA publicou o seu parecer de avaliação dos riscos dos géneros alimentícios e alimentos para animais derivados de animal GM em janeiro de 2012. Este parecer foi seguido pela publicação do parecer da AESA sobre a avaliação dos riscos ambientais dos animais geneticamente modificados, em abril de 2013 ([2]).

([1]) JO L 268 de 18.10.2003.
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3200.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006621/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Genetic manipulation of mosquitoes

According to an article published recently in the journal *Nature*, American scientists have shown that genetic manipulation can be used to disorient mosquitoes, making them incapable of distinguishing between the smells of humans and those of other animals.

Is the Commission aware of this discovery? What view does it take of it, bearing in mind that it could play an essential role in creating a new generation of repellents and reducing related diseases?

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

1. The answer to the question of the Hourable Member is Yes.

2. The Commission supports research and innovation if it is safe, and in particular where it can bring benefits, for human and animal health and for the environment. It is the Commission's responsibility to make sure that appropriate procedures are in place to assess the safety of possible future applications for authorisation of GM animals in the EU and it has thus asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to provide guidance for both the risk assessment of food and feed containing, consisting of, or produced from GM animals (within the framework of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 ([1]) on GM food and feed) and for the environmental risk assessment of genetically modified animals. EFSA published its guidance on food and feed from GM animals in January 2012. This was followed by the publication of EFSA's guidance on the environmental risk assessment of genetically modified animals in April 2013 ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3200.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006622/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: EUA crescem mais do que os países da UE

De acordo com o «Economic Outlook» publicado pela Organização para a Cooperação e Desenvolvimento Económico (OCDE), «o crescimento deverá ser mais elevado nos Estados Unidos da América (EUA) do que na zona euro, apesar das fortes dificuldades orçamentais, dos níveis de atividade impulsionados por uma política monetária muito moderada e do reforço dos balanços dos bancos privados».

Na zona Euro, «a atividade económica deverá continuar a contrair ou estagnar até à segunda metade de 2013, com uma prolongada consolidação orçamental, fracos balanços no setor privado, baixa confiança, fraca oferta de crédito em alguns países e más condições laborais», refere o documento, que destaca a Alemanha como exceção a este cenário.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como avalia o documento em questão?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(16 de julho de 2013)

De um modo geral, as perspetivas económicas para a UE e os EUA contidas no mais recente «Economic Outlook» (N°91), publicado pelo Secretariado da OCDE, não divergem substancialmente das previsões económicas europeias da primavera de 2013, emitidas pelos serviços da Comissão ([1]).

O capítulo I das previsões económicas europeias debruça-se sobre os fatores que continuam a travar o crescimento do PIB na UE, e que se espera sejam atenuados gradualmente. Em consequência, o PIB da UE deverá estabilizar no primeiro semestre de 2013, prevendo-se uma expansão mais percetível no segundo semestre deste ano e em 2014.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006622/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: United States growing faster than EU countries

According to the 'Economic Outlook' published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): 'Growth is set to remain higher in the United States than in the euro area, despite stronger fiscal headwinds, with activity levels boosted by very accommodative monetary policy and strengthened private sector balance sheets'.

The document states that in the euro area, 'activity is likely to continue to contract or stagnate until the second half of 2013, with continued fiscal consolidation, weak private sector balance sheets, low confidence, impaired credit supply in some countries and deteriorating labour market conditions being drags on activity', and emphasises that Germany is the exception to this rule.

What is the Commission's assessment of this document?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

Overall, the assessment of the economic outlook for the EU and the US in the OECD Secretariat's most recent 'Economic Outlook No 91' does not differ substantially from the Commission's Spring 2013 European Economic Forecast (EEF) ([1]).

Chapter I of the EEF discusses the factors that are still holding back GDP growth in the EU, but that are expected to gradually fade. As a result, GDP in the EU is expected to stabilise in the first half of 2013, with a more noticeable expansion projected in the second half of this year and in 2014.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006623/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Novo tratamento da SIDA

Considerando que:

Um grupo de investigadores norte-americanos conseguiu descrever pela primeira vez a estrutura química do capsídio do vírus VIH, o que poderá permitir explorar novas terapias para o tratamento da sida;

Durante muito tempo os cientistas tiveram dificuldade em decifrar o capsídio do VIH, a estrutura da proteína que contém o material genético do vírus e que é fundamental para a sua virulência, pelo que estes avanços podem ajudar a desenvolver novos medicamentos.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que importância atribui a esta recente descoberta?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão está consciente deste importante estudo e das conclusões dos autores ([1]).

A Comissão considera que os resultados do estudo são importantes e parecem oferecer algumas esperanças. Devem ser seguidos atentamente outros desenvolvimentos a fim de compreender melhor as potenciais aplicações para novas perspetivas terapêuticas e clínicas.

([1]) 1. Zhao, G., et al., «Mature HIV-1 capsid structure by cryo-electron microscopy and all-atom molecular dynamics.» Nature, 2013. 497(7451): P. 643-646.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006623/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: New treatment for AIDS

For the first time, a group of American researchers has succeeded in describing the chemical structure of the HIV capsid, which could lead to the development of new treatments for AIDS.

For a long time, scientists had difficulty deciphering the HIV capsid, the protein structure containing the virus's genetic material that is essential to its virulence. These advances may therefore allow new drugs to be developed.

What importance does the Commission attribute to this discovery?

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

The Commission is aware of this important study and about the authors' conclusions ([1]).

The Commission estimates that the findings of the study are important and appear to hold some promise. Further developments need to be attentively followed in order to better understand potential applications for new therapeutic and clinical perspectives.

([1]) 1. Zhao, G., et al., Mature HIV-1 capsid structure by cryo-electron microscopy and all-atom molecular dynamics. Nature, 2013. 497(7451): p. 643-646.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006624/13
a la Comisión
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) y Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D)
(7 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Medidas ante el exilio económico de jóvenes europeos

Con una tasa de paro juvenil en torno al 55,7 % y escasas opciones de encontrar un empleo a corto plazo, los jóvenes españoles se ven obligados cada vez más a salir fuera del país para encontrar un horizonte laboral. De acuerdo con el último Informe sobre el estado del mercado laboral español, elaborado por InfoJobs y ESADE, dos de cada tres jóvenes españoles de entre 22 a 30 años está dispuesto a irse fuera de España para buscar un empleo, y tres de cada cuatro jóvenes ha expresado su voluntad de trabajar incluso sin remuneración económica. Se trata de la generación con menos expectativas de nuestra historia reciente pese a sus altos niveles de formación. El caso de otros países periféricos como Grecia o Portugal es similar al de España, donde la falta de oportunidades para obtener un trabajo digno constituye un auténtico drama social y la movilidad laboral pasa a convertirse en un exilio económico forzoso para numerosos jóvenes.

A la falta de mecanismos suficientes y ambiciosos de orientación, asesoramiento e interlocución, se unen otros problemas tales como el no reconocimiento de las cualificaciones académicas o profesionales, o las diferentes condiciones de contratación. Por todo ello, muchos Estados miembros están procediendo a la firma de acuerdos bilaterales de inserción laboral de jóvenes desempleados a través de los cuales se aplican cuotas anuales de contrataciones y se establecen sistemas de intercambio común de información y experiencias. ¿No cree la Comisión que estos acuerdos bilaterales suponen un fracaso de los mecanismos de intermediación europeos como el EURES? Ante la existencia de 5,7 millones de jóvenes europeos menores de 25 en paro, ¿no considera la Comisión que propuestas como «Tu Primer Eures» que, se estima, podría crear alrededor de 5 000 empleos, resultan completamente insuficientes?

Como parte del «paquete de empleo», la Comisión pide a los Estados miembros que permitan la portabilidad de los subsidios al desempleo a otro Estado miembro por un periodo de seis meses.

¿Qué avances se han producido en la materia? ¿Qué avances hay en lo que se refiere a los demás programas de portabilidad de derechos sociales que faciliten tanto la movilidad voluntaria como el retorno a los países de origen? ¿Se ha planteado la Comisión un programa de ayudas para los jóvenes, especialmente con pocos recursos, que se ven obligados a buscar oportunidades fuera de sus países?

¿No cree preocupante la Comisión la descapitalización social que está provocando la crisis en algunos países europeos? ¿Piensa hacer algo la Comisión para evitar que se produzca una fuga de talento de la Unión Europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión expresa su profunda preocupación por las consecuencias sociales de las altas tasas de desempleo juvenil, como se pone de relieve en la reciente Comunicación *Un llamamiento a la acción contra el desempleo juvenil* ([1]).

EURES y «Tu Primer Trabajo EURES» son herramientas al servicio de los Estados miembros para impulsar la movilidad como medio para ofrecer oportunidades de empleo. La Comisión ha puesto en marcha recientemente una reforma de EURES para mejorar esta red y ayudar a facilitar la movilidad. Sin embargo, corresponde a los Estados miembros maximizar el potencial ofrecido; además, se acogen favorablemente los acuerdos bilaterales específicos a tal efecto. «Tu Primer Trabajo EURES» es una iniciativa a pequeña escala que cuenta con un presupuesto limitado (12 millones EUR a lo largo de tres años), que tiene por objeto probar la eficacia de los servicios a medida, combinados con apoyo financiero, destinados a los jóvenes móviles solicitantes de empleo. Debe servir de inspiración para que los Estados miembros implanten este tipo de sistemas a nivel nacional, que pueden ser cofinanciados por el Fondo Social Europeo. Por ejemplo, Alemania ha creado un programa de movilidad de formación profesional transnacional para los jóvenes denominado «el Trabajo de mi Vida» inspirándose en «Tu Primer Trabajo EURES».

La Comisión está evaluando, en consulta con todas las partes interesadas pertinentes, el funcionamiento de todas las normas transfronterizas sobre prestaciones de desempleo, incluidas las normas relativas a la exportación de dichas prestaciones.

([1]) COM(2013) 447 final de 19 de junio de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006624/13
to the Commission
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) and Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: Measures to tackle the economic exile of young Europeans

With a youth unemployment rate of 55.7% and few opportunities to find employment in the short term, young people in Spain are increasingly forced to go abroad to find work. According to the latest ESADE InfoJobs report on the state of the Spanish job market, two thirds of people between the ages of 22 and 30 are prepared to leave Spain in order to find a job, while three quarters say that they will even work without pay. This is the generation that has the fewest prospects in our recent history despite it being highly skilled. Other peripheral countries such as Greece and Portugal are suffering the same fate as Spain: the lack of opportunities to find decent work is a real social tragedy and labour mobility is turning into forced economic exile for many young people.

In addition to the lack of adequate, ambitious mechanisms for guidance, assessment and exchanges, there are other problems, such as the failure to recognise academic or professional qualifications and the different recruitment conditions. Therefore, many Member States are signing bilateral agreements for the integration of young unemployed people into the labour market, through which they apply annual recruitment quotas and set up systems for exchanging information and experiences. Does the Commission not believe that these bilateral agreements imply that the European intermediary mechanisms such as EURES have failed? Given that 5.7 million young people under the age of 25 are out of work, does the Commission not believe that proposals such as 'Your first EURES job', which, according to estimates, could create around 5 000 jobs, are completely inadequate?

As part of the Employment Package, the Commission calls on Member States to allow for the export of unemployment benefits for jobseekers in another country for a period of up to six months.

What progress has been made in this area? What progress has been made on the other programmes to ensure the portability of social rights and facilitate voluntary mobility and the return to countries of origin? Has the Commission considered setting up a programme to support young people, especially those with very little means at their disposal, who are forced to seek work abroad?

Is the Commission not concerned about the depletion of social capital the crisis is causing in some European countries? Does the Commission intend to do anything to prevent a talent drain from the European Union?

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

The Commission is highly concerned about the social consequences of high youth unemployment rates as highlighted in the recent Communication 'Call to Action on Youth Unemployment' ([1]).

EURES and Your First EURES job are tools at the service of Member States to boost mobility as a means to offer job opportunities. The Commission recently launched a reform of EURES to improve this network and to help make mobility easier. But it is up to the Member States to maximise the potential offered and targeted bilateral arrangements for this purpose are welcome. 'Your first EURES Job' is a small-scale initiative with a limited budget (EUR 12 million over 3 years) which aims to test the effectiveness of tailor-made services for young mobile jobseekers combined with financial support. It should serve as a source of inspiration for Member States for rolling out such schemes at national level, which can be co-financed from the European Social Fund. For example, Germany has created a transnational youth vocational training mobility programme 'The job of my life' on the footprints of 'Your first EURES Job'.

The Commission is currently assessing, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, the functioning of all cross-border rules on unemployment benefits, including the rules on the export of these benefits.

([1]) COM(2013) 447 final of 19 June 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006625/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Arsenais nucleares

Considerando o seguinte:

De acordo com o relatório anual do Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), apenas as duas antigas superpotências reduziram o número de ogivas nucleares, com a Rússia a baixar de 10 000 para 8 500 e os Estados Unidos a diminuírem de 8 000 para 7 700.

Os arsenais controlados pela França mantiveram-se nos 300, enquanto a Grã-Bretanha e Israel fixaram o número em 225 e 80, respetivamente.

A China tem agora 250 ogivas nucleares contra 240 em 2012; o Paquistão aumentou o número para 100-120; e a Índia para 90-110.

De acordo com o SIPRI, a corrida ao armamento na Ásia é muito preocupante devido ao que o instituto designa como paz «frágil», em resultado das crescentes tensões desde 2008 entre a Índia, o Paquistão, a China e o Japão e as duas Coreias e outros países.

Assim pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

Tem conhecimento do referido relatório? Que posição tem mantido a UE relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

O SIPRI Yearbook é uma conhecida publicação muito apreciada. O SIPRI faz parte da rede europeia de grupos independentes de reflexão sobre a não proliferação apoiada pela UE desde 2010 (Decisão 2010/430/PESC do Conselho).

A UE reafirma o seu empenhamento constante na criação das condições para um mundo sem armas nucleares, em conformidade com os objetivos do TNP. Tendo em conta os atuais riscos de proliferação, especialmente em casos como o Irão e a RPDC, o TNP é mais importante do que nunca. A UE compromete-se plenamente e apoia incondicionalmente o Tratado, cuja implementação é uma responsabilidade coletiva de todos os Estados Participantes.

A UE sublinha a necessidade de prosseguir a redução a nível mundial das existências de armas nucleares, sobretudo nos Estados com maiores arsenais, tendo em conta os princípios de irreversibilidade, verificabilidade e transparência para orientar todas as medidas no domínio do desarmamento nuclear e do controlo do armamento.

A UE congratulou-se com os esforços envidados pelos P5 no sentido de reconfirmar o princípio da irreversibilidade no domínio do desarmamento nuclear e do controlo do armamento. Com base na Decisão 2010/212/PESC do Conselho, a UE continuará a defender uma maior transparência relativamente aos arsenais nucleares, a inclusão das armas nucleares não estratégicas no processo de desarmamento nuclear, a transparência e a implementação de medidas de instauração da confiança, assim como a realização de novas reduções nos arsenais nucleares. A UE congratulou-se igualmente com o novo acordo START.

A UE permanece preocupada com as atuais programas nos domínios nuclear e dos mísseis no Médio Oriente, no nordeste Asiático e no Sul da Ásia, incluindo o Irão e a RPDC, e insta ao respeito das Resoluções 1540, 1887 e 1997 do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas.

Os países E3+3, liderados pela AR/VP continuam empenhados em encontrar uma solução diplomática para o programa nuclear do Irão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006625/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Nuclear arsenals

According to the annual report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), only the two former superpowers have reduced their arsenals of nuclear warheads, with Russia reducing its inventory from 10 000 to 8 500 and the United States decreasing its stockpile from 8 000 to 7 700.

France has retained a stockpile of around 300 nuclear warheads, while the United Kingdom and Israel still have 225 and 80 respectively.

China now has 250 nuclear warheads compared with 240 in 2012. Pakistan has increased its arsenal to between 100 and 120 and India's stockpile has risen from 90 to 110.

According to the SIPRI, the arms race in Asia is a huge cause for concern due to what it calls 'fragile' peace, caused by rising tensions since 2008 between India, Pakistan, China and Japan, North and South Korea and other countries.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this report? What stance has the EU taken on this issue?

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

The SIPRI Yearbook is a well-known and highly appreciated publication. SIPRI is part of the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium of think thanks supported by the EU since 2010 (Council Decision 2010/430/CFSP).

The EU constantly reaffirms its commitment to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the NPT. Given the current proliferation risks, in particular cases like Iran and DPRK, the NPT is more vital than ever. The EU lends its full commitment and unconditional support to the Treaty, implementation of which is a collective responsibility of all its States Parties.

The EU underlines the need to continue the overall reduction of global stockpiles of nuclear weapons, especially by those States with the largest arsenals, taking into account the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency to guide all measures in the field of nuclear disarmament and arms control.

The EU has welcomed P5 efforts to reconfirm the principle of irreversibility with regard to nuclear disarmament and arms control, and — based on Council Decision 2010/212/CFSP — will continue to advocate for increased transparency of nuclear arsenals, inclusion of non-strategic nuclear weapons into the nuclear disarmament process, transparency and confidence-building measures, and further reductions in nuclear arsenals. The EU has also welcomed the new START Agreement.

The EU remains concerned about the ongoing nuclear and missile programmes in the Middle East, North East Asia and South Asia, including Iran and DPRK, and calls for UNSC Resolutions 1540, 1887 and 1997 to be observed.

The E3+3 countries led by the HR/VP remain committed to finding a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear programme.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006626/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Rússia trava ajuda humanitária à Síria

As autoridades russas bloquearam no último Conselho de Segurança da ONU um projeto de resolução proposto pela Grã-Bretanha sobre a situação dramática que se vive na cidade síria de Qusair, depois dos intensos combates entre o exército regular e os rebeldes registados nos últimos dias. O documento pedia ao governo de Bashar al-Assad que autorizasse «o acesso imediato, total e sem barreiras» às organizações humanitárias, para que protegessem os civis.

Segundo notícias veiculadas pelas agências internacionais, os 15 membros do Conselho de Segurança exigiam também ao governo sírio que assumisse a sua responsabilidade na proteção da população, mas a resolução foi travada pela Rússia, que pediu «uma discussão política mais abrangente» sobre o assunto.

Assim pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

Tem conhecimento desta situação? Qual a posição da UE nesta matéria?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

A UE e o SEAE estão preocupados com os factos referidos pelo Senhor Deputado. A AR/VP emitiu uma declaração em 1 de junho de 2013 ([1]) em que exprimia a sua profunda preocupação com o conflito armado em Qusayr que causou centenas de vítimas e deixou muitos civis numa situação extremamente crítica.

No que respeita à Rússia e à sua posição no Conselho de Segurança, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente abordou a questão com o ministro russo dos Negócios Estrangeiros em diversas ocasiões, sendo a mais recente durante a Cimeira UE — Rússia de Yekaterinburg realizada em 3 e 4 de julho de 2013. A UE continua a instar a Rússia a apoiar os esforços da comunidade internacional no sentido de prestar ajuda humanitária à Síria. Neste contexto, a UE congratula-se com os «Elementos para a imprensa» do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas de 18 de abril de 2013, em que todos os membros do Conselho de Segurança exortam todas as partes no conflito sírio a proteger os civis e a respeitar os direitos humanos e o direito humanitário internacional e recordam a responsabilidade primária das autoridades sírias a este respeito.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137369.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006626/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Russia blocks humanitarian aid to Syria

At the last UN Security Council, Russian authorities blocked a draft resolution proposed by the United Kingdom on the dramatic situation unfolding in the Syrian city of Qusair, following intense fighting between the army and rebel forces in recent days. The document appealed to Bashar al-Assad's government to allow 'immediate, full and unimpeded access' to humanitarian organisations with a view to protecting civilians.

According to international media reports, the Security Council's 15 members also called on the Syrian Government to exercise its responsibility to protect the population; however, the resolution was vetoed by Russia, which called for a more comprehensive political discussion on the issue.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this situation? What is the EU's stance on this matter?

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

The EU and the EEAS are concerned about the mentioned facts illustrated by the Honourable MEP. The HR/VP issued a statement on 1 June 2013 ([1]) expressing deep concern at the fighting in Qusayr that caused hundreds of victims and left many civilians in an extremely critical situation.

With regards to Russia and its position within the Security Council, the HRVP has raised the issue with the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs on several occasions, most recently during the EU-Russia Summit in Yekaterinburg held on 3-4 July 2013. The EU continues to urge Russia to support the efforts of the international community to provide humanitarian aid to Syria. In this context, the EU very much welcomed the UNSC 'elements for the press', issued on 18 April 2013, in which all members of the Security Council urged all parties in Syria to protect civilians and respect international human rights and humanitarian law and recalling the primary responsibility of the Syrian authorities in this regard.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137369.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006627/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — UE levanta embargo de armas aos rebeldes sírios

Recentemente, os membros da União Europeia concordaram em acabar com o embargo de armas à oposição síria. Este era o resultado que o Reino Unido queria. Citado pelo «The Guardian», William Hague, o ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros britânico referiu que, «foi uma difícil decisão para alguns países, embora certa e necessária com vista a uma solução diplomática para o conflito na Síria».

Assim pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

Considera fazer sentido que, numa fase em que se prepara uma conferência de paz para a Síria, se faça o levantamento do embargo de armas ao referido país?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(2 de setembro de 2013)

O embargo de armas da UE contra a Síria chegou ao fim em 31 de maio. A possibilidade de exportar armas para a Síria é agora uma questão de política nacional dos Estados-Membros.

Na Declaração do Conselho sobre a Síria, de 27 de maio, os Estados-Membros comprometeram-se a respeitar critérios rigorosos no âmbito das suas políticas nacionais, nomeadamente que as armas só deveriam ser fornecidas à coligação da oposição síria para a proteção dos civis e mediante o fornecimento de garantias quanto aos seus utilizadores finais. Cabe aos Estados-Membros garantir o respeito destes critérios, no caso de se estudar a possibilidade de fornecer armas à Síria.

A este respeito, em 27 de maio os Estados-Membros declararam igualmente que não forneceriam armas à Síria nesta fase. Além disso, vários Estados-Membros declararam bilateralmente que continuariam a não fornecer armas à Síria.

Por conseguinte, a decisão do Conselho de levantar o embargo à exportação de armas tem em conta os recentes esforços com vista ao reatamento do diálogo político.

Todos os Estados-Membros concordaram que a prioridade consiste atualmente em desenvolver ações diplomáticas e prestar uma ajuda humanitária ainda mais eficaz. A UE reitera a necessidade premente de se encontrar uma solução política para o conflito e congratulou-se com o apelo lançado em conjunto pelos EUA e pela Rússia a que seja organizada uma conferência de paz sobre a Síria que promova um processo político assente nos princípios enunciados no Comunicado de Genebra de 30 de junho de 2012. A UE não poupará esforços para ajudar a criar as condições adequadas para a organização com êxito da referida conferência.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006627/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU lifts arms embargo on Syrian rebels

The Member States recently agreed to lift the arms embargo on the Syrian opposition. That is the result that the UK wanted. *The Guardian* quotes the UK Foreign Secretary, William Hague, as saying 'it was a difficult decision for some countries, but it was necessary and right to reinforce international efforts to reach a diplomatic solution to the conflict in Syria'.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative think it makes sense to lift the arms embargo on Syria at a time when peace talks are being prepared for the country?

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

The EU arms embargo against Syria has expired on 31 May. Possible export of arms to Syria is now a matter of Member States' national policies.

Member States have declared in a Council Declaration on Syria on 27 May that they are to proceed in their national policies on the basis of strict criteria notably that arms would be supplied, only to the Syrian Opposition Coalition, for the protection of civilians and with guarantees about who the end-users will be. It is for Member States to ensure that these criteria are fulfilled in case delivery of arms to Syria would be considered.

In this respect Member States have also declared on 27 May that they would not deliver arms to Syria at this stage. In addition, a number of Member States have bilaterally declared that they would continue not to deliver arms to Syria at all.

The decision by the Council to lift the arms embargo therefore does take into acount the recent efforts for a resumption of political dialogue.

All Member States strongly agreed that the priority now is to focus on diplomatic actions and delivery of even more effective humanitarian assistance. The EU reiterates the urgent need for a political solution of the conflict and 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 communiqué of 30 June 2012. The EU will spare no efforts in helping to create the appropiate conditions for a succesful convening of this conference.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006628/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Relatório da Amnistia Internacional

Considerando o seguinte:

O relatório anual da Amnistia Internacional (AI) sobre direitos humanos, lançado recentemente, identifica 15 milhões de refugiados e 12 milhões de apátridas;

Numa monitorização que envolveu 161 países, o relatório regista a existência de práticas de tortura em 112, de repressão da liberdade de expressão em 101, de violência de género, com destaque para as violações em cenários de guerra e para as execuções por motivos religiosos;

A fragilidade dos direitos humanos no continente africano e os ataques à liberdade de expressão na Ásia são outros pontos sublinhados neste relatório que assinala a existência de presos políticos em 57 países e julgamentos sem respeito pelas normas internacionais de direito em 80;

A presidente da Amnistia Internacional alerta para a necessidade de «mais responsabilidade por parte da comunidade internacional».

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

Tem conhecimento da situação descrita? De que forma tem contribuído a UE relativamente aos direitos humanos?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão e o SEAE estão plenamente informados do relatório anual de Amnistia Internacional. A gama completa das ações da UE é apresentada no relatório anual da UE sobre os direitos humanos e a democracia no mundo ([1]).

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente apresentou o relatório anual da UE sobre direitos humanos ao Parlamento Europeu em 12 de junho de 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2013/250613_eu_hr_report_2012_en.htm
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137457.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006628/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Amnesty International report

Amnesty International (AI) recently released its annual report on human rights, which identifies 15 million refugees and 12 million stateless people.

The report reveals that torture is taking place in 112 of the 161 countries monitored, that repression of the freedom of expression is a reality in 101 countries, and that gender-based violence, particularly rape in war and religiously motivated killings, is prevalent.

The report also highlights the fragility of human rights in Africa and attacks on the freedom of expression in Asia, and notes that 57 countries detain political prisoners while 80 uphold sentences that contravene international law.

The President of Amnesty International warns that the international community must take more responsibility.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this situation? How has the EU contributed to human rights?

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

The Commission and the EEAS are fully apprised of the annual report by Amnesty International. The full range of the EU's action is presented in the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World ([1]).

The HR/VP presented the EU Annual Report on Human Rights to the European Parliament on 12 June 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2013/250613_eu_hr_report_2012_en.htm
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137457.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006629/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Aresztowanie Wano Merabiszwilego – byłego premiera Gruzji

W Gruzji aresztowano byłego premiera Wano Merabiszwilego. Zatrzymany jest sekretarzem generalnym opozycyjnej partii Zjednoczony Ruch Narodowy i był typowany na kandydata na prezydenta obozu Micheila Saakaszwilego. Wraz z nim do aresztu trafił również były minister Zurab Cziaberaszwili. Według opozycji zatrzymania mają charakter polityczny. Ich celem jest wyłączenie Merabiszwilego z aktywnej polityki oraz uniemożliwieniu mu startu w wyborach prezydenckich.

1. Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel zna sprawę aresztowania Wano Merabiszwilego?

2. Czy według Wysokiej Przedstawiciel działania wobec byłego premiera mogą mieć charakter walki politycznej? Jeśli tak, jakie działania podejmie UE, aby jak najszybciej doprowadzić do uwolnienia Wano Merabiszwilego?

3. Czy UE zamierza oficjalnie potępić działania prowadzone przez administrację premiera Iwaniszwilego prowadzące do dyskredytacji i zniszczenia demokratycznej opozycji w Gruzji?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca z uwagą odnotowała sprawę aresztowania i zatrzymania byłego premiera Gruzji, obecnie sekretarza generalnego opozycyjnej partii Zjednoczony Ruch Narodowy, Wano Merabiszwilego, oraz byłego gruzińskiego ministra zdrowia, obecnie gubernatora prowincji Kakheti, Zuraba Cziaberaszwilego.

Unia Europejska będzie w dalszym ciągu uważnie śledzić przebieg postępowania sądowego przeciwko nim, oczekując, że będzie ono sprawiedliwe, przejrzyste i niezależne, w pełni zgodne z normami międzynarodowymi.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca podkreśla, iż ma nadzieję, że rząd Gruzji będzie prowadzić wspomniane sprawy, podobnie jak wszystkie inne sprawy sądowe w sposób sprawiedliwy, bezstronny i z wyłączeniem jakichkolwiek względów politycznych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006629/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Arrest of Vano Merabishvili, former Prime Minister of Georgia

Vano Merabishvili, the former Prime Minister, has been arrested in Georgia. As well as being General Secretary of the opposition party United National Movement, Merabishvili has been tipped to run for president by the head of his party, Mikheil Saakashvili. The former minister Zurab Tchiaberashvili was also arrested at the same time. The opposition believes that these arrests were politically motivated, with the aim of excluding Merabishvili from active politics and making it impossible for him to run in the presidential elections.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the arrest of Vano Merabishvili?

2. In the opinion of the High Representative, are the measures taken in respect of the former prime minister a form of political struggle? If so, what steps will the EU take to ensure that Vano Merabishvili is released as soon as possible?

3. Is the EU intending to issue an official condemnation of the measures taken by Prime Minister Ivanishvili's administration, which have discredited and destroyed the democratic opposition in Georgia?

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

The HR/VP took careful note of the arrests and detention of the former Prime Minister of Georgia, current Secretary-General of the United National Movement, Vano Merabishvili, and the former Georgian Health Minister, current governor of Kakheti, Zurab Chiaberashvili.

The European Union will closely follow the legal proceedings against them, which it expects to be fair, transparent and independent, in full accordance with international standards.

The HR/VP underlines her expectation that the Georgian authorities will pursue justice in these cases, as in all other cases, impartially and free from political motivation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006632/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Airlines forcing passengers to change wheelchairs before boarding flights

The Commission will be aware that it used to be common practice for wheelchair users to remain in their own chairs whilst going through check-in and security at an airport. They would then board the plane still in their own chair and be assisted into their seat.

Is the Commission aware that over recent years, airlines have favoured transferring passengers from their own chairs to the companies' standard chairs? They have used new health and safety regulation as the justification for this change. Could the Commission please clarify what changes to EU legislation would explain this change in policy? Would the Commission agree that this change creates additional pressure and inconvenience for disabled passengers and may even cause some distress, and is therefore undesirable?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2013)

The Commission is aware that wheelchair users prefer to remain in their own chairs at least until boarding. In its interpretative guidelines on Regulation 1107/2006 ([1]) of June 2012 the Commission states that it is considered best practice for airport managing bodies to allow wheelchair users to use their own chairs until the boarding of the aircraft, where this is possible and in line with applicable security regulations ([2]).

The guidelines further refer to the recommendations in the 'Guidelines on ground handling for persons with reduced mobility' contained in Document 30, Annex 5D of ECAC ([3]). The document insists on the appropriateness of the assistance to be provided to disabled persons and its adaptation to the specific situation of the passenger. It also insists on specific training for staff dealing with disabled passengers, notably as regards transfers between wheelchairs.

The Commission has received only few complaints regarding the application of Regulation (EC) 1107/2006 and has not been informed about a change in policy by air carriers, whilst there has been no change in the relevant EU passenger rights legislation. Member States are in charge of the application of Regulation 1107/2006. In case of a problem, passengers can complain to the national enforcement body in the country where the incident occurred.

Futhermore, the Commission has just launched a new information campaign to raise awareness on the rights of passengers, which devotes particular attention to passengers with disabilities. The Commission is confident that better awareness on the side of both, passengers and air transport industry will improve the travel experience, notably for passengers with disabilities.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air; OJ L 204, 26.7.2006.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/prm/2012-06-11-swd-2012-171_en.pdf See answer to Q10 , third subparagraph.
([3]) European Civil Aviation Conference, https://www.ecac-ceac.org///index.php/home See in particular point 1.2.3 (a) to (c) and point 2.2(a) of Annex 5D.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006633/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Mecanismul de evaluare în vederea verificării aplicării acquis-ului Schengen

La 30 mai s-a ajuns la un acord pe marginea pachetului privind Guvernanța Schengen. Printre actele propuse se numără și un Regulament privind instituirea unui mecanism de evaluare în vederea verificării aplicării acquis-ului Schengen.

Prin intermediul acestui Regulament, se adaugă o dimensiune comunitară semnificativă Spațiului Schengen, atât în ceea ce privește evaluarea îndeplinirii criteriilor pentru statele candidate, cât și pentru verificarea aplicării corespunzătoare a acquis-ului de către statele care deja fac parte din Spațiul Schengen.

România, în calitate de stat care nu aplică integral dispozițiile acquis-ului Schengen, este direct interesată de modul în care va funcționa noul mecanism, mai ales în condițiile în care din punct de vedere tehnic au fost îndeplinite condițiile pentru eliminarea controlului la frontiere, iar în prezent există un blocaj de natură politică.

Poate genera acest mecanism condiții suplimentare pentru state precum România?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(25 iulie 2013)

Articolul 1 din textul convenit al noului Regulament privind mecanismul de evaluare Schengen ([1]) precizează că, în ceea ce privește decizia privind aplicarea integrală a acquis-ului Schengen, noul regulament nu se va aplica României, deoarece, în momentul intrării în vigoare a acestui regulament, evaluarea relevantă va fi deja încheiată.

Comisia confirmă faptul că acest mecanism nu generează condiții suplimentare pentru țări ca România.

([1]) Proiect de Regulament al Consiliului privind instituirea unui mecanism de evaluare în vederea verificării aplicării acquis-ului Schengen — a se vedea documentul Consiliului nr.10723/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006633/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Evaluation mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen *acquis*

On 30 May, an agreement was reached on the Schengen Governance package. The proposed laws include a regulation on the establishment of an evaluation mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen *acquis*.

Through this regulation, a significant Community dimension is added to the Schengen Area, both in terms of the evaluation of candidate states' fulfilment of criteria, as well as the verification of the appropriate application of the *acquis* by the states that are already part of the Schengen Area.

As a state that does not fully apply the provisions of the Schengen *acquis*, Romania is directly interested in how this new mechanism will work, particularly as the conditions for eliminating border checks have been met from a technical point of view, and yet there is now a political impasse.

Can this mechanism generate supplementary conditions for states such as Romania?

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

Article 1 of the text agreed for the new Regulation on the Schengen evaluation mechanism ([1]) makes clear that, with regard to the decision on the full application of the Schengen *acquis*, the new regulation will not apply to Romania, the relevant evaluation being already completed at the time the new Regulation comes into force.

The Commission can confirm that this mechanism does not generate supplementary conditions for states such as Romania.

([1]) Draft Council regulation on the establishment of an evaluation mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen *acquis* — see Council document 10273/13.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-006634/13
à la Commission
Louis Michel (ALDE)
(10 juin 2013)

Objet: Situation politique à Magadascar

La Cour électorale spéciale (CES) a publié, le 3 mai 2013, la liste officielle des candidats à l'élection présidentielle qui se tiendra le 24 juillet prochain à Madagascar. Andry Rajoelina, actuel président de la Transition à Madagascar, figure parmi les candidats, à la grande surprise de tous. Ce dernier s'était en effet engagé, tout comme son opposant Marc Ravalomanana, à ne pas se présenter aux élections par souci d'apaisement des tensions et sous la pression de la communauté internationale.

En se portant candidat, Andry Rajoelina viole l'article 96 de l'accord de Cotonou qui interdit à tout auteur de coup d'État de diriger un pays.

Le 15 mai dernier, la Haute représentante de l'Union pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité a déclaré qu'elle soutenait la position de la SADC ainsi que les efforts de médiation qu'elle entreprend.

Le 5 juin dernier, la CES a déclaré qu'elle refusait de réviser la liste des candidats à l'élection présidentielle et qu'elle maintenait donc les candidatures d'Andry Rajoelina, de Lalao Ravalomanana, née Rakotonirainy, et de Didier Ratsiraka. Traiter les trois candidats sur le même pied porte atteinte aux droits politiques et civiques des candidatures de Mme Lalao Ravalomanana, née Rakotonirainy, et de M. Ratsiraka.

Quelles sont, dès lors, les mesures que l'Union européenne compte prendre?

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

À la suite à la déclaration évoquée par l'Honorable Parlementaire, l'Union européenne a continué de s'engager activement et de soutenir avec force les efforts de médiation de la SADC pour aider les parties prenantes malgaches à sortir de l'impasse actuelle.

L'UE a réaffirmé son appui et son alignement sur les récents communiqués publiés par l'Union africaine et la SADC, condamnant fermement ces développements politiques et demandant instamment le retrait des candidatures d'Andry Rajoelina, de Lalao Ravalomanana et de Didier Ratsiraka.

L'UE a également participé de manière active à la récente réunion du groupe international de contact sur Madagascar (GIC-M), qui s'est tenue le 26 juin à Addis. À cette occasion, la communauté internationale a réitéré son message à toutes les parties prenantes malgaches concernant la nécessité de trouver une solution rapide à la crise.

Suivant les recommandations faites à Addis par M. Chissano, médiateur de la SADC, et approuvées par le GIC-M, l'UE envisage d'appliquer des mesures restrictives ciblées à l'encontre des personnes dont il est estimé qu'elles portent atteinte au processus électoral à Madagascar et à la mise en œuvre de la feuille de route pour la transition.

Conformément à l'opinion de la communauté internationale, l'UE a également indiqué qu'elle refuserait de reconnaître le résultat d'élections auxquelles les candidats illégitimes auraient participé. Compte tenu de la réunion du GIC-M du 26 juin, l'UE a décidé de suspendre temporairement le projet de mission d'observation électorale. Elle est aussi en train d'examiner les implications d'un gel provisoire de son soutien au processus électoral entaché d'irrégularités, jusqu'à ce que les candidatures deviennent conformes à la loi.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006634/13
to the Commission
Louis Michel (ALDE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Political situation in Madagascar

On 3 May 2013, Madagascar's Special Electoral Court (CES) released the official list of candidates in the presidential election to be held on 24 July 2013. To universal surprise, the current President of the Madagascan High Transitional Authority, Andry Rajoelina, featured among the list of candidates. Under pressure from the international community, Rajoelina and his opponent, Marc Ravalomanana, had pledged not to stand in order to ease tensions in the country.

By standing for the presidency, Andry Rajoelina has violated Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, which prohibits any individual who has instigated a coup from governing a country.

On 15 May 2013, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy stated that she supported the position adopted by the South African Development Community (SADC) and its mediation efforts.

On 5 June 2013, the CES stated that it was not prepared to revise the list of presidential candidates and that Andry Rajoelina, Lalao Ravalomanana née Rakotonirainy and Didier Ratsiraka would be allowed to stand. Treating the three candidates in the same way infringes the political and civic rights of Ms Ravalomanana née Rakotonirainy and Mr Ratsiraka.

What action does the EU intend to take?

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

Following the statement the Honorable Member of Parliament refers to, the EU has continued its active involvement and strong support to SADC's mediation efforts to help Malagasy stakeholders to overcome the current impasse.

The EU has confirmed its support and alignment with recent Communiqués issued by the Africa Union and SADC firmly regretting those political developments and urging the withdrawal of Andry Rajoelina, Lalao Ravalomanana and Didier Ratsiraka.

The EU has also actively participated in the recent meeting of the International Contact Group on Madagascar (ICG-M) held on 26 June in Addis, where the international community reinforced its message to all stakeholders in Madagascar on the need to expedite the resolution of the crisis.

Following recommendations made in Addis by Dr Chissano, SADC's mediator, endorsed by the ICG-M, the EU is considering applying targeted restrictive measures against those individuals considered to be undermining the electoral process in Madagascar and the implementation of the Roadmap for transition.

In line with the international community the EU has also indicated that it will not recognise the result of elections which include the illegal candidates. The EU has decided to temporarily suspend the planned Electoral Observation Mission and is examining the implications of freezing temporarily its support to the electoral process flawed by irregularities until the legality of candidatures is restored, in light of the ICG-M meeting on 26 June.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-006635/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Declarações do Comissário Rehn sobre o FMI

Segundo a edição em linha do Financial Times, o senhor Comissário Olli Renh comparou o duro relatório do FMI sobre a gestão do primeiro resgate à Grécia, de 110 mil milhões de euros, com uma brecha no princípio transatlântico «entrar juntos, sair juntos» desenvolvido na guerra dos Balcãs nos anos 1990.

O senhor Comissário terá afirmado: «Penso que não é justo o FMI lavar as mãos e deitar a água suja para os europeus».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Confirma estas declarações?

2. Como avalia o recente relatório do FMI sobre a gestão do primeiro resgate à Grécia?

3. Quais as conclusões do mesmo de que «discorda fundamentalmente»?

4. Que conclusões retira do mesmo que possam servir para melhorar a gestão dos resgates em curso?

5. Considera ter havido quebra de lealdade institucional do FMI para com a Comissão?

6. Acredita que os termos duros constantes do relatório significam, na prática, o reconhecimento por parte do FMI de que o caminho trilhado pela troika na Grécia não foi bem sucedido?

7. Não será a altura de proceder a alterações estruturais nos programas de ajustamento em curso?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(4 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão expressou claramente o seu ponto de vista sobre o relatório do FMI a que o Senhor Deputado se refere. O relatório identifica êxitos significativos durante a vigência do programa, nomeadamente a forte consolidação orçamental, a reforma do sistema de pensões e a contenção dos efeitos colaterais. Evidencia ainda outros desenvolvimentos positivos, como as reformas do mercado de trabalho e do sistema de cuidados de saúde.

A Comissão já identificou as conclusões com que não concorda. Uma delas, é que teria sido preferível proceder à reestruturação da dívida em 2010. A Comissão considera o relatório tem em conta a natureza interligada dos Estados-Membros da área do euro. A reestruturação da dívida do setor privado envolveria certamente o risco de contágio sistémico e também teria comprometido seriamente o programa. A Comissão, que foi a principal impulsionadora da forte incidência do programa nas reformas estruturais, também não concorda com o ponto de vista de que não foi feito o suficiente para identificar essas reformas.

A Grécia continua a realizar progressos no quadro do seu 2.º programa de ajustamento económico mas, no entanto, muito continua por fazer. A Comissão considera que a plena execução do programa é um fator crítico e a única forma de a Grécia regressar ao crescimento e melhorar a situação do emprego.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006635/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Commissioner Rehn's statements on the IMF

The online edition of the *Financial Times* reports that Commissioner Olli Rehn compared the IMF's harsh report on the handling of Greece's first EUR 110 billion bailout with a breach of the transatlantic 'in together, out together' principle developed in the Balkans war in the 1990s.

The *Financial Times* quotes the Commissioner as saying: 'I don't think it's fair and just for the IMF to wash its hands and throw the dirty water on the Europeans'.

1. Can the Commission confirm these statements?

2. How does it assess the recent IMF report on the handling of the first Greek bailout?

3. What are the findings of the report with which it 'fundamentally disagrees'?

4. Which of the report's findings could help improve the handling of the bailouts currently underway?

5. Does it believe that there has been a breach of the IMF's institutional loyalty to the Commission?

6. Does it believe that the harsh terms of the report mean in effect that the IMF now recognises that the course taken by the troika in Greece has not been successful?

7. Is it not now time to make structural changes to the current adjustment programmes?

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

The Commission has clearly expressed its views on the IMF report referred to by the Honourable Member. The report identifies notable successes during the programme, in particular the strong fiscal consolidation, the reform of the pension system and the containment of spillovers. It also highlights other positive developments, such as the labour market and healthcare system reforms.

The Commission has already highlighted the findings with which it disagrees. One of them is the conclusion that an upfront debt restructuring in 2010 would have been desirable. The Commission is of the opinion the report ignores the interconnected nature of the euro area Member States. Private sector debt restructuring would have certainly risked systemic contagion and would also have severely undermined the programme. The Commission, which has been a major driving force behind the strong focus of the programme on structural reforms, also disagrees with the view that not enough was done to identify such reforms.

Greece continues to make progress under its 2nd economic adjustment programme, yet much stillremains to be done. The Commission believes that full implementation of the programme is critical and the only way for the return of growth and jobs to Greece.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006636/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(10 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Crimen de odio en París

El pasado miércoles 5 de junio de 2013, tras salir de una tienda de ropa, un estudiante francés, Clément Méric, fue golpeado hasta la muerte por miembros de la extrema derecha francesa por ser homosexual. Clément era miembro de «Solidaires Estudiant-e-s» y de «Action Antifasciste Paris-Banlieue».

El ataque se produjo en el marco de las protestas en contra del matrimonio gay, movilizaciones homófobas en las que las organizaciones de extrema derecha —incluyendo el grupo nazi, Jeunesses Nationalist révolutionnaires (JNR), presuntos responsables de la agresión— han participado de manera destacada e impune. El Front National de Le Pen se ha esforzado en desmarcarse del asesinato, pero se sabe que grupúsculos nazis como JNR forman parte del entorno del FN desde su nacimiento y hasta hoy. Según algunos informes, uno de los agresores llevaba una camiseta del FN.

La UE se ha comprometido en varias ocasiones contra el fascismo y el nazismo. Así lo refleja la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI del Consejo de 28 de noviembre de 2008 y la Decisión 1904/2006/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo que establece el programa «Memoria histórica activa de Europa» para evitar que se repitan los crímenes del nazismo y del estalinismo. También la Comisaria Malmström puso en funcionamiento en 2011 un programa de la UE para la Sensibilización frente a la Radicalización («RSR») ([1]), donde se incluyen propuestas como formar a la policía local para detectar signos de radicalización hacia el extremismo violento y facilitar programas de desradicalización y desvinculación de los miembros de grupos extremistas.

¿Considera la Comisión que la violencia o el odio dirigidos contra personas por su orientación sexual es punible de acuerdo con lo dispuesto en la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI? Si este no fuera el caso, ¿existe a juicio de la Comisión otro acto jurídico comunitario susceptible de proteger a la ciudadanía europea contra la discriminación, la violencia o el odio por su orientación sexual? ¿Se plantea la Comisión proponer reforzar o completar el ordenamiento jurídico de la UE en este ámbito? En vistas del constante incremento de la violencia ultraderechista, ¿qué actividades más allá del RSR piensa hacer para frenar estas acciones que atenta contra la libertad de expresión y los derechos fundamentales en Europa?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión está supervisando actualmente las medidas de aplicación de la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI adoptadas por los Estados miembros y tiene previsto publicar un informe sobre esa cuestión en diciembre de 2013. Además, es y será competencia de las autoridades nacionales investigar todo delito motivado por la intolerancia o toda incitación al odio, y perseguir a sus autores.

Dado que el proceso de supervisión de la Directiva Marco por parte de la Comisión está aún en curso, es prematuro indicar si es preciso revisarla. Por el momento, no cubre los delitos motivados por la intolerancia en relación con la orientación sexual. La Comisión desearía señalar que, en virtud de los Tratados, toda revisión de ese instrumento requeriría una decisión unánime del Consejo (tras obtener el consentimiento del Parlamento) en virtud de la cual los delitos motivados por el odio constituyan un «ámbito criminal de especial gravedad, con una dimensión transfronteriza».

La Directiva relativa a los derechos de las víctimas ([2]) establece una serie de normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección de todas las víctimas de cualquier delito, incluidos los motivados por la intolerancia y la violencia generada por los prejuicios. Además, la Comisión presentó en 2008 una propuesta de Directiva del Consejo por la que se aplica el principio de igualdad de trato a las personas independientemente de su religión o convicciones, discapacidad, edad u orientación sexual ([3]), que de adoptarse ampliaría el ámbito de protección más allá del sector del empleo.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-59_es.htm
([2]) Directiva 2012/29/UE que ha de ser aplicada por todos los Estados miembros no más tarde del 16 de noviembre de 2015. Contiene un amplio catálogo de derechos procesales penales y de acceso a servicios de asistencia generales y especializados.
([3]) COM(2008) 0426 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006636/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Hate crime in Paris

On Wednesday 5 June 2013, having just left a clothes shop, a French student, Clément Méric, was beaten to death by members of the French far right for being gay. Clément was a member of the student organisation *Solidaires Étudiant-e-s* and of the anti-fascist group *Action Antifasciste Paris-Banlieue*.

The attack took place against a backdrop of protests against gay marriage, homophobic demonstrations in which far-right organisations — including the fascist group *Jeunesses Nationalistes Révolutionnaires* (JNR), allegedly responsible for the attack — have played a prominent role, albeit with impunity. Le Pen's National Front (NF) has sought to distance itself from the murder, but it is well known that fascist factions, such as the JNR, have been involved with the NF ever since its inception. According to some reports, one of the attackers was wearing an NF t-shirt.

The EU has repeatedly promised to combat fascism and Nazism. This is reflected in Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JAI of 28 November 2008 and Decision No 1904/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the programme 'Active European Remembrance' to prevent any repetition of the crimes of Nazism and Stalinism. Commissioner Malmström also launched an EU programme in 2011 to address Radicalisation Awareness ('RAN') ([1]), which includes proposals on training local police to detect signs of radicalisation into violent extremism, and providing de-radicalisation or exit programmes for members of extremist groups.

Does the Commission think that violence or hatred against people on the basis of their sexual orientation is punishable in accordance with the provisions of Framework Decision 2008/913/JAI? If not, in the Commission's view, is there any other EU legal act that could protect European citizens against discrimination, violence or hatred on the basis of their sexual orientation? Does the Commission plan to propose reforming or supplementing EC law in this area? Given the steady increase in far-right violence, what action, beyond the RAN, will it take to put a stop to this kind of behaviour, which threatens freedom of expression and fundamental rights in Europe?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Commission is currently monitoring Member States' implementing measures of the framework Decision 2008/913/JHA and will draw up a report on this issue, scheduled for December 2013. Furthermore, it is, and will remain, the competence of national authorities to investigate any instances of hate crime and speech and to prosecute the perpetrators of such offences.

As the Commission is in the process of monitoring the Member States' compliance with the framework Decision, it is premature to indicate whether this instrument should be revised. For the time being, it does not cover hate crime on the ground of sexual orientation. The Commission would like to point out that under the Treaties, any revision of the instrument would require the Council to unanimously decide (after having obtained the consent of the Parliament) that hate crime is 'an area of particularly serious crime with a cross-border dimension'.

The Victims' Directive ([2]) establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of all victims of all crimes, including hate crime and bias violence. The Commission also tabled in 2008 a Proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation ([3]) which would extend the scope of protection beyond the field of employment.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-59_en.htm
([2]) Directive 2012/29/EU which is to be implemented by all Member States by 16 November 2015. It contains a broad set of procedural rights in criminal proceedings and access to general and specialist support services.
([3]) COM(2008) 0426 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006637/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(10 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Sobrecostes encubiertos por aerolíneas

Las compañías aéreas incrementan sus cobros por servicios básicos, obligando incluso en ocasiones al pago de recargos no anunciados. Entre los recargos más comunes se cuentan el pago con tarjeta, la emisión de la tarjeta de embarque, la facturación de la maleta o de un segundo equipaje, recargos escandalosos por el sobrepeso del equipaje, la elección de asiento, el embarque prioritario o los servicios de restauración.

Muchos de estos recargos se producen sin que, tras ellos, exista un sobrecoste real para la compañía aérea, siendo su intención extraer el máximo beneficio de los consumidores, vulnerando sus derechos.

En 2011 la Comisión inició una investigación y en 2012 se aprobó el informe del Parlamento Europeo sobre el funcionamiento y la aplicación de los derechos adquiridos de los usuarios de los transportes aéreos (2011/2150(INI)) sin que las compañías aéreas hayan cesado en estas prácticas claramente ilegales. Al contrario, cada vez con mayor asiduidad se van incluyendo más recargos. Por otro lado, la normativa europea indica que la ciudadanía debe conocer de antemano el precio final del billete sin que pueda variarse el mismo.

Concretamente Vueling ha fijado un límite a la opción de «no escoger asiento», la cual no tenía recargo, de modo que un cliente puede verse obligado a comprar un asiento para poder proceder con la tarjeta de embarque. De la misma forma, Ryanair no informa con claridad a sus clientes de la opción de no pagar por su asiento provocando sobrecostes injustos.

¿Considera que estas son prácticas abusivas y generan competencia desleal al ocultar el precio final del servicio? ¿Qué medidas piensa tomar para evitar que los consumidores sean engañados sobre el precio final de su billete? ¿Qué sanciones se van a imponer a las compañías aéreas por estas prácticas? ¿Contempla la Comisión reforzar los derechos de los pasajeros aéreos para evitar estos abusos? Concretamente, ¿cree que obligar a un pago posterior para poder sentarse es una práctica abusiva? ¿Qué acciones piensa tomar al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de julio de 2013)

El artículo 22 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1008/2008 (Reglamento de servicios aéreos) declara la libertad de fijación de precios de las compañías aéreas. No obstante, esta libertad de fijación de precios no es absoluta. El artículo 23 de dicho Reglamento obliga a las compañías aéreas a incluir las condiciones aplicables a las tarifas aéreas ofrecidas o publicadas bajo cualquier forma, y dispone que se indicará en todo momento el precio final antes de cualquier suplemento opcional de precio ([1]). Además del precio final, se deben precisar al menos los siguientes elementos: «a) la tarifa o flete; b) los impuestos; c) las tasas de aeropuerto, y d) otros cánones, recargos o derechos, tales como los relacionados con la seguridad extrínseca o el combustible». El mismo artículo obliga a que los suplementos opcionales de precios se comuniquen de una manera clara, transparente y sin ambigüedades al comienzo de cualquier proceso de reserva, y a que su aceptación por el pasajero se realice sobre una base de opción de inclusión. La transparencia de los precios en el sector de la aviación se considera crucial para salvaguardar la competencia leal entre compañías aéreas y para garantizar que los pasajeros no se ven inducidos a error ([2]).

Según la normativa de la UE, las compañías aéreas tienen libertad para aplicar estrategias de «libre elección de asientos» y cobrar suplementos realmente opcionales de precio por servicios opcionales (por ejemplo, prioridad de embarque, elección de asiento por razones de comodidad, etc.). Según la información que obra en poder de los servicios de la Comisión, los pasajeros no están obligados a escoger asiento para obtener su tarjeta de embarque: la tarjeta de embarque se expide con independencia de que el viajero haya elegido la opción de escoger asiento o no.

Sin embargo, si un pasajero considera que el trato que ha recibido por una compañía aérea no se ajusta a las condiciones establecidas del transporte, debe ponerse en contacto con las autoridades competentes del Estado miembro de que se trate que puedan investigar el asunto.

([1]) Este precio debe incluir la tarifa o flete aplicable así como los impuestos aplicables y los cánones, recargos y derechos que sean obligatorios y previsibles en el momento de su publicación.

([2]) Véase el control de adecuación de las normas de la aviación de la UE, 6 de junio de 2013 http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/doc/fitness_check_internal_aviation_market_en_commission_staff_working_document.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006637/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Additional charges concealed by airlines

Airlines are increasing their charges for basic services, at times even asking passengers to pay charges of which they have not been informed. The most common charges are added for card payments, issuing boarding passes, checking in baggage or a second piece of baggage, outrageous fees for excess baggage, seat selection, priority boarding, and food and drink.

Many of these charges are applied even though they do not actually cost the airline anything, their sole purpose being to extract the maximum amount of profit from consumers, thereby infringing their rights.

In 2011, the Commission launched an investigation and, in 2012, the European Parliament's report on the functioning and application of established rights of people travelling by air (2011/2150(INI)) was approved, yet the airlines have not stopped these clearly illegal practices. On the contrary, they continue to apply more and more charges. However, under European regulations, citizens must be informed in advance of the final cost of their ticket, which must not change.

Specifically, Vueling has restricted the 'no seat selection' option, which was free of charge, which means that passengers can now be forced to purchase a seat in order to obtain their boarding pass. Similarly, Ryanair does not provide passengers with clear information about the option of not paying for a seat, resulting in unfair excess charges.

Does the Commission believe these are abusive practices and they result in unfair competition by concealing the final price of the service? What measures does it intend to take to ensure that consumers are not misled about the final price of their ticket? What sanctions is it going to apply to airlines who participate in such practices? Does the Commission intend to strengthen the rights of air passengers in order to prevent such abuses? Specifically, does it believe that requiring passengers to pay for a seat at a later stage is an abusive practice? What actions does it intend to take in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2013)

Article 22 of the Air Services Regulation (EC) 1008/2008 declares the pricing freedom of air carriers. This pricing freedom is however not absolute. Article 23 of the same Regulation obliges air carriers to include the applicable condition of air fares when offered or published in any form and provides that the final price before any optional price supplements ([1]) must be indicated at all times. In addition to the final price, at least the following elements shall be specified: '(a) air fare or air rate; (b) taxes; (c) airport charges; and (d) other charges, surcharges or fees, such as those related to security or fuel'. The same Article obliges that optional price supplements shall be communicated in a clear, transparent and unambiguous way at the start of any booking process and their acceptance by the customer shall be on an 'opt-in' basis. Aviation price transparency is considered as crucial to safeguard fair competition between airlines and to ensure that passengers are not misled ([2]).

Under EC law, airlines are free to run 'free seating policies' and to charge genuinely optional price supplements for optional service (for example for priority boarding, selection of dedicated seat by convenience, etc.). To the knowledge of the Commission's services, passengers are not forced to purchase a dedicated seat to obtain their boarding card. The boarding card is issued regardless of whether the passenger chose the seat selection option or not.

If however a passenger believes that he/she was not treated by air carriers according to the terms and conditions of the carriage he/she should contact the enforcement authorities of the relevant Member State that has power to investigate the case.

([1]) This price shall include the applicable air fare or air rate as well as applicable taxes, and charges, surcharges and fees which are unavoidable and foreseeable at the time of publication.

([2]) See Fitness check of EU aviation rules, 6th June 2013

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/doc/fitness_check_internal_aviation_market_en_commission_staff_working_document.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006638/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(10 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Violazione dei diritti umani in Arabia Saudita

É notizia recente che in Arabia Saudita, a causa del gran numero di condanne alla pena capitale, il numero dei boia è insufficiente a far fronte a tutte le esecuzioni e il governo arabo sta quindi vagliando la possibilità di sostituire alla decapitazione tramite sciabola, più complessa e difficile da attuare, la fucilazione. Alcune settimane fa, inoltre, un cittadino libanese e uno saudita sono stati condannati a ricevere 300 frustate e a scontare sei anni di detenzione per aver convertito una ragazza al cristianesimo.

La Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea tutela, rispettivamente agli articoli 1 e 2, la dignità umana e il diritto alla vita, affermando testualmente che «La dignità umana è inviolabile. Essa deve essere rispettata e tutelata» e che «Ogni individuo ha diritto alla vita (…) Nessuno può essere condannato alla pena di morte, né giustiziato».

Inoltre, la giurisprudenza della Corte europea per i diritti dell'uomo ha spesso considerato la relazione tra la libertà religiosa e la libertà di espressione, ispirando il Consiglio d'Europa che vi ha dedicato alcune risoluzioni, tra cui spiccano le numero 1510/2006, 1577/2007 e 1805/2007.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante:

1. Quali misure intende prendere per dare impulso al dialogo con l'Arabia Saudita sul tema della protezione dei diritti umani?

2. Di quali dati dispone la Commissione sul tema delle condanne capitali in Medio Oriente?

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

1. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è ben consapevole delle questioni relative all'Arabia Saudita sollevate dall'onorevole parlamentare. La delegazione dell'UE e le missioni diplomatiche dell'UE a Riyad seguono da vicino e riferiscono regolarmente sulla situazione dei diritti umani, anche in materia di libertà di culto.

Tra l'UE e l'Arabia Saudita non esistono attualmente accordi bilaterali su cui si possa basare un dialogo politico bilaterale istituzionalizzato in cui affrontare anche le questioni relative ai diritti umani.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e suoi servizi hanno utilizzato l'intera gamma delle opportunità e degli strumenti a loro disposizione, tra cui numerose dichiarazioni e iniziative diplomatiche, per sollevare sistematicamente le questioni relative ai diritti umani e alle libertà fondamentali nei contatti con i funzionari sauditi.

2. Il SEAE non compila statistiche proprie sul numero di condanne a morte pronunciate nei paesi terzi, ma secondo Amnesty International nel 2012 sono state inflitte almeno 505 condanne a morte in 16 paesi del Medio Oriente, rispetto alle 750 del 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006638/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights violations in Saudi Arabia

According to recent reports, due to the large number of death sentences handed down there, there are not enough executioners in Saudi Arabia to carry out all the executions and the Saudi Government is thus looking into the possibility of replacing beheading, which is more complicated and difficult to carry out, with execution by firing squad. Several weeks ago, a Lebanese national and a Saudi national were sentenced to 300 lashes and six years' imprisonment for having converted a girl to Christianity.

Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union safeguard human dignity and the right to life, respectively, laying down that 'Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected' and that 'Everyone has the right to life. No one shall be condemned to the death penalty, or executed.'

Moreover, the link between religious freedom the freedom of expression has been contemplated many times in the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, leading the Council of Europe to devote several resolutions to this issue, of which Nos 1510/2006, 1577/2007 and 1805/2007 are obvious examples.

1. What steps does the Commission plan to take to promote a dialogue with Saudi Arabia on the protection of human rights?

2. What figures does the Commission have for death sentences handed down in the Middle East?

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

1. The HR/VP is well aware of the issues raised by the Honourable Member of the European Parliament with regard to Saudi Arabia. The EU Delegation and EU diplomatic missions in Riyadh are closely following the human rights situation, including religious freedom, as part of their regular reporting.

There are currently no bilateral agreements between the EU and Saudi Arabia on which an institutionalised bilateral political dialogue, inlcuding on Human Rights, could be based.

The HR/VP and her services have been using the full range of opportunities and instruments available, including numerous statements and diplomatic demarches, to raise human rights and fundamental freedoms regularly in their contacts with Saudi officials.

2. The EEAS does not compile own statistics on the number of death sentences handed down in third countries. However, according to Amnesty International, at least 505 death sentences were imposed in 16 countries of the Middle East in 2012, down from 750 in 2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006639/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(10 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Scandalo alimentare a Taiwan

Alla fine del mese di maggio sull'isola di Taiwan è stata avviata un'operazione di controllo della qualità di numerosi alimenti, azione resasi necessaria a causa della scoperta di tracce rilevanti di pesticidi e altri elementi tossici in molti prodotti commercializzati nel Paese e negli Stati terzi. In particolare, polvere di agar e tapioca contaminate sono state rinvenute in budini, gelati e riso. Sebbene le autorità abbiano attuato ispezioni in migliaia di attività commerciali, non si conosce ancora l'esatta quantità dei prodotti che sarebbe necessario ritirare al più presto dal mercato.

La legislazione europea attribuisce grande importanza all'etichettatura — secondo quanto stabilito dalla direttiva 2000/13/CE — che non deve indurre in errore il consumatore con riferimento alla vera natura del prodotto.

Si osservi, inoltre, che l'Unione europea è il quarto partner commerciale di Taiwan dopo Cina, Stati Uniti e Giappone.

Infine, il Libro Bianco sulla sicurezza alimentare COM(1999)0719 sottolinea che «Ai consumatori si dovrebbe offrire un'ampia gamma di prodotti sicuri e di alta qualità provenienti da tutti gli Stati membri. Questo è il ruolo essenziale del mercato interno (…). Tale principio deve valere indipendentemente dal fatto che gli alimenti vengano prodotti nella Comunità europea o importati da Paesi terzi».

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza degli ultimi sviluppi relativi alla situazione sull'isola di Taiwan;

2. se vi siano notizie dell'entrata nel mercato unico europeo di merci provenienti da Taiwan e potenzialmente nocive per la salute dei consumatori;

3. quali azioni intende intraprendere per aumentare il controllo nell'ambito della sicurezza alimentare?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(19 luglio 2013)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione a Taiwan menzionata dall'onorevole deputato. Sin dalle prime fasi della recente crisi attinente alla sicurezza alimentare le autorità competenti taiwanesi hanno informato in modo proattivo la Commissione delle pertinenti risultanze.

La Commissione nota che le autorità competenti taiwanesi hanno adottato le misure appropriate per affrontare la crisi. Inoltre, il 31 maggio 2013 il legislatore taiwanese ha modificato la «Legge sulla sanità alimentare», rafforzando le ispezioni sugli alimenti secondo un modello più vicino a quello dettato dalla legislazione unionale sulla sicurezza alimentare e introducendo sanzioni più severe in caso di violazioni.

2. Sono state identificate partite di prodotti taiwanesi non conformi ai requisiti unionali. Le notifiche del caso sono state emanate per il tramite del Sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi dell'UE al fine di consentire alle autorità competenti degli Stati membri di prendere le misure appropriate per tenere lontani questi prodotti dal mercato dell'UE.

3. La Commissione continua a seguire da vicino la situazione di concerto con gli stakeholder e le autorità pertinenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006639/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Food scandal in Taiwan

At the end of May 2013, an operation got under way in Taiwan to inspect the quality of many foodstuffs. This action was necessary after significant traces of pesticides and other toxins were found in a wide range of products sold in the country and in third countries. In particular, contaminated agar powder and tapioca were found in puddings, ice cream and rice. Although the authorities have inspected thousands of commercial establishments, it is not yet known exactly how many products need to be taken off the market as a matter of urgency.

EU legislation attaches great importance to labelling — according to the provisions of Directive 2000/13/EC — which must not mislead the consumer as to the actual nature of the product.

It should also be noted that the EU is Taiwan's fourth largest trading partner after China, the United States and Japan.

Finally, according to the White Paper on food safety COM(1999)0719, 'Consumers should be offered a wide range of safe and high quality products coming from all Member States. This is the essential role of the internal market. […] This principle must apply whether the food is produced within the European Community or imported from third countries.'

1. Is the Commission aware of the latest developments in the situation in Taiwan?

2. Have there been any reports of Taiwanese goods that are potentially harmful to consumers' health entering the EU single market?

3. What action will the Commission take to step-up food safety checks?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the situation in Taiwan mentioned by the Honourable Member. Since the early stage of the recent food safety crisis the Taiwanese competent authority proactively informed the Commission about the relevant findings.

The Commission notes that the Taiwanese competent authority took appropriate measures in order to address the crisis. In addition, on 31 May 2013, the Taiwanese legislator amended the 'Act Good Food Sanitation', strengthening food inspection in a framework closer to the European Union food safety legislation and introducing tougher penalties for violations.

2. Consignments of Taiwanese goods not complying with EU requirements have been identified. The relevant notifications have been issued via the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed to enable the Member States' competent authorities to take the appropriate measures to keep these goods out of the EU market.

3. The Commission continues to monitor closely the situation in strict cooperation with the relevant stakeholders and authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006640/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(10 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Bambini nordcoreani costretti a lasciare la scuola per piantare il riso

All'inizio del mese di giugno è stata diffusa la notizia che il governo nordcoreano ha intimato a tutti i cittadini, anche ai bambini di età compresa tra i 5 e i 10 anni, di lasciare le loro mansioni abituali per recarsi nei campi a piantare il riso. Le scuole hanno chiuso il primo maggio e non esistono comunicazioni ufficiali che ne garantiscano al più presto la riapertura.

Il regime di Pyongyang è testimone di una crisi economica, ma anche e soprattutto alimentare, in continuo peggioramento e le conseguenze di questa situazione colpiscono anzitutto i minori.

L'articolo 24 della CEDU sostiene che i minori hanno diritto alla protezione e alle cure necessarie per il loro benessere, mentre l'articolo 32 ribadisce il divieto di sfruttare il lavoro minorile e precisa altresì che «i giovani ammessi al lavoro devono beneficiare di condizioni di lavoro appropriate alla loro età ed essere protetti contro lo sfruttamento economico o contro ogni lavoro che possa minarne la sicurezza, la salute, lo sviluppo (…) o che possa mettere a rischio la loro istruzione».

Infine, stando alla comunicazione della Commissione COM(2010)0573 dal titolo Strategia per un'attuazione effettiva della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, l'obiettivo dell'Unione deve essere quello di «(..) rendere il più possibile effettivi nell'Unione i diritti fondamentali contenuti nella Carta».

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se sia in possesso di nuove informazioni relative alle condizioni di vita dei bambini nordcoreani;

2. quali azioni intenda intraprendere, a livello globale, per tutelare i diritti dell'infanzia e prevenire episodi di sfruttamento come quelli segnalati nella regione asiatica?

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

È difficile avere informazioni dettagliate e affidabili sulle condizioni nella Repubblica popolare democratica di Corea (RPDC). In generale, tuttavia, la situazione dei gruppi vulnerabili nella RPDC, compresi i bambini, resta precaria. Il rachitismo infantile è molto diffuso e i servizi sanitari presentano gravissime carenze. L'UE attua un programma di assistenza umanitaria a favore dei gruppi vulnerabili, compresi i bambini. Sul più ampio fronte dei diritti umani, l'UE ha promosso la creazione di una commissione d'indagine dell'ONU e coglie qualsiasi occasione per parlare con la RPDC della terribile situazione dei bambini.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006640/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: North Korean children forced to leave school to plant rice

According to reports that emerged in early June 2013, the North Korean Government has ordered all citizens, including children between the ages of 5 and 10, to leave their normal duties to go and plant rice in the fields. Schools closed on 1 May and there has been no official statement to confirm that they will reopen soon.

The regime in Pyongyang is experiencing an increasingly severe economic and, in particular, food crisis and it is children who are bearing the brunt of this situation.

According to Article 24 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, children shall have the right to such protection and care as is necessary for their well-being. Article 32 prohibits child labour and lays down that 'Young people admitted to work must have working conditions appropriate to their age and be protected against economic exploitation and any work likely to harm their safety, health or […] development or to interfere with their education.'

Finally, according to Communication from the Commission COM(2010)0573 entitled 'Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union', the EU's objective is 'to make the fundamental rights provided for in the Charter as effective as possible.'

1. Does the Commission have any new information on children's living conditions in North Korea?

2. What global action will it take to safeguard the rights of children and to prevent episodes of child exploitation such as those reported in Asia?

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

Detailed and accurate information about conditions in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is hard to obtain. Nevertheless, in general, the situation of vulnerable groups in the DPRK, including children, remains fragile. Stunting of children is widespread and health services severly inadequate. The EU maintains a programme of humanitarian assistance in favour of vulnerable groups including children. On the broader, human rights front, the EU has sponsored the setting up of a UN Commission of Enquiry and raises the plight of children with the DPRK at every opportunity.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006642/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(10 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Rischi di contaminazione di una falda acquifera connaturati al progetto di ampliamento di una discarica a Trevignano (TV)

A Trevignano (TV), in una zona caratterizzata da vestigia di centuriazione romana, si trova la discarica per inerti «Postumia 2». Nel luglio del 2012, la Provincia di Treviso autorizzava un progetto di ampliamento dell'impianto dagli attuali 99.000 m3 a 850.000 m3 di estensione, con autorizzazione al conferimento di oltre un milione di tonnellate di rifiuti provenienti anche da siti contaminati e da operazioni di bonifica ([1]). Tale progetto comporta seri rischi di contaminazione della poco profonda falda acquifera sottostante alla discarica, prontamente segnalati con preoccupazione dall'azienda di gestione del servizio di approvvigionamento di acqua potabile. In una lettera scritta alla Provincia di Treviso, al Comune di Trevignano (TV), a quello di Istrana (TV) e all'ARPAV (Agenzia regionale per la prevenzione e protezione ambientale del Veneto), detta azienda specificava che l'ampliamento interessa un'area di ricarica della falda acquifera per la fascia di territorio che si trova a valle dell'impianto, corrispondente ai comuni di Paese (TV), Istrana (TV) e Vedelago (TV) ([2]). Più nello specifico, la discarica è separata dalla falda acquifera da uno strato di ghiaia spesso solo un paio di metri. Ciò nonostante, in base al progetto, per impermeabilizzare il fondo verrà utilizzato appena un metro di argilla, materiale questo, peraltro, solo parzialmente isolante.

È opportuno ricordare i problemi di inquinamento della falda acquifera (in tal caso da mercurio) che già caratterizzano alcune aree limitrofe, segnalati nelle interrogazioni E-010520/2011 ed E-004321/2013 presentate dallo scrivente. Il territorio circostante, infatti, presenta serie problematiche nella gestione dei rifiuti, dovute alla presenza di una sorprendente concentrazione di impianti per il trattamento e lo stoccaggio caratterizzati da numerose irregolarità. Uno di questi, la discarica denominata «Ex SEV» di Paese (TV), è già stato sottoposto all'attenzione della Commissione nella recente interrogazione E-004885/2013 presentata sempre dallo scrivente.

Tutto ciò premesso, ritiene la Commissione opportuno contattare le autorità locali al fine di verificare eventuali violazioni della normativa UE di settore, data l'approvazione dell'ampliamento di tale discarica nonostante la presenza di un impressionante numero di altri impianti nel territorio (spesso affetti da gravi irregolarità) e visti i rischi di inquinamento della poco profonda falda acquifera sottostante (ricordando i casi di grave inquinamento di falda acquifera già verificatisi in alcune zone limitrofe) ([3])?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(19 luglio 2013)

Le decisioni relative all'autorizzazione delle discariche sono adottate dalle autorità competenti degli Stati membri. La Commissione non interviene in tali decisioni a condizione che rispettino le pertinenti prescrizioni della normativa dell'UE, in particolare la direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti ([4]) («direttiva quadro sui rifiuti»), la direttiva 1999/31/CE relativa alle discariche di rifiuti ([5]) («direttiva sulle discariche») e la direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati sull'ambiente ([6]) («direttiva VIA»).

In questa fase la Commissione non dispone di alcuna informazione specifica da cui risulti che le autorità italiane competenti abbiano rilasciato un'autorizzazione non conforme alla pertinente normativa dell'Unione europea.

([1]) Contro l'ampliamento si schierano le associazioni ambientaliste Legambiente di Trevignano (TV) e Paeseambiente di Paese (TV); nel marzo del 2011, inoltre, 2.500 cittadini di Trevignano (TV) hanno firmato una petizione in proposito.
([2]) Cfr. Lettera di ATS (Alto Trevigiano Servizi S.r.l.), figurante nel link http://goo.gl/wvspC.
([3]) Il territorio della Regione del Veneto sembra essere caratterizzato da scarsa attenzione ai rischi per le falde acquifere legati a una gestione irregolare delle discariche. Cfr. un altro caso segnalato dallo scrivente nell'interrogazione E-003818-13 relativa alla discarica «Vianelle» di Marano Vicentino (VI).
([4]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.
([5]) GU L 182 del 16.7.1999.
([6]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006642/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Danger of aquifer contamination from the planned expansion of a landfill site in Trevignano, north-eastern Italy

The inert landfill site Postumia 2 in Trevignano, Treviso province, is located in an area featuring traces of Roman centuriation. In July 2012, the Treviso provincial authorities backed a plan to expand the site from its current size of 99 000 m^3 to 850 000 m^3, and authorised the dumping of over 1 million tonnes of waste, including material from contaminated sites and rehabilitation schemes ([1]). The plan involves a serious risk of contaminating the shallow aquifer that runs under the landfill, as was quickly pointed out with some concern by the domestic water supply company. In a letter addressed to the authorities of Treviso province, Trevignano and Istrana municipalities and ARPAV (the Veneto Region Environmental Protection Agency), the water company explained that the expansion would involve an aquifer recharge area supplying the municipalities of Paese, Istrana and Vedelago downstream of the site ([2]). More specifically, the landfill is separated from the aquifer by a layer of gravel that is often only a couple of metres thick. Nonetheless, according to the plan the bottom will be lined with just one metre of clay, a material that is only partly effective as a sealant.

It should be borne in mind that problems of aquifer contamination (with mercury, in this case) are already occurring in certain neighbouring areas, as the writer pointed out in questions E-010520/2011 and E-004321/2013. The surrounding area in fact suffers from serious waste management problems due to its surprising concentration of waste processing and storage plants, where a large number of irregularities have been reported. One of them, the Ex SEV landfill site in Paese, has already been brought to the Commission's attention in Question E-004885/2013, which was recently tabled by the writer.

In light of the above, does the Commission believe it should contact the local authorities in order to check whether any EU rules for the sector are being breached, since approval has been given for expansion of the landfill site even though an extraordinary number of other sites already exists in the area, and in view of the danger of polluting the shallow aquifer running beneath it (bearing in mind the cases of serious aquifer pollution that have already occurred in some neighbouring areas) ([3])?

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

Decisions about the authorisation of landfills are taken by the competent authorities in Member States. The Commission does not intervene in such decisions provided that they comply with relevant requirements in EC law, particularly the directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([4]) (the 'Waste Framework Directive'), Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste ([5]) (the 'Landfill Directive') and Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ([6]) (the 'EIA Directive').

At this stage, the Commission does not have any specific information indicating that the competent Italian authorities have issued a permit which would be non-compliant with relevant EU legislation.

([1]) The environmental groups Legambiente in Trevignano and Paesambiente in Paese, both in Treviso province, are campaigning against the expansion, and 2 500 people in Trevignano signed a petition on the subject in March 2011.
([2]) See Letter from ATS (Alto Trevigiano Servizi S.r.l.), available at http://goo.gl/wvspC.
([3]) The Veneto region seems to be marked by a lack of interest in the dangers posed to aquifers by improper landfill management. Another case was reported by the writer in Question E-003818/2013 on the Vianelle landfill in Marano Vicentino, Vicenza province.
([4]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([5]) OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.
([6]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006643/13
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(10 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Servizio Uber

Il servizio Uber consente, attraverso un'applicazione o un sito Internet mobile, di prenotare un servizio di autovettura con autista. Infatti, una volta registrato fornendo i propri dati e quelli della propria carta di credito, il cliente può richiedere il servizio e, tramite il GPS, viene localizzata e inviata l'auto libera più vicina. Il servizio, nato negli Stati Uniti, è arrivato negli scorsi mesi anche in città europee come Londra, Parigi, Amsterdam, Stoccolma, Milano e Roma e si configura come un ibrido tra taxi e noleggio auto con conducente, senza però rispettare la normativa vigente e senza ottenere prima dalle amministrazioni locali i permessi necessari a fornire il servizio.

In Italia tale servizio contrasta sia con la legge 21/1992 (Legge quadro per il trasporto di persone mediante autoservizi pubblici non di linea) sia con il testo unico delle leggi regionali in materia di trasporti, in particolare per quel che riguarda l'obbligo di stazionamento dei veicoli utilizzati all'interno delle autorimesse nonché il divieto di stazionamento su suolo pubblico.

Il costo della corsa non viene concordato preventivamente con l'utente come previsto per il servizio di noleggio con conducente, né viene determinato tramite tassametro omologato come per i taxi, ma pagato direttamente alla società Uber tramite l'applicazione e in virtù della distanza e della velocità calcolate via GPS. Si fa sempre più frequente il ricorso al price-sourcing, ovvero all'aumento esponenziale e ingiustificato del prezzo della corsa, non solo in casi eccezionali, ma a totale discrezione di Uber e senza preavviso per il cliente. Uber non richiede mai autorizzazioni preventive alle autorità locali, ma adotta come strategia quella di far sanare la propria posizione illegale da atti amministrativi successivi, a seguito di campagne stampa o di pressione sui clienti. Negli Stati Uniti Uber non si serve soltanto di autisti con regolare licenza, ma arruola cittadini privati dopo un breve colloquio e senza effettuare verifiche psicofisiche o giudiziarie. Un tale comportamento, se applicato nell'UE, ne violerebbe la normativa in materia di taxi e noleggio con conducente, mettendo a repentaglio la sicurezza dei clienti. La Direttiva 2006/123/CE esclude esplicitamente i servizi di trasporto, compresi i trasporti urbani e i taxi.

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere:

se è a conoscenza della situazione sopra descritta e se intende adottare misure per bloccare il proliferare di tali servizi che sono in palese contrasto con i principi di una concorrenza leale e trasparente, prima di trovarsi di fronte al fatto compiuto?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(21 agosto 2013)

I servizi di trasporto come quelli in questione comprendono il trasporto di passeggeri con autoveicoli, ossia veicoli omologati per trasportare al massimo otto passeggeri. I servizi sono generalmente prestati per brevi distanze e hanno un impatto locale. Non esiste alcuna legislazione specifica dell'UE per questi servizi. La normativa europea sul trasporto stradale regola solo i servizi di trasporto con autobus, i quali, per definizione, vengono effettuati con veicoli omologati per trasportare *più* di otto passeggeri, e la dimensione internazionale di tali mercati. La regolamentazione di detti servizi è prevista dalla normativa nazionale o regionale o, spesso, persino a livello comunale. Nel disciplinare detti servizi e nell'applicare la rispettiva normativa nazionale, gli Stati membri sono tenuti a rispettare i principi generali della legislazione dell'UE, come il principio di proporzionalità e il divieto di discriminazione in base alla nazionalità, nonché la libertà di stabilimento.

Le norme nazionali che stabiliscono determinati requisiti tecnici o altre norme mirano generalmente a garantire un certo livello di qualità del servizio e in quanto tali non sono incompatibili con il trattato, purché siano conformi ai suddetti principi.

Una situazione analoga a quella descritta dall'onorevole deputato, compreso, tra l'altro, l'obbligo di stazionamento nelle autorimesse, è stata segnalata al Tribunale amministrativo del Lazio e quest'ultimo ha deferito la questione alla Corte di giustizia europea per una pronuncia pregiudiziale ([1]). Dato che il procedimento è ancora in corso, la Commissione si astiene dall'emettere un parere in materia.

([1]) C-162/12, C-163/12 (cause riunite).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006643/13
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Uber service

The Uber service, accessed via a mobile Internet application, allows customers to book a car with a driver. Once customers register with the site by providing their personal details, including their credit card details, they can request the service. They are located via GPS and the nearest available car is sent to them. The service, created in the United States, was launched in recent months in European cities such as London, Paris, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Milan and Rome, and is a hybrid of a taxi service and car hire with chauffeur service, without, however, complying with current legislation or first obtaining from the local authorities the permits necessary to provide the service.

In Italy, this service runs counter to both Law No 21/1992 (Framework law on the carriage of persons on non-scheduled public transport), and the consolidated text of the regional laws on transport, in particular with regard to the obligation to park the vehicles used in a garage as well as the ban on parking on the public highway.

The cost of the journey is not agreed in advance with the user, which is the case with a car hire with chauffeur service, nor is it calculated by an approved meter as in taxis, but it is paid directly to the Uber company via the application according to the distance and speed travelled, calculated by GPS. Surge pricing, namely the exponential and unjustified increase of the price of the journey, is increasingly being used, and not just in exceptional cases but at the complete discretion of Uber and without warning the customer in advance. Uber never requests prior authorisation from the local authorities, its strategy being to rectify its illegal position by means of subsequent administrative regulations, following press campaigns or by putting pressure on its customers. In the United States, Uber does not only use drivers with a valid permit, but recruits private citizens following a brief interview and without carrying out any psychological, physical or legal checks. In the EU, such behaviour would violate the legislation on taxis and car hire with chauffeur services, putting customer safety at risk. Directive 2006/123/EC explicitly excludes transport services, including urban transport and taxis.

In light of the above, can the Commission state:

whether it is aware of the above situation and whether it intends to take action to stop the proliferation of these services, which are in flagrant contradiction of the principles of fair and transparent competition, before we are faced with a *fait accompli*?

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

Transport services like the one in question encompass the transportation of passengers with passenger vehicles, i.e. vehicles equipped to transport no more than eight passengers. The services are normally rendered over short distances and have a local impact. There is no specific EU legislation for these services. The European road transport legislation only addresses bus and coach services, which, by definition, are carried out with vehicles for the transport of *more* than eight passengers, and the international dimension of such markets. These services are thus regulated by national or regional legislation or often even at the level of municipalities. When regulating these services and when applying the respective national rules Member States have to respect the general principles of the Union law such as the principle of proportionality and of non-discrimination on the basis of nationality as well as the freedom of establishment.

National rules which set certain technical requirements or other standards are normally meant to ensure a certain level of service quality and are not as such incompatible with the Treaty, provided that they comply with the abovementioned principles.

A situation similar to the one described by the Honourable Member, including, *inter alia*, the obligation for a garage, has been addressed to the Administrative District Court of Lazio and the latter has referred the issue to the European Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling ([1]). As the procedure is still ongoing the Commission will refrain from issuing an opinion on the matter.

([1]) C-162/12, C-163/12 (joined cases).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006644/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Tratado sobre venda internacional de armas

Mais de 60 países assinaram o primeiro tratado sobre o comércio internacional de armas convencionais. Numa declaração conjunta, os países signatários «pedem a todos os Estados que façam os máximos esforços para assinar e ratificar o tratado o mais rapidamente possível».

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Que expectativas tem quanto ao alcance e eficácia efetivos do tratado?

2. Está satisfeita com a sua redação?

3. Apela aos Estados-Membros da União Europeia para que o assinem e ratifiquem?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(29 de agosto de 2013)

As disposições do Tratado sobre o Comércio de Armas (TCA) devem ser apreciadas tendo em conta o contexto que rodeou a negociação e adoção do Tratado, no quadro da ONU, em duas conferências diplomáticas realizadas segundo a regra do consenso. Como tal, as disposições do TCA resultam de uma solução de compromisso, nomeadamente no que se refere à sua redação, em geral, e ao seu âmbito de aplicação, em especial. No entanto, a opinião geral, partilhada pela UE, é de que o compromisso alcançado constitui uma base sólida para assegurar uma maior transparência e responsabilidade no comércio internacional de armas.

O Tratado contém disposições claras que incentivam os Estados Partes a aplicarem controlos mais rigorosos e mais abrangentes do que os previstos no próprio Tratado. O Tratado, enquanto tal, tem por objetivo estabelecer normas mínimas a nível internacional, podendo ser aplicados controlos mais rigorosos a nível nacional. Este aspeto é especialmente pertinente no que se refere ao equipamento militar que é objeto de controlo.

Quase todos os Estados-Membros da UE assinaram o Tratado no primeiro dia em que esteve aberto à assinatura, em 3 de junho de 2013, tendo os restantes Estados-Membros assinado alguns dias depois. Quanto à ratificação, a Comissão apresentou, em 28 de junho de 2013, o projeto de decisão do Conselho que autoriza os Estados-Membros da UE a ratificar o Tratado. Antes de ser formalmente adotada pelo Conselho, a decisão deve receber a aprovação do Parlamento Europeu, nos termos do artigo 218.°, n.° 6, alínea a), subalínea v), do TFUE. Proceder-se-á, em seguida, à ratificação a nível nacional, de acordo com os procedimentos nacionais pertinentes. Os Estados-Membros da UE já manifestaram a sua intenção de ratificar o Tratado o mais rapidamente possível. A Comissão e o Conselho apoiaram esta ambição, adotando o mais rapidamente possível a decisão que autoriza a assinatura. Do mesmo modo, a decisão que autoriza a ratificação deve ser adotada de forma expedita, com o apoio do Parlamento Europeu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006644/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — International Arms Trade Treaty

Over 60 countries have signed the first treaty on the international trade in conventional weapons. The signatory countries issued a statement calling on all states to do everything they could to sign and ratify the treaty as quickly as possible.

1. What are the High Representative's expectations regarding the scope and effectiveness of the treaty?

2. Is she happy with how it is drafted?

3. Is she calling on EU Member States to sign and ratify it?

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

The provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) have to be assessed against the background of its negotiation and adoption within the UN framework in two diplomatic conferences held under the rule of consensus. As such, the provisions of the ATT result from a compromise, notably with regard to its drafting in general and its scope in particular. However, the general opinion which is shared by the EU is that the compromise reached provides a sound basis for further transparency and responsibility in international arms trade.

The Treaty contains clear provisions encouraging its State parties to apply more stringent and broader controls than those laid down in the Treaty itself. As such, the Treaty is meant to set minimum standards at the international level and stricter controls can be applied at national level. This is notably relevant to the scope of controlled military items.

Almost all EU Member States have signed the Treaty on the first day it was open for signature on 3 June 2013. The remaining Member States did it a few days later. With regard to the ratification, the Commission tabled on 28 June 2013 the draft Council decision authorising the ratification by EU Member States. Before being formally adopted by the Council, this decision must receive the consent of the European Parliament pursuant to Article 218(6)(a)(v) TFEU. National ratification will then subsequently proceed depending on the relevant national procedures. EU Member States have already expressed their intention to ratify as early as possible. The Commission and the Council have supported this ambition by adopting as quickly as possible the decision authorising the signature. The same way the decision authorising the ratification should be adopted in a timely manner, with the expected support of the European Parliament.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006645/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Imposto sobre transações financeiras — ponto da situação e prospetiva

O lançamento de um imposto sobre transações financeiras tem sido objeto de controvérsia praticamente desde que foi proposto há já mais de quarenta anos por James Tobin. A União Europeia parece tender para a sua adoção, mas, de momento, a sua estrutura, âmbito, impacto financeiro e modo de arrecadação ainda não se encontram devidamente definidos.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Está em condições de esclarecer as dúvidas que de momento se apresentam quanto a este imposto?

2. Como crê que este deverá estabelecer-se e evoluir?

3. Que receita prevê arrecadar com a introdução de um imposto desta natureza?

4. Crê que este terá algum efeito inibidor no funcionamento e fluidez do mercado financeiro?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(23 de julho de 2013)

1.-2. A proposta da Comissão de Diretiva do Conselho que aplica uma cooperação reforçada no domínio do imposto sobre as transações financeiras (COM(2013) 71 final) está atualmente a ser debatida no Conselho. A estrutura, o âmbito de aplicação, o impacto financeiro e os métodos de cobrança desses impostos irão, em última análise, depender dos resultados destas negociações.

3. Os serviços da Comissão estimam que a harmonização dos impostos nacionais sobre as transações financeiras, tal como proposta pela Comissão, poderia gerar, anualmente, receitas de cerca de 30 a 35 mil milhões de euros nos Estados-Membros que participam na cooperação reforçada.

4. Não.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006645/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Financial transaction tax — State of play and prospects

The launch of a financial transaction tax has been the subject of controversy virtually since James Tobin first proposed it over 40 years ago. The EU seems to be moving towards adopting the idea. However, neither its structure, scope or financial impact, nor how it is to be levied, have yet been properly set out.

1. Is the Commission in a position to clear up the doubts currently emerging as regards this tax?

2. What are its views on how the tax will be set up and how will it develop?

3. How much money does it expect to collect by levying this sort of tax?

4. Does it believe that this will have an inhibiting effect on the functioning and fluidity of the financial market?

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

1 and 2. The Commission Proposal for a Council Directive implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax(COM(2013) 71 final) is presently discussed in Council. The structure, scope, financial impact and the methods of levying these taxes will eventually depend on the outcome of these negotiations.

3. The Commission Services estimate that the national taxes on financial transactions harmonised as proposed by the Commission could generate revenues of around EUR 30 to EUR 35 billion on a yearly basis in the Member States participating in enhanced cooperation.

4. No.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006647/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Possibilidade de nova redução da dívida soberana grega

Durante uma recente visita a Atenas, o Presidente do Eurogrupo, Jeroen Djisselbloem, declarou, em conferência de imprensa conjunta com o seu homólogo grego, Yannis Sturnaras, que o Eurogrupo discutirá, caso seja necessário, uma nova redução da dívida soberana grega em abril de 2014.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Considera benéfica para a zona euro esta potencial nova redução da dívida soberana grega?

2. Que principais pontos a favor e contra destacaria?

3. Crê que a Tróica tem usado critérios equilibrados de reconhecimento e de ajuda aos países intervencionados?

4. Acredita, nomeadamente, que os mais cumpridores estão a ser objeto de melhores condições para a resolução dos seus problemas estruturais?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(27 de agosto de 2013)

No contexto do 2.° programa de ajustamento económico para a Grécia têm-se verificado progressos consideráveis no sentido de garantir a sustentabilidade da dívida grega. Prevê-se que o rácio dívida/PIB recomece a diminuir em 2014, devendo situar-se abaixo dos 120 % até 2021, se o programa de ajustamento económico continuar a ser plenamente executado. O Eurogrupo de novembro de 2012 declarou que os Estados-Membros da área do euro irão ponderar medidas e assistência adicionais, se necessário, quando a Grécia atingir um excedente primário anual, desde que sejam plenamente cumpridas as condições previstas no programa, a fim de que a Grécia possa atingir o rácio dívida/PIB previsto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006647/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Possible new reduction in Greek sovereign debt

During a recent trip to Athens, the Chair of the Eurogroup, Jeroen Djisselbloem, stated at a joint press conference with his Greek counterpart, Yannis Sturnaras, that the Eurogroup will discuss reducing Greek sovereign debt in April 2014, if necessary.

1. Does the Commission consider this potential new reduction in Greek sovereign debt beneficial to the euro area?

2. What principal pros and cons would it highlight?

3. Does it believe that the troika has used balanced recognition and aid criteria for bailed-out countries?

4. In particular, does it believe that countries that comply best are experiencing better conditions for resolving their structural problems?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

In the context of the 2nd Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece, significant progress is being made towards securing the sustainability of the Greek debt. The debt-to-GDP ratio is forecast to resume a declining path in 2014, and should become lower than 120% by 2021, assuming that the economic adjustment programme continues to be fully implemented. The November 2012 Eurogroup stated that euro area Member States will consider further measures and assistance, if necessary, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus, conditional on full implementation of all conditions contained in the programme , in order to ensure that Greece can reach the targeted debt-to-DGDP ratio.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006648/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Necessidade de recapitalização da banca grega

O Presidente do Eurogrupo, Jeroen Djisselbloem, durante uma visita recente a Atenas, declarou em conferência de imprensa conjunta com o seu homólogo grego, Yannis Sturnaras, que os grandes bancos gregos precisam de se recapitalizar de modo a fortalecer a saúde do sistema bancário da zona do euro.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Acompanha esta posição do Presidente do Eurogrupo?

2. Crê que os grandes bancos gregos estão em condições de encetar processos de recapitalização bem sucedidos?

3. Quais são os riscos inerentes à manutenção dos presentes níveis de capitalização por parte dos principais bancos gregos?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2013)

Quatro grandes bancos gregos autorizados a receber verbas do Fundo de estabilidade financeira para a Grécia (FEFG) concluíram recentemente os seus esforços de recapitalização de acordo com os prazos e procedimentos estabelecidos no memorando de entendimento, no âmbito do segundo programa de ajustamento económico ([1]). O Banco da Grécia também alinhou os requisitos de capital dos bancos pelo rácio de capital mínimo de nível core tier 1, ou seja, 9 % dos ativos ponderados pelo risco.

Como tal, a viabilidade e a capitalização do sistema bancário grego foram restabelecidas de molde a apoiar a retoma económica e a preservar a proteção dos depositantes.

Para mais informações, consultar a secção 3.4 do relatório dos serviços da Comissão, subsequente à terceira avaliação do segundo programa de ajustamento, de julho de 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp123_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp159_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006648/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Need to recapitalise Greek banks

During a recent trip to Athens, the Chair of the Eurogroup, Jeroen Djisselbloem, stated at a joint press conference with his Greek counterpart, Yannis Sturnaras, that the major Greek banks will need to be recapitalised, so as to make the euro area banking system healthier.

1. Does the Commission agree with the Chair of the Eurogroup?

2. Does it believe that Greek banks are in a position to start recapitalisation processes successfully?

3. What are the inherent risks of the main Greek banks keeping the same capitalisation levels?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

Four major Greek banks that were entitled to receive funds from the Hellenic Financial Stability Fund (HFSF) have recently completed their recapitalisation efforts according to the timeframe and procedures agreed in the memorandum of understanding under the 2nd Economic Adjustment Programme ([1]). The Bank of Greece (BoG) also aligned banks' capital metrics to the minimum core tier I capital ratio of 9% of risk-weighted assets.

As such, the viability and capitalisation of the Greek banking system has been restored in a manner that supports economic recovery and maintains the protection of depositors.

Further details can be found in Section 3.4 of the Commission services report followint the Third Review of the second adjustment programme July 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp123_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp159_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006649/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — OIT: Diminuição das desigualdades nos países emergentes e em desenvolvimento

Num relatório recentemente divulgado, a Organização Internacional do Trabalho deu conta de que a desigualdade e o desemprego aumentaram na maioria dos países desenvolvidos atingidos pela crise, mas tendem a diminuir nos países emergentes e em desenvolvimento.

Assim, pergunta-se à Alta Representante:

1. Sendo a União Europeia o principal doador mundial, como avalia a redução das desigualdades e do desemprego nos países emergentes e em desenvolvimento avançada pela OIT? Tem idêntica perceção?

2. Considera que o apoio da União Europeia tem sido útil para a melhoria deste indicador?

3. Em que áreas crê que o auxílio europeu se vem revelando mais eficaz e reprodutivo?

4. Julga que a União Europeia deve manter os atuais níveis de compromisso com a ajuda externa? Quais devem ser as prioridades da União neste tocante?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

O relatório da OIT ([1]) afirma que as desigualdades de rendimento diminuíram na maioria dos países emergentes e em desenvolvimento. Todavia, o relatório também salienta que esta melhoria é ainda precária, devido aos níveis elevados de desigualdade preexistente, à contínua vulnerabilidade das pessoas que se encontram imediatamente acima do limiar de pobreza e ao aumento do número de pobres nos países de baixos rendimentos. Além disso, as tendências do desemprego refletem apenas uma pequena parte dos desafios em matéria de emprego nos países em desenvolvimento, em que a maior parte dos empregos são de baixa qualidade e, frequentemente, na economia informal.

A UE apoia o emprego, o ensino e a formação profissionais, a proteção social e o desenvolvimento de micro, pequenas e médias empresas, para reduzir a pobreza, a vulnerabilidade e a exclusão, e criar postos de trabalho e oportunidades económicas nos países parceiros. O impacte global deste apoio é difícil de medir a curto prazo e é influenciado por fatores exógenos, como a crise mundial. No entanto, o acompanhamento e os relatórios de avaliação das várias intervenções demonstram que o apoio atingiu os objetivos, tanto de conceção de políticas como de capacitação direta e de criação de emprego.

Na sua comunicação «Uma Vida Digna para Todos» ([2]), a Comissão expõe a sua visão da futura cooperação para o desenvolvimento, que deve integrar as três dimensões do desenvolvimento sustentável — económica, social e ambiental. Programaticamente, tal implica a manutenção do apoio ao desenvolvimento humano e aos fatores de crescimento, assim como a gestão sustentável dos recursos naturais. A posição da UE exposta nessa comunicação torna claro que a responsabilidade pela aplicação do futuro quadro incumbe a cada país, mas reconhece igualmente que alguns países continuarão a precisar de apoio, nomeadamente de assistência ao desenvolvimento.

([1]) A Comissão presume que a pergunta se refira ao World of Work Report 2013, da Organização Internacional do Trabalho, Repairing the economic and social fabric, http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/world-of-work/2013/WCMS_214476/lang--en/index.htm

([2]) COM(2013) 92 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006649/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — ILO: reduced inequality in emerging and developing countries

In a recent report, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) stated that inequality and unemployment have increased in the majority of countries affected by the crisis, but are decreasing in emerging and developing countries.

Can the High Representative state:

1. As the EU is the world's largest aid donor, what is her view of the ILO's suggestion that inequality and unemployment in emerging and developing countries have declined? Does she share that view?

2. Does she believe that EU aid has been useful in improving this indicator?

3. In which areas does she believe that EU aid has been most effective and productive?

4. Does she believe that the EU should maintain current levels of external aid commitment? What should the EU's priorities be in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

In its report ([1]), the ILO states that income inequalities have narrowed in the majority of emerging and developing economies. However, it stresses that this improvement is still fragile because of the high levels of pre-existing inequality, the continuing vulnerability of those just above the poverty line and the increase in the number of poor in low-income countries. Similarly, unemployment trends only reflect a small part of the employment challenges in developing countries where most jobs are of low quality, often in the informal economy.

The EU supports employment, vocational education and training, social protection and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises development to reduce poverty, vulnerability and exclusion and create jobs and economic opportunities in partner countries. The aggregate impact of this support is difficult to measure in the short run and is influenced by exogenous factors such as the global crisis. However, monitoring and evaluation reports of individual interventions show that they have achieved objectives, whether these are in terms of policy development or direct empowerment and job creation.

'A Decent Life for all' ([2]) sets out the Commission's vision for future development cooperation, integrating three dimensions of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental. Programmatically this entails continued support for human development and the drivers of growth, together with sustainable management of natural resources. The EU position set out in this communication makes it clear that responsibility for implementing the future development framework lies with each country itself, but also acknowledges that some countries will continue to need support including development assistance.

([1]) The Commission understands that the question refers to the International Labour Organisation, World of Work Report 2013: Repairing the economic and social fabric http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/world-of-work/2013/WCMS_214476/lang--en/index.htm

([2]) COM(2013) 92 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006652/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: «Malware» em redes sociais

Notícias recentes dão conta que se tem verificado um aumento da circulação de programas de computador malévolos concebidos para roubar senhas nas redes sociais como o Facebook e o Twitter.

A este propósito, tem sido referido um aumento significativo de um vírus de redes sociais chamado «Koobface» e um «aumento espetacular» de mensagens indesejadas nos três primeiros meses de 2013.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento do relatório destas notícias?

2. Está ciente desta ameaça?

3. Alertou os seus funcionários para os riscos acrescidos que correm ao utilizarem redes sociais e para os procedimentos cautelares que devem adotar?

4. Considera que as populações estão suficientemente cientes dos riscos que correm ao utilizarem a Internet em geral e as redes sociais em particular de forma menos cautelosa?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(21 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos relatórios recentes referidos pelo Senhor Deputado e está ciente dos riscos para a segurança e a confidencialidade das comunicações em linha.

A Comissão confere a maior importância à garantia da segurança das redes e da informação. As suas equipas de segurança interna monitorizam ativamente a infraestrutura de TIC; a Comissão estabeleceu um conjunto de medidas de segurança com vista a proteger as mensagens eletrónicas sensíveis do seu pessoal e a limitar as possibilidades de acesso não autorizado aos seus dados. Além disso, a Comissão realiza ao longo do ano campanhas de sensibilização com o objetivo de informar o pessoal dos riscos em matéria de segurança, nomeadamente os programas malévolos (malware), a ciberiscagem (phishing) e as mensagens ardilosas (hoaxes), e dos riscos associados à utilização das redes sociais.

Além disso, foi criada em 2012 uma equipa de resposta a emergências informáticas para as instituições, agências e organismos da UE (CERT-EU), com o objetivo de proteger melhor as instituições da União promovendo a colaboração entre elas, bem como com os Estados-Membros e a indústria.

A Comissão considera também muito importante reforçar a consciência do público para os riscos em linha. De acordo com o Eurobarómetro sobre Cibersegurança de 2012 ([1]), os cidadãos da EU, na sua maioria, consideram-se pouco ou nada informados sobre os riscos da cibercriminalidade. Por este motivo, nomeadamente, a Comissão adotou há pouco uma Estratégia da União Europeia para a cibersegurança ([2]) e uma proposta de diretiva no domínio da segurança das redes e da informação ([3]), com vista a garantir um ambiente digital aberto e seguro em toda a União.

([1]) Eurobarómetro Especial n.° 390.
([2]) JOIN(1) 2013.
([3]) COM(2013) 48.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006652/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Social media malware

Recent reports have drawn attention to the growing spread of malware designed to steal passwords for social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

There has been talk of significantly wider use of a social media virus called 'Koobface' and of a spectacular rise in unsolicited messages in the first three months of 2013.

1. Does the Commission know about these reports?

2. Is it aware of the threat?

3. Has it warned its officials that they are running a greater risk when using social media and should therefore take precautions?

4. Does it consider the public sufficiently aware of the risks entailed in less cautious use of the Internet in general and social media in particular?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the recent reports referred to by the Honourable Member. The Commission is also aware of the risks to the security and confidentiality of online communications.

The Commission attaches the utmost importance to ensuring network and information security. Its internal security teams actively monitor the Commission's ICT infrastructure and the Commission has put a package of security measures in place to protect the sensitive e-mails of Commission staff and to limit the chances of unauthorised access to Commission data. Furthermore, the Commission runs awareness campaigns throughout the year to inform its staff about security risks such as malware, phishing, hoaxes as well as dangers related to the use of social media.

In addition, a Computer Emergency Response Team for the EU institutions, agencies and bodies (CERT-EU) has been set up in 2012 to better protect the Union's institutions by fostering collaboration between them, with the Member States and the industry.

The Commission also believes that it is very important to increase public awareness of online risks. The 2012 Eurobarometer on cybersecurity ([1]) found that most EU citizens do not feel very or at all informed about the risks of cybercrime. Also for this reason, the Commission has recently adopted a Cybersecurity strategy ([2]) and a proposal for a directive on network and information security ([3]) to ensure an open and safe digital environment throughout the Union.

([1]) Special Eurobarometer 390.
([2]) JOIN(1) 2013.
([3]) COM(2013) 48.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006653/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Maior estabilidade da zona euro

O Presidente do Banco Central Europeu afirmou recentemente que a zona euro estava mais estável do que há um ano, mas ressalvou que as condições económicas adversas permanecem e que os governos devem prosseguir com as reformas em curso.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Partilha da confiança manifestada pelo Presidente do BCE na maior estabilidade da zona euro?

2. Corrobora a sua afirmação de que a prossecução das reformas é essencial para essa mesma estabilidade?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão concorda com o Presidente do Banco Central Europeu (BCE), segundo o qual a área do euro está mais estável do que há um ano. A pressão sobre os mercados financeiros diminuiu relativamente aos picos observados nos últimos dois anos: a liquidez na maioria dos segmentos de mercado melhorou, a volatilidade baixou e os prémios de risco diminuíram. As preocupações dos mercados financeiros quanto à integridade da área do euro diminuíram acentuadamente graças às medidas tomadas a nível nacional e europeu, por exemplo no plano da consolidação orçamental e das reformas estruturais realizadas pelos Estados-Membros, às medidas na via de uma união bancária efetiva e funcional, bem como à introdução do programa relativo às Transações Monetárias Definitivas (OMT).

A prossecução das reformas é fundamental para a estabilidade macroeconómica na área do euro. Muitos Estados-Membros apresentam um fraco crescimento e um aumento dos níveis de desemprego, em especial entre os jovens. O regresso ao crescimento nestes países só ocorrerá caso procedam a reformas estruturais para recuperar a competitividade, tendo já sido adotadas medidas nesse sentido. Em conjunto com os Estados-Membros e no âmbito do Semestre Europeu, a Comissão está a abordar os desafios resultantes desta situação de fraco crescimento e de elevado desemprego. Após uma cuidadosa avaliação dos desafios estruturais e das situações orçamentais nacionais, em 29 de maio de 2013, a Comissão recomendou ao Conselho que adotasse recomendações específicas por país (REP) para todos os Estados-Membros, incluindo a área do euro no seu conjunto, com orientações abrangentes de política económica, aliando uma orientação orçamental adequada com reformas estruturais profundas, a fim de apoiar o crescimento e o ajustamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006653/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Increased euro area stability

The President of the European Central Bank (ECB) recently stated that the euro area was more stable than a year ago, but stressed that economic conditions are still unfavourable and that governments should continue with the reforms underway.

1. Does the Commission share the confidence expressed by the ECB President that the euro area has become more stable?

2. Can it confirm his statement that pursuing reforms is essential to that same stability?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission concurs with the President of the European Central Bank (ECB) that the euro area is more stable than a year ago. Stress on the financial markets has decreased from the peaks seen in the last two years: liquidity in most market segments has improved, volatility has receded and risk premia have fallen. Financial markets' concerns about the integrity of the euro area have diminished sharply and this is thanks to measures taken at national and European level, for example fiscal consolidation and structural reforms undertaken by Member states, the steps towards a complete and functional banking union, as well as the introduction of the Outright Monetary Transactions (OMT) programme.

Pursuing reforms is essential for macroeconomic stability in the euro area. Many Member States are experiencing low growth and rising levels of unemployment, particularly among the young people. Unless these countries undertake structural reforms to regain competitiveness, growth will not return. Steps in this direction have already been taken. The Commission is addressing the challenges of low growth and high unemployment together with the Member States in the framework of the European Semester. After a careful assessment of national structural challenges and budgetary situations, it has recommended on 29 May 2013 to the Council to adopt country-specific recommendations (CSRs) for all Member States plus the euro area as a whole, which provide comprehensive economic policy guidance combining an appropriate fiscal stance with in-depth structural reforms to bolster growth and adjustment.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006654/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Itália: três casos de coronavírus

O ministério da saúde da Itália registou dois novos casos de coronavírus, similar ao SARS. As vítimas tiveram contacto com um homem a quem já haviam diagnosticado a doença, recém-chegado da Jordânia.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tendo presente a informação veiculada pela Organização Mundial de Saúde indicando que os países do Médio Oriente são os mais atingidos pelo vírus conhecido como MERS-CoV (Síndrome Coronavírus Respiratória do Médio Oriente, em inglês), desaconselha as deslocações dos cidadãos da União Europeia àquela parte do globo?

2. Está disponível para, em conjunto com os Estados-Membros, promover um maior controlo do estado de saúde dos indivíduos provenientes daquela região aquando da sua entrada no território da União?

3. Em que países da União existem casos desta doença?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

1. A Comissão informou recentemente o Conselho sobre a situação atual no que respeita à Síndrome Coronavírus Respiratória do Médio Oriente (MERS-CoV), tendo o surto sido amplamente discutido no âmbito do Comité de Segurança da Saúde. A Comissão, apoiada pelo Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças e pela Organização Mundial de Saúde, acordou com o Comité de Segurança da Saúde as precauções a adotar em matéria de saúde pelas pessoas que viajam para os países afetados, a fim de minimizar o risco de infeção (por exemplo, evitar o contacto com animais). O texto desse acordo foi traduzido para as línguas oficiais dos Estados-Membros e para o árabe, tendo sido partilhado com os Estados-Membros, para assegurar a coerência das informações fornecidas na União. Tal irá permitir que as autoridades de saúde nacionais preparem os seus próprios conselhos aos cidadãos.

2. A Organização Mundial de Saúde não aconselha rastreios especiais nos pontos de entrada, não recomendando também, atualmente, a aplicação de quaisquer restrições em matéria de viagens ou comércio.

3. Após 2 de julho de 2013, quatro Estados-Membros notificaram à Comissão e à Organização Mundial de Saúde 11 casos confirmados laboratorialmente de MERS-CoV: França (2 casos), Alemanha (2), Itália (3) e Reino Unido (4). Estes casos dizem respeito a doentes transferidos para Estados-Membros, a fim de receberam cuidados, e a pessoas que regressaram do Médio Oriente e adoeceram subsequentemente. Em França, Itália e no Reino Unido, registou-se uma transmissão local limitada entre doentes que não estiveram no Médio Oriente, mas que estiveram em contacto estreito com os casos confirmados laboratorialmente.

Em termos globais, até à data, foram notificados à Organização Mundial de Saúde 77 casos confirmados laboratorialmente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006654/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Italy: three coronavirus cases

The Italian health ministry has reported two new cases of coronavirus, which is similar to SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome). The victims had been in contact with a man who had already been diagnosed with the disease and had recently come back from Jordan.

1. Bearing in mind the information provided by the World Health Organisation, which says that Middle Eastern countries are those most affected by the virus known as MERS-CoV (Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus), does the Commission advise EU citizens against travelling to that part of the world?

2. Is it willing to work with the Member States to promote more thorough health checks on individuals entering the EU from that region?

3. Which EU countries have reported cases of the coronavirus?

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

1. The Commission has recently updated the Council about the current situation of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV), and the outbreak was extensively discussed within the Health Security Committee. The Commission, supported by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the World Health Organisation, agreed with the Health Security Committee on health precautions to be taken by travellers to affected countries in order to minimise the risk to be infected (e.g. avoid contact with animals). This text has been translated in Member States' official languages and Arabic and shared with the Member States to assure consistency of information provided in the Union. It enables National Health Authorities to prepare their own advice to citizens.

2. The World Health Organisation does not advise special screening at points of entry nor does it currently recommend the application of any travel or trade restrictions.

3. As of 2 July 2013, four Member States notified to the Commission and the World Health Organisation of 11 laboratory-confirmed cases of MERS-CoV: France (2 cases), Germany (2), Italy (3), and the United Kingdom (4). These cases concerned either patients transferred to Member States for care or individuals returning from the Middle East and who subsequently became ill. In France, Italy, and the United Kingdom, there has been limited local transmission among patients who had not been to the Middle East but had been in close contact with the laboratory-confirmed cases. Globally, 77 laboratory-confirmed cases have been notified so far to the World Health Organisation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006655/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Fabricação de armas químicas por parte da Al-Qaeda

O diretor-geral da Agência Internacional da Energia Atómica, Yukiya Amano, declarou durante uma conferência de imprensa que possivelmente o Irão terá apagado os rastos da sua atividade nuclear de caráter militar numa base à qual a agência vem pedindo acesso, mas que só recentemente lhe foi concedido.

A agência suspeita de que o Irão realizou nesta base testes de explosões convencionais que poderiam ser aplicados a armas nucleares, mas o Irão desmente-o formalmente.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Recebeu informação da AIEA quanto às questões levantadas pelo seu diretor-geral?

2. Contactou as autoridades de Teerão a este respeito? Que respostas obteve?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2013)

Em conformidade com as resoluções do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas, a AR/VP tem procurado, juntamente com os países E3+3, encontrar uma solução diplomática para a questão nuclear iraniana. Essa busca de uma solução inclui a manutenção de contactos regulares com a Agência Internacional da Energia Atómica (AIEA). Como foi oficialmente comunicado pela Diretor-Geral da Agência, até à data, o Irão rejeitou todos os seus pedidos no sentido de ter acesso às instalações de Parchin.

A falta de cooperação do Irão com a AIEA foi abordada pela AR/VP, que instou o Irão a cooperar plenamente com a Agência a fim de resolver todas as questões pendentes, incluindo as que indiciam uma eventual componente militar do programa nuclear iraniano.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006655/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Manufacture of chemical weapons by al-Qaeda

During a press conference, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Yukiya Amano, said that Iran may have erased traces of its military nuclear activity at a base to which the agency has been requesting, but has only recently been granted, access.

The agency suspects that Iran used the base to test conventional explosives which could be used in nuclear weapons; however, Iran formally denies this.

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative received information from the IAEA regarding the issues raised by its Director General?

2. Has she contacted the authorities in Tehran in this regard? What responses has she received?

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

As mandated by the UN Security Council resolutions the HR/VP together with the E3+3 countries has been engaged to find a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear issue. This includes regular contacts with the IAEA. As officially reported by the IAEA Director General, Iran has so far rejected all request of the IAEA to get access to the location at the Parchin site.

Iran's lack of cooperation with the IAEA has been addressed by the HR/VP. Iran has been urged to fully cooperate with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding issues including those pointing to a possible military dimension of Iran's nuclear programme.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006656/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Inundações na Europa Central

Devido às inundações provocadas pelas fortes chuvas dos últimos dias na Europa Central, principalmente na Alemanha, República Checa e Áustria, dezasseis pessoas morreram, várias estão consideradas desaparecidas e milhares viram-se obrigadas a deixar as suas casas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Foi-lhe pedido auxílio por parte dos Estados-Membros afetados?

3. Está disponível para o prestar?

4. Face à dimensão dos prejuízos entretanto conhecida, crê que se encontram reunidas as condições para ser pedido o acionamento do Fundo de Solidariedade da União Europeia?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(31 de julho de 2013)

1. A Comissão tem estado desde o início plenamente ao corrente dos riscos das inundações e da evolução da situação. O Centro de Resposta de Emergência (CRE) da Comissão foi o único órgão que conservou uma visão global dos acontecimentos em toda a Europa.

2. Todos os países afetados conseguiram fazer face aos efeitos das inundações recorrendo a meios nacionais (nalguns casos completados por um apoio limitado de países ou regiões vizinhos). Não foi lançado nenhum pedido de assistência através do Mecanismo Europeu de Proteção Civil.

3. Durante a crise, o CRE acompanhou de perto a situação e atuou como ponto central de recolha de informações, mantendo-se em estreito contacto com os serviços nacionais de emergência. A pedido, o CRE prestou também apoio específico, como foi o caso das imagens por satélite de alta resolução das zonas inundadas.

Agora que o nível das águas baixou, o Fundo de Solidariedade da União Europeia pode ser um instrumento viável para ajudar os Estados-Membros a fazer face aos custos das medidas de emergência. A Áustria, a República Checa, a Alemanha, a Hungria e a Eslováquia manifestaram a intenção de apresentar um pedido para a obtenção de assistência do Fundo de Solidariedade. O prazo para a apresentação dos pedidos termina no início de agosto.

4. A avaliação dos danos é da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros. É demasiado cedo para se poder fazer quaisquer estimativas fiáveis sobre se os limiares aplicáveis serão atingidos. A Comissão pretende realizar um exercício sobre os ensinamentos retirados a fim de aproveitar a experiência com as inundações.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006656/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Floods in Central Europe

The flooding caused by the last few days' heavy rain in Central Europe — mainly Germany, the Czech Republic and Austria — has led to 16 deaths, with several people missing and thousands obliged to leave their homes.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Have the affected Member States requested help?

3. Is the Commission prepared to provide help?

4. Given what it already knows about the scale of the damage, does it believe that the conditions will be met for activating the EU Solidarity Fund?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

1. The Commission is and has been fully aware of the flood risks and the evolution of the situation from the very beginning. The Commission's Emergency Response Centre (ERC) was the only body which kept a round the clock overview of the developments across Europe.

2. All affected countries were able to cope with the effects of the floods through national means (in some instances completed by limited support from neighbouring countries or regions). No request for assistance was launched through the European Civil Protection Mechanism.

3. Throughout the crisis the ERC closely monitored the situation and acted as information hub, keeping close contact with the national emergency services. The ERC also provided specific support on demand such as high resolution satellite images of the flooded areas.

Now that the waters have receded, the EU's Solidarity Fund could be one available instrument to provide assistance to the Member States in dealing with the costs of the emergency measures. Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia have signalled their intention to apply for Solidarity Fund assistance. The deadline for submitting applications is early August.

4. The assessment of the damage is the responsibility of the Member States. It is too early to make any reliable estimates about whether the applicable thresholds will be reached. The Commission is planning to conduct a lessons learned exercise to draw experience from the floods.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006658/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: EUA: Avião solar

O avião norte-americano Solar Impulse é, de momento, a primeira e única aeronave movida a energia solar.

Este aparelho experimental é tripulado, já realizou voos de teste e já permaneceu ininterruptamente em voo durante 26 horas. Não obstante, é ainda particularmente sensível a turbulências e não tem espaço para passageiros.

No caso de a aviação comercial poder, de futuro, vir a adotar aeronaves movidas a energia solar, tal significaria uma redução muito significativa das emissões poluentes para a atmosfera acarretando uma consequente melhoria do ambiente.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Acompanha o desenvolvimento deste projeto?

2. Existe algum estudo semelhante em curso na União Europeia?

3. Com os dados de que dispõe, o que significaria a adoção de aeronaves movidas a energia solar por parte das companhias de aviação em termos de redução de emissões para a atmosfera e de poupança em combustível?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2013)

1. A iniciativa *Solar Impulse* é uma iniciativa com liderança suíça que conta com a participação de várias entidades europeias. A Comissão tem-se mantido informada sobre esta iniciativa desde 2008 e teve encontros com a equipa *Solar Impulse* em várias ocasiões, por exemplo, quando da primeira aterragem do avião *Solar Impulse* em Bruxelas, em 2011.

2. O 7.° Programa-Quadro ([1]) tem estado aberto a novos métodos de propulsão, incluindo a utilização de energia solar, no âmbito da área «Investigação Pioneira» do subtema «Aeronáutica e Transporte Aéreo». Vários projetos do 7.° PQ resultantes dos convites à apresentação de propostas estão relacionados com a utilização da energia solar. Por exemplo, o projeto MAAT ([2]) está a investigar a utilização de energia solar para a alimentação de aeronaves inovadoras de alta altitude e o projeto SOLAR-JET ([3]) está a demonstrar um processo que utiliza energia solar para produzir combustíveis renováveis para a aviação a partir de CO_2 e água. No entanto, a equipa *Solar Impulse* não se candidatou a cofinanciamento da UE no âmbito do 7.° PQ no domínio da «Aeronáutica e Transporte Aéreo».

3. O conceito *Solar Impulse* parece, à primeira vista, muito atraente — silencioso e não poluente, não emitindo CO_2 — mas tem atualmente aplicações bastante limitadas uma vez que apenas permite transportar uma pessoa a uma velocidade muito lenta (cerca de 70 km/h). A aplicação direta da energia solar para a propulsão de aeronaves continua a ser atualmente marginal, uma vez que a energia solar disponível em voo é várias ordens de grandeza inferior à necessária para assegurar a propulsão de aeronaves de grande porte. Contudo, a energia fotovoltaica poderá ter a sua aplicação como uma fonte adicional de alimentação elétrica (mais do que de propulsão) a bordo de aeronaves convencionais, bem como para assegurar a propulsão de pequenas aeronaves pessoais lentas ou veículos não tripulados. Todavia, a integração dessas aeronaves no futuro sistema de gestão do tráfego aéreo, bem como as questões de segurança, exigiriam estudos mais aprofundados.

([1]) Sétimo Programa-Quadro de atividades em matéria de investigação, desenvolvimento tecnológico e demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013).
([2]) Sítio web do projeto do 7.° PQ: http://www.eumaat.info/
([3]) Projeto do 7.° PQ: http://www.transport-research.info/web/projects/project_details.cfm?ID=41424

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006658/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: United States: Solar plane

The US Solar Impulse plane is currently the first and only solar-powered aircraft.

This experimental machine is manned, has already conducted test flights, and has flown non-stop for 26 hours. However, it is also particularly sensitive to turbulence and has no room for passengers.

A future switch to solar-powered aircraft in commercial aviation would mean a huge reduction in air pollutant emissions, improving the environment as a result.

1. Is the Commission following the development of this project?

2. Are any similar studies taking place in the EU?

3. According to available data, what would the use of solar-powered aircraft by airlines mean in terms of reducing air emissions and saving fuel?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

1. Solar Impulse is a Swiss-led initiative involving several European entities. The Commission has been kept informed about this initiative since 2008 and has met the Solar Impulse team at several occasions, e.g. at the occasion of the first landing of Solar Impulse in Brussels in 2011.

2. FP7 ([1]) has been open to new methods of propulsion, including the use of solar power, under the area 'Pioneering' of the sub-theme 'Aeronautics and Air Transport'. Several FP7 projects resulting from the Calls for Proposals are related to the use of solar energy. For example, MAAT ([2]) is investigating the use of solar energy for powering innovative high altitude airships and SOLAR-JET ([3]) is demonstrating a process that uses solar energy to produce renewable aviation fuel from CO_2 and water. However, the Solar Impulse team has not applied for EU co-funding in FP7 in the field of 'Aeronautics and Air Transport'.

3. Solar Impulse appears at first glance as a very appealing concept — silent and clean, not emitting CO_2 — but has quite limited applications today as it carries only one person at a very slow speed (around 70 km/h). The direct application of solar energy to propel aircraft remains currently marginal, as the solar power available in flight is several orders of magnitude below that required to propel large aircraft. Photovoltaic energy could however find its application as an additional electric power source (rather than propulsion) on-board conventional aircraft as well as to propel small slow-flying personal aircraft or un-manned vehicles. The integration of such aircraft in the future ATM system as well as safety considerations would however require further studies.

([1]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([2]) FP7 project whose website is: http://www.eumaat.info/
([3]) FP7 project: http://www.transport-research.info/web/projects/project_details.cfm?ID=41424

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006659/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Violação da correspondência por e-mail do primeiro-ministro belga

A imprensa belga deu recentemente conta de que e-mails da conta pessoal do primeiro-ministro Elio Di Rupo foram enviados para o jornal De Morgen depois de terem sido retirados da sua caixa de e-mail por hackers. Estes e-mails seriam datados de 2004 a 2008, quando Di Rupo foi presidente do partido socialista da Bélgica e eram, na sua maioria, de natureza privada.

Esta revelação relançou o debate acerca da segurança das comunicações por via da internet e do direito à vida privada dos principais agentes políticos.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação? E de situações similares no quadro da Comissão e das demais instituições europeias?

2. Considera que as medidas de segurança atualmente praticadas pela Comissão e seus funcionários no tocante à internet asseguram a confidencialidade das comunicações e limitam as possibilidades de acessos indevidos?

3. Está disponível para colaborar estreitamente com os principais agentes do setor para adotar e promover a adoção das melhores práticas neste tocante?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão partilha o ponto de vista do Senhor Deputado sobre a importância da preservação da segurança e da confidencialidade das comunicações em linha, tendo adotado recentemente uma estratégia para a cibersegurança ([1]) e uma proposta de diretiva relativa à segurança das redes e da informação ([2]), com vista a garantir um ambiente digital aberto e seguro em toda a União. A rápida adoção desta legislação é da máxima importância.

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos factos referidos na imprensa belga, mas não tem conhecimento de situações semelhantes na Comissão nem nas outras instituições da UE.

A Comissão atribui a maior importância à segurança das redes e da informação. As suas equipas de segurança interna monitorizam ativamente as suas infraestruturas TIC. A Comissão estabeleceu igualmente um pacote de medidas de segurança para proteger as mensagens de correio eletrónico sensíveis dos funcionários da Comissão. Tais medidas destinam-se ainda a reduzir a possibilidade de acesso não autorizado aos dados da Comissão. Além disso, foi instituída de modo permanente, em 2012, uma equipa de resposta a emergências informáticas para as instituições, agências e organismos da UE (CERT-UE), a fim de melhor proteger as instituições da União, promovendo a colaboração entre elas e com as CERT dos Estados-Membros.

Com vista a manter um elevado nível de segurança, a Comissão é assistida pela Agência Europeia para a Segurança das Redes e da Informação (ENISA) e mantém um diálogo com a indústria e o mundo da investigação no domínio da segurança das redes e da informação, agora também através da recém-criada plataforma público-privada para a segurança das redes e da informação (plataforma SRI). As equipas de segurança interna da Comissão, em colaboração com a CERT-UE, trabalham em estreita colaboração, a nível técnico, com os intervenientes relevantes neste setor.

([1]) JOIN(1) 2013.
([2]) COM(2013) 48.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006659/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Belgian Prime Minister's email hacked

According to recent reports in the Belgian press, personal emails from the Prime Minster, Elio Di Rupo, were sent to the newspaper *De Morgen* after having been taken from his email account by hackers. These emails dated from 2004 and 2008, when Mr Di Rupo was president of the Belgian Socialist Party, and were mostly personal.

This revelation has reignited the debate on the security of online communications and prominent political figures' right to privacy.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation? Is it aware of similar situations within the Commission and the other European institutions?

2. Does it think that the online security measures currently taken by the Commission and its officials ensure that communications remain confidential and limit the chances of unauthorised access?

3. Is it prepared to work in close collaboration with major players in IT security to adopt best practices in this area and promote their adoption?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

The Commission shares the views of the Honourable Member on the importance of preserving security and confidentiality of online communications and has recently adopted a Cybersecurity strategy ([1]) and a proposal for a directive on network and information security ([2]) to ensure an open and safe digital environment throughout the Union. It is of utmost importance to rapidly adopt this legislation.

The Commission is aware of the facts reported in the Belgian press and it is not aware of similar situations in the Commission or other EU institutions.

The Commission attaches the utmost importance to network and information security. Its internal security teams actively monitor the Commission's ICT infrastructure. The Commission has also put a package of security measures in place to protect the sensitive e-mails of the officials of the Commission. These security measures have also been taken to limit the chances of unauthorised access to Commission data. In addition, a Computer Emergency Response Team for the EU institutions, agencies and bodies (CERT-EU) has been set up on a permanent basis in 2012 to better protect the Union's institutions by fostering collaboration between them and with the CERTs from the Member States.

In order to maintain a high level of security, the Commission is assisted by the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) and is in dialogue with the industry and the research world as regards network and information security, also via the newly set up public-private platform on network and information security (NIS Platform). The Commission's internal security teams, in collaboration with CERT-EU, work closely with relevant industry players at a technical level.

([1]) JOIN(1) 2013.
([2]) COM(2013) 48.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006660/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/84/UE — produtos de branqueamento dentário

A Diretiva 2011/84/UE do Conselho, de 20 de setembro de 2011, que alterou a Diretiva 76/768/CEE relativa aos produtos cosméticos, adaptou o seu anexo III ao progresso técnico de modo a permitir, nomeadamente, a utilização de produtos para branquear os dentes que contenham entre 0,1 % e 6 % de peróxido de hidrogénio, presente no produto ou libertado de outros compostos ou misturas presentes nesses produtos, se forem respeitadas determinadas condições a fim de evitar uma utilização indevida.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

2. Está em condições de avaliar o impacto e a suficiência da alteração introduzida pela Diretiva 2011/84/UE?

3. Considera que os produtos para branquear os dentes em circulação na União acautelam devidamente a saúde dos consumidores?

Resposta dada por Neven Mimica em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2013)

Todos os Estados-Membros comunicaram à Comissão que tinham transposto a Diretiva 2011/84/UE ([1]). Além disso, o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1223/2009 relativo aos produtos cosméticos ([2]), tal como alterado, retoma as regras sobre a concentração máxima permitida de peróxido de hidrogénio, presente ou libertado, bem como as condições de utilização, venda e rotulagem introduzidas por essa diretiva. O regulamento aplica-se a partir de 11 de julho de 2013.

As regras dos produtos para branquear os dentes baseiam-se nas conclusões do Comité Científico dos Produtos de Consumo no seu parecer de 2007 sobre peróxido de hidrogénio ([3]) e foram discutidas com peritos dos Estados-Membros. Como a concentração máxima permitida de peróxido de hidrogénio, presente ou libertado, em produtos para branquear os dentes foi aumentada no seguimento da adoção da Diretiva 2011/84/UE do Conselho, passando de 0,1 % para 6 %, em consonância com as conclusões do Comité Científico, a Comissão considera que as novas regras só podem ter afetado os produtos que anteriormente não eram conformes.

Não obstante a sua posição clara quanto à classificação destes produtos, expressa, por exemplo, através de respostas a perguntas escritas sobre a matéria ([4]), a Comissão estava ciente da situação imprecisa no mercado. Com a adoção da Diretiva 2011/84/UE, confirmou-se a posição da Comissão e esta matéria tornou-se mais clara.

As regras existentes no que se refere aos produtos para branquear os dentes têm por objetivo garantir a utilização segura destes produtos na UE. A fiscalização do mercado é da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros, que devem assegurar-se de que no mercado se encontram apenas produtos conformes.

([1]) JO L 283 de 29.10.2011, p.36.
([2]) JO L 342 de 22.12.2009, p.59.
([3]) SCCP/1129/07.
([4]) E-3629/95, E-1655/04, E-1594/04, E-2744/04, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006660/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/84/EU — tooth whitening or bleaching products

Council Directive 2011/84/EU of 20 September 2011 amending Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, adapted Annex III thereto to technical progress so as to enable, in particular, the use of tooth whitening or bleaching products containing between 0.1% and 6% hydrogen peroxide, present or released from other compounds or mixtures present in those products, if certain conditions are met in order to avoid misuse.

1. Which Member States have still not transposed this directive?

2. Is the Commission able to assess the impact and the adequacy of the amendment made by Directive 2011/84/EU?

3. Does it think that tooth whitening or bleaching products in circulation in the EU duly safeguard consumers' health?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

The Commission has been informed by all Member States of the transposition of Directive 2011/84/EU ([1]). In addition, the Cosmetics Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 ([2]), as amended, takes over the rules on maximum allowed concentration of hydrogen peroxide, present or released, use conditions, sale and labelling introduced by that directive. That regulation applies from 11 July 2013.

The rules for tooth whitening or bleaching products are based on the conclusions of the Scientific Committee on Consumer Products in its opinion of 2007 on hydrogen peroxide ([3]) and were discussed with the experts of the Member States. As the maximum allowed concentration of hydrogen peroxide, present or released, in tooth whitening products has been increased through the adoption of Council Directive 2011/84/EU, from 0.1% to 6%, in line with the Scientific Committee's conclusions, the Commission considers that the new rules may have affected only those products which previously were non-compliant.

Despite its clear position on the qualification of these products, expressed for example through answers to written questions on this matter ([4]), the Commission was aware of the unclear situation on the market. Through the adoption of Directive 2011/84/EU the Commission's position was confirmed and clarity was improved in this sector.

Existing rules on tooth whitening and bleaching products are aimed to guarantee the safe use of these products in the EU. Market surveillance is the responsibility of Member States, which must ensure that only compliant products are present on the market.

([1]) OJ L 283, 29.10.2011, p. 36.
([2]) OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59.
([3]) SCCP/1129/07.
([4]) E-3629/95, E-1655/04, E-1594/04, E-2744/04, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006661/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Futura desmobilização das FARC — eventual apoio europeu

O Ministério Público colombiano declarou recentemente não dispor de capacidade técnica para conduzir e assegurar um eventual processo de desmobilização e julgamento das FARC e recomendou a criação de uma estrutura especialmente destinada a este efeito.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento desta declaração?

2. Estaria disponível para, caso lhe fosse solicitado, auxiliar as autoridades colombianas com meios humanos e materiais num processo deste tipo?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente teve conhecimento das declarações que refere.

Há muito tempo que a UE apela a uma solução negociada para o conflito colombiano e, por conseguinte, congratula-se com as negociações de paz em curso com as FARC. Nesse contexto, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente declarou que a União está disposta a ajudar o governo colombiano, as instituições estatais e a sociedade civil, prestando apoio a atividades que promovam a paz, a verdade, a justiça, a reparação e a reconciliação.

A cooperação da UE tem sido utilizada para apoiar a justiça na fase transitória no âmbito da Lei «Justiça e Paz» de 2005. Atualmente, está em curso um programa para melhorar a eficácia do sistema de justiça penal, que irá beneficiar, nomeadamente, o Ministério Público.

A UE está disponível para analisar quaisquer pedidos de ajuda que lhe venham a ser apresentados no âmbito do processo de paz em curso. Já foi criado um mecanismo para coordenar a intervenção dos doadores internacionais interessados em prestar apoio na fase pós-conflito. O referido mecanismo é atualmente presidido pela delegação da UE em Bogotá. Qualquer decisão final sobre o papel específico da UE neste contexto deverá ter em conta a natureza dos pedidos formulados, a capacidade de resposta da UE e o valor acrescentado que a ajuda da UE pode representar.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006661/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Possible EU support for the future demobilisation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army (FARC-EP)

The Colombian Public Prosecutor's Office recently stated that it did not have the technical resources to lead any demobilisation of FARC-EP and ensure that its members are brought to justice, and recommended that an infrastructure be specially set up for this purpose.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this statement?

2. Would she be prepared, were she asked, to help the Colombian authorities with the necessary human and material resources for a process of this kind?

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

The VP/HR is aware of the statement in question.

The EU has long called for a negotiated solution to the Colombian conflict and thus welcomes the ongoing peace negotiations with the FARC. In this context, the HR/VP has stated that the EU stands ready to assist the Colombian Government, state institutions and civil society in providing support for activities that promote peace, truth, justice, reparation and reconciliation.

EU cooperation has in the past been used to support transititional justice in the framework of the 2005 Justice and Peace Law. At the present time, a programme to improve the effectiveness of the criminal justice system, which i.a. benefits the Public Prosecutor's Office, is ongoing.

The EU stands ready to to consider any request for assistance that may be forthcoming in the context of the current peace process. A mechanism for the coordination of international donors that are interested in providing support in a post-conflict phase has already been established; it is currently chaired by the EU Delegation in Bogotá. Any final decision on a specific EU role in such a context will be based on the nature of the requests made, the EU's response capability and the added value that EU aid could bring to the table.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006662/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Novo apelo europeu ao combate ao desemprego jovem

O senhor Comissário Andor apelou recentemente aos Estados-Membros para que adotem «ações urgentes» para combater os «atuais níveis inaceitáveis de desemprego», sobretudo entre os jovens. No entanto, como é sobejamente sabido pela Comissão Europeia, alguns Estados-Membros confrontam-se atualmente com planos de ajustamento muito duros que lhes coartam a disponibilidade financeira para acorrerem, como desejariam, às situações de desemprego.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Não considera que, em obediência aos princípios da solidariedade e da coesão, a União Europeia deveria empenhar-se particularmente na redução e resolução dos casos de desemprego nos países que presentemente cumprem planos de ajustamento e ter presente a sua realidade no momento de estabelecer prioridades?

2. Face à falta de disponibilidade financeira por parte dos Estados-Membros objeto de resgate por parte da «Troika», não crê ser difícil àqueles confrontarem adequadamente o flagelo do desemprego, justificando-se por isso um abrandamento das condições que lhes estão sendo impostas de modo a que possam fazê-lo com outra capacidade?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão reconhece as dificuldades com que alguns Estados-Membros se deparam no que respeita à sua capacidade para afetar financiamento suficiente para lutar contra o desemprego dos jovens.

Para o efeito, a Comissão propôs concentrar na fase inicial o financiamento disponível ao abrigo da Iniciativa para o Emprego dos Jovens, desembolsando 6 mil milhões de euros em 2014-2015, bem como a antecipação da data de elegibilidade das ações no âmbito da referida iniciativa. Estas propostas foram confirmadas nas Conclusões do Conselho Europeu de 27 e 28 de junho. A Comissão incentiva os Estados-Membros a afetarem um volume suficiente de recursos do FSE e a apresentarem os seus programas no domínio da juventude, a fim de permitir a rápida execução dessas medidas, incluindo os fluxos financeiros.

Já durante o período de programação atual, a Comissão aplicou um aumento nas taxas de cofinanciamento da UE para os fundos estruturais da UE em relação aos Estados-Membros com programas de ajustamento macroeconómico em curso, a fim de compensar as dificuldades temporárias que esses países enfrentam para garantir o seu financiamento no que respeita às operações apoiadas pelos fundos da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006662/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Another European call to combat youth unemployment

Commissioner Andor recently called on the Member States to take urgent measures to combat 'currently unacceptable levels of unemployment', especially amongst young people. However, as the Commission knows only too well, some Member States are currently facing very tough adjustment programmes that have deprived them of the funds to help with unemployment as they would like.

1. Does the Commission agree that, in line with the principles of solidarity and cohesion, the EU should be particularly committed to reducing and resolving cases of unemployment in countries currently under adjustment plans, and should bear these countries' situations in mind when setting priorities?

2. In view of the lack of funds available in Member States that have been bailed out by the troika, does it agree that it is difficult for these countries to tackle the scourge of unemployment adequately, and that this justifies relaxing the conditions being imposed on such countries so that they can do more to this end?

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

The Commission recognises the difficulty that some Member States are facing with regard to their ability to earmark sufficient funding to combat youth unemployment.

For this purpose, the Commission has proposed to frontload the available funding under the Youth Employment Initiative by disbursing EUR 6 billion in 2014-2015, as well as bringing forward the date of eligibility of actions under this Initiative. These proposals have been confirmed in the European Council conclusions of 27-28 June. The Commission encourages Member States to allocate sufficient ESF resources and submit their youth programmes for approval, to enable the speedy implementation of these measures, including financial flows.

Already during the current programming period, the Commission has implemented an increase in the EU co-financing rates for the EU Structural Funds for the Member States with ongoing macroeconomic adjustment programmes, in order to offset the temporary difficulties these countries are facing in ensuring matching funding for EU funds -supported operations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006663/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Crise no setor da construção

Dados recentemente divulgados apontam para uma subida dos índices de confiança económica na zona do euro. Esta melhoria refletiu-se em todos os setores com exceção do da construção.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão?

1. Quais considera serem os principais motivos que obstam a que o setor da construção possa recuperar os índices anteriores?

2. Tomou ou prevê tomar medidas especificamente dirigidas a este setor? Que resultados pode apresentar?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2013)

1. A expansão no mercado da habitação foi desfavorecida por uma oferta de crédito excessiva e pelos baixos custos do financiamento ([1]). O emprego no setor da construção aumentou consideravelmente em alguns Estados-Membros durante os anos da expansão, mas caiu de forma acentuada na sequência da crise financeira mundial, ao mesmo tempo que diminuía o investimento no setor. Hoje em dia, a tendência subjacente no setor europeu da construção continua a ser negativa, porquanto prossegue o ajustamento no mercado imobiliário de alguns Estados-Membros, num cenário de produção ainda substancialmente excedentária e de situação económica globalmente precária.

De acordo com a nossa previsão da primavera de 2013, o investimento no setor da construção deverá registar nova contração este ano, tanto na UE como na zona euro, antes da retoma moderada prevista para 2014, o que significa que, a curto prazo, a confiança e o emprego no setor da construção deverão permanecer débeis.

2. O plano de ação «Construção 2020» ([2]), adotado em 31 de julho de 2012, reflete o ponto de vista da Comissão sobre o enfrentamento dos desafios atinentes à competitividade e à sustentabilidade do setor da construção. Por outro lado, o empenho acrescido na eficiência energética dos trabalhos de renovação deverá conferir algum dinamismo ao setor da construção e oferecer oportunidades de emprego a gestores e trabalhadores qualificados. A Comissão está também a trabalhar numa estratégia de acesso a novos mercados através de «missões para o crescimento» ([3]).

([1]) Na UE e na zona euro, durante o pico da expansão, o investimento na habitação representou cerca de 30 % do investimento total (40 % e 50 % na Espanha e na Irlanda, respetivamente).

([2]) COM(2012) 433 final — «Estratégia para a competitividade sustentável do setor da construção e das suas empresas».

([3]) As regiões com crescimento dinâmico noutras partes do mundo proporcionam amplas oportunidades para uma maior internacionalização da atividade europeia de construção, nomeadamente na Rússia/Eurásia, na Ásia e na América Latina, mas também nos países africanos em desenvolvimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006663/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Crisis in the construction sector

Recently published figures show that economic confidence has increased in the euro area. This improvement was reflected in all sectors except for construction.

1. What does the Commission consider the reasons why the construction sector has been unable to return to its previous levels?

2. Has it taken, or does it plan to take, steps specifically aimed at this sector? What results can it present?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

1. The boom in the housing market was favoured by an abundant supply of credit and low financing costs ([1]). Construction employment increased considerably in the boom years in some Member States, but plummeted following the global financial crisis, while investment in construction started to shrink. Today, the underlying trend in the European construction sector is still negative as adjustment in some Member States' housing markets continues against the backdrop of a still substantial production overhang and the overall weak economic situation.

According to our spring 2013 forecast, construction investment is forecast to shrink further in 2013 in both the EU and the euro area, before a moderate pick-up is expected in both areas in 2014. This implies that both confidence and employment in the construction sector is likely to remain weak, in the short-term.

2. The 'Construction 2020' Action Plan ([2]), adopted on 31 July 2012, reflects the views of the Commission on how to proceed with the challenges related to the competiveness and sustainability of the construction sector. Moreover, the increased commitment to energy efficient renovation should trigger some impetus for the construction sector and offer job opportunities to skilled management and labour. Furthermore, the Commission is working on a strategy to access new markets through 'Growth Missions' ([3]).

([1]) Housing investment accounted for around 30% of total investment at the peak of the boom in the EU and the euro area (40% and 50% in the case of Spain and Ireland respectively).
([2]) COM(2012) 433 final 'Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its Enterprises'.
([3]) Dynamically growing regions in other parts of the world provide ample opportunities for further internationalisation of European construction activities, notably in Russia/Eurasia, Asia and Latin America, but also in developing countries in Africa.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006664/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Descoberta da estrutura química do capsídio do vírus VIH

Notícias recentes dão conta que a revista *Nature* revelou que investigadores da universidade norte-americana de Pittsburgh conseguiram descrever a estrutura química do capsídio — estrutura da proteína que contém o material genético do vírus — do vírus VIH, o que permitirá explorar novas terapias para o tratamento da SIDA.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta descoberta e do estudo científico que lhe subjaz?

2. Acompanha ou pretende acompanhar o seu desenvolvimento?

3. Estaria disponível para apoiar estudos complementares do entretanto desenvolvido destinados a explorar novas terapias para o tratamento da SIDA?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

1. A Comissão está ciente da descoberta e do estudo publicado na revista científica «Nature» que descreve pela primeira vez a estrutura química do capsídio do vírus VIH ([1]).

2. A Comissão considera que as conclusões do estudo, bem como outros desenvolvimentos científicos publicados em revistas especializadas de grande impacto são importantes. Contudo, é de notar que, após estes resultados, há que seguir várias fases de investigação para atingir um novo objetivo terapêutico e que os sucessos são impossíveis de prever na fase atual.

3. A Comissão prestou um apoio significativo neste domínio de investigação através dos programas-quadro de investigação. Durante o 7.° PQ (2007-2013), mais de 165 milhões de euros foram atribuídos à investigação do VIH, dos quais 50 % são consagrados ao tratamento do VIH. De particular interesse neste contexto são os dois grandes projetos colaborativos (Thinpad, 5,7 milhões de euros; e HIV-ACE, 3 milhões de euros), que têm como objetivo desenvolver novas drogas contra o VIH visando o nucleocapsídio do VIH-1. Por último, tal como indicado no Programa Específico do Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020 (2014-2020), a Comissão continuará a apoiar a investigação neste domínio e a fixação das suas prioridades terá em consideração todos os principais desenvolvimentos científicos.

([1]) 1. Zhao, G. et al., Mature HIV-1 capsid structure by cryo-electron microscopy and all-atom molecular dynamics. Nature, 2013. 497(7451): P. 643-646.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006664/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Discovery of the chemical structure of the HIV capsid

According to recent reports, the journal *Nature* has revealed that researchers at the University of Pittsburgh in the United States have determined the chemical structure of the HIV capsid — the protein structure containing the genetic material of the virus — which will make it possible to investigate new treatments for AIDS.

1. Is the Commission aware of this discovery and of the scientific study that led to it?

2. Is it monitoring or does it plan to monitor its development?

3. Would it be prepared to support further studies conducted in the meantime to investigate new treatments for AIDS?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the discovery and of the scientific study published in the scientific journal 'Nature' describing for the first time the mature HIV-1 capsid structure ([1]).

2. The Commission considers that the findings of the study, as well as other scientific developments published in high-impact peer-reviewed journals are important. However, it is to note that there are several research steps forward from these findings to a new therapeutic target, and successes are impossible to predict at the current stage.

3. The Commission has significantly supported this area of research through the Research Framework Programmes. During FP7 (2007-2013), over EUR 165 million have been committed to HIV research, of which 50% is devoted to HIV treatment. Of particular interest in this context are two large collaborative projects (THINPAD, EUR 5.7 million; HIV-ACE, EUR 3 million) that aim to develop novel HIV drugs targeting the HIV-1 nucleocapsid. Finally, as indicated in the Horizon 2020 Specific Programme (2014-2020), the Commission will continue to support research in this area and in setting its priorities will take into account all relevant major scientific developments.

([1]) 1. Zhao, G., et al., Mature HIV-1 capsid structure by cryo-electron microscopy and all-atom molecular dynamics. Nature, 2013. 497(7451): p. 643-646.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006665/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Combate europeu à «economia hacker»

Multiplicam-se as notícias acerca de um aumento continuado no número e na complexidade dos ataques por via da Internet, sobretudo no setor financeiro, projetados para roubar informações.

Alegadamente, os criminosos cibernéticos deram-se conta de que as informações pessoais e empresariais são a moeda mais forte naquilo que já vem sendo designado por «economia hacker».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que medidas tomou ou prevê tomar no combate à «economia hacker» e na promoção da proteção das informações pessoais e empresariais?

2. Dispõe de informações ou de estimativas quanto ao montante a que pode ascender essa «economia hacker»?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(10 de setembro de 2013)

Em resposta à ameaça global da cibercriminalidade, a Comissão e o SEAE traçaram uma política coordenada em cooperação com os Estados-Membros da UE, bem como com outras instituições e agências da UE. A Estratégia da União Europeiapara a Cibersegurança ([1]) estabeleceu medidas para combater a cibercriminalidade e para garantir uma resposta coordenada e eficiente aos riscos e incidentes a nível nacional e da UE.

A Diretiva relativa a ataques contra os sistemas de informação ([2]), responde ao número crescente de ataques informáticos sofisticados e de grandes proporções que alimentam a economia «hacker» através do roubo da identidade pessoal, de informações financeiras e de direitos de propriedade intelectual. A referida diretiva impõe aos Estados-Membros a obrigação de considerar crime o ato intencional de produção, venda, aquisição para utilização, importação, distribuição ou outra forma de disponibilizar instrumentos para a prática de ataques deste tipo. Além disso, introduz medidas para melhorar a cooperação transfronteiras entre autoridades judiciárias e policiais e incentiva a recolha de dados estatísticos e a apresentação de relatórios.

A criação do Centro Europeu de Cibercriminalidade no âmbito da Europol, em janeiro de 2013, acrescentou um recurso importante na luta contra a cibercriminalidade através da criação de um ponto focal europeu e a congregação de conhecimentos especializados europeus para apoiar as investigações dos Estados-Membros.

Devido a diferentes formas de classificar a cibercriminalidade nos Estados-Membros, bem como à tendência para não denunciar as infrações, as estimativas do valor da economia «hacker» variam consideravelmente. Um relatório elaborado por Anderson et al. intitulado «Measuri» ([3]) explica as dificuldades envolvidas.

([1]) Comunicação conjunta ao Parlamento Europeu, ao Conselho, ao Comité Económico e Social Europeu e ao Comité das Regiões — Estratégia da União Europeia para a cibersegurança: Um ciberespaço aberto, seguro e protegido; JOIN(2013) 1 final.

([2]) Diretiva 2013/40/UE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa a ataques contra os sistemas de informação e que substitui a Decisão-Quadro 2005/222/JAI, JO L 218 de 14.8.2013, p. 8.

([3]) Measuring the Cost of Cybercrime. Ross Anderson, Chris Barton, Rainer Bohme, Richard Clayton, Michel J.G. van Eeten Michael Levi, Tyler Moore, Stefan Savage, 2012
http://weis2012.econinfosec.org/papers/Anderson_WEIS2012.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006665/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: EU action to combat the 'hacker economy'

Evidence is mounting that online attacks designed to steal information are continuing to grow in number and complexity, especially in the financial sector.

Cybercriminals have apparently come to realise that personal and business information is the hardest currency of what has been termed the 'hacker economy'.

1. What steps has the Commission taken or will it take to combat the 'hacker economy' and help protect personal and business information?

2. Does it have any information or estimates about how much this 'hacker economy' might be worth?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

In response to the overall threat from cybercrime, the Commission and the EEAS have designed a coordinated policy in cooperation with EU Member States, other EU institutions and agencies. The EU Cyber Security Strategy ([1]) sets out actions to combat cybercrime and to ensure a coordinated and efficient response to risks and incidents at national and EU level.

The recently-adopted Directive on attacks against information systems ([2]) responds to the growing number of large-scale, sophisticated cyber attacks which fuel the 'hacker economy' through the theft of personal identity, financial information and intellectual property. This directive imposes upon the Member States to criminalize the intentional production, sale, procurement for use, import, distribution or otherwise making available of tools to commit attacks. It also introduces steps to improve EU cross-border cooperation between judicial and police authorities, and encourages collection of statistical data and reporting.

The establishment of the European Cybercrime Centre within Europol in January 2013 added an important resource in the fight against cybercrime by providing a European focal point and pooling European expertise to support Member States' investigations.

Due to disparate ways of classifying cybercrime in different Member States as well as a tendency to underreport offences, estimates as to the value of the 'hacker economy' vary widely. A report by Anderson et al. on 'Measuring the Cost of Cybercrime' ([3]) explains the difficulties involved.

([1]) Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions — Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union: An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace; JOIN(2013) 1 final.

([2]) Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on attacks against information systems and repealing Council Framework Decision 2005/222/JHA, OJ L 218, 14.8.2013, p. 8.

([3]) Measuring the Cost of Cybercrime. Ross Anderson, Chris Barton, Rainer Bohme, Richard Clayton, Michel J.G. van Eeten Michael Levi, Tyler Moore, Stefan Savage, 2012: http://weis2012.econinfosec.org/papers/Anderson_WEIS2012.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006666/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Melhoria dos índices de confiança económica na zona do euro

Dados recentemente divulgados apontam para uma subida dos índices de confiança económica na zona do euro melhorando as perspetivas de recuperação económica que anteriormente se apresentavam. Esta melhoria refletiu-se nas maiores economias da zona do euro e atingiu todos os setores com exceção do da construção.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. A que fatores imputa a subida dos índices de confiança económica registada na zona do euro?

2. De que modo poderá contribuir para que esta subida possa ser mantida de molde a assegurar a existência de um clima económico mais adequado ao investimento e ao crescimento?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(2 de agosto de 2013)

1. Com a atenuação da incerteza nos mercados financeiros, num contexto de medidas políticas resolutas, os indicadores de expectativa começaram a melhorar no último trimestre do ano passado. Após uma estagnação em março e uma deterioração em abril, o indicador das expectativas económicas (IEE) da Comissão começou a melhorar em maio, mantendo essa tendência em junho. Aumentou também a confiança dos consumidores, que registava já uma tendência ascendente desde o final de 2012. Contudo, o nível do IEE da Comissão encontra-se ainda muito abaixo da sua média histórica. Assim, embora se registem indícios de que a fase mais difícil foi já ultrapassada, o nível ainda baixo de confiança económica está em conformidade com as previsões de primavera da Comissão, que apontavam para uma estabilização gradual da economia no primeiro semestre de 2013 e o início da retoma apenas no segundo semestre.

2. A Comissão apoia as medidas destinadas ao reforço da estabilidade macroeconómica e da eficácia da governação da área do euro, que, por conseguinte, sustentam a confiança económica. A recomendação específica para a área do euro, adotada pelo Conselho em 9 de julho de 2013, sublinhou que o Eurogrupo tem uma responsabilidade especial no sentido de garantir uma posição política coerente e tomar as decisões políticas necessárias ao bom funcionamento da UEM. Importa inverter a fragmentação do mercado único e reforçar o fluxo de crédito para a economia real, em especial para as PME. É, pois, necessário tomar medidas em prol de uma união bancária completa e funcional, de forma a apoiar os investimentos e o crescimento na área do euro. Além disso, a Comissão colabora estreitamente com o BEI no desenvolvimento e na aplicação de instrumentos que mobilizam recursos do orçamento da UE combinados com empréstimos do BEI (como a iniciativa «obrigações para o financiamento de projetos»), e com o FEI, no apoio às PME e empresas de média dimensão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006666/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Increased economic confidence in the euro area

According to recently published figures, economic confidence in the euro area has grown, meaning that the prospects of economic recovery are better than before. This improvement has been seen in all sectors, except the construction sector, in the major euro area economies.

1. What factors does the Commission think are behind the increase in economic confidence seen in the euro area?

2. How could it help sustain this increase so as to ensure the economic climate is more conducive to investment and growth?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

1. With uncertainty in financial markets receding on the back of decisive policy measures, sentiment indicators started to improve in the final quarter of last year. After flat developments in March and deteriorations in April, the Commission's Economic Sentiment Indicator (ESI) picked up again in May and continued to improve in June. Consumer confidence also increased, being on an upward trend since end-2012. However, the level of the Commission's headline ESI is still well below its historical average. Thus, while there are signs that the worst is behind us, the still low level of economic confidence is in line with the predictions of the Commission's Spring forecast, foreseeing a gradual stabilisation of the economy in the first half of this year and a beginning of the recovery only in the second half of 2013.

2. The Commission supports measures to improve macroeconomic stability and the effectiveness of euro area governance and thereby sustain economic confidence. In the specific recommendation for the euro area, which was adopted by the Council on 9 July 2013, it was stressed that the Eurogroup has a special responsibility to ensure a coherent policy stance and to deliver the policy decisions needed for the good functioning of EMU. Fragmentation in the single market must be reversed and the flow of credit to the real economy, particularly SMEs, improved. Steps towards a complete and functional banking union are therefore essential to sustain investment and growth in the euro area. Moreover, the Commission cooperates closely with the EIB to develop and implement instruments which leverage resources from the EU budget with EIB lending, such as the Project Bond Initiative, and with the EIF in support of SMEs and mid-sized businesses.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006667/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Alemanha — redução da previsão de crescimento do país por parte do FMI

O Fundo Monetário Internacional reduziu a previsão de crescimento para a Alemanha em 2013 em consequência das incertezas económicas persistentes na zona do euro.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Acompanha o FMI na moderação de expectativas quanto ao crescimento alemão e no diagnóstico das suas causas?

2. Considera que algumas das incertezas que ainda persistem na zona do euro radicam na resposta tardia que foi dada às questões do crescimento e do emprego e à aposta demasiado longa na solução da consolidação das contas públicas sem se atentar nas suas consequências sociais e económicas?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(2 de agosto de 2013)

1. A Comissão tomou nota da avaliação revista das perspetivas económicas para a economia alemã pelo FMI. Tendo em conta os dados novos e revistos relativos ao PIB, as perspetivas do FMI de um crescimento real do PIB de 0,3 % em 2013 (corrigidas pelo número de dias úteis), anunciadas no contexto da declaração sobre a consulta de 2013 ao abrigo do artigo IV, não diferem significativamente das previsões da primavera de 2013 da Comissão (0,4 % em 2013). Os fatores que limitam as perspetivas e os riscos de crescimento da Alemanha às perspetivas referidas pelo FMI foram também tidos em conta nas projeções realizadas pela Comissão.

2. Garantir o equilíbrio das finanças públicas é essencial para relançar o crescimento e o emprego. A Comissão sempre defendeu que a consolidação das finanças públicas vai de par com reformas estruturais, a fim de garantir o crescimento e o emprego ([1]). O Senhor Deputado é convidado a consultar o último número do relatório trimestral sobre a área do euro que analisa a amplitude ao longo do tempo da incerteza ligada a esta política e o seu impacto na atividade económica, que demonstra que esta incerteza tem vindo a diminuir desde 2012 em virtude das melhorias introduzidas na governação da área do euro ([2]).

([1]) Ver ponto 4.3. da Comunicação «Europa 2020» http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:PT:PDF

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/qr_euro_area/2013/pdf/qrea2_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006667/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Germany's growth forecast lowered by the IMF

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has lowered Germany's growth forecast for 2013 as a result of ongoing economic uncertainties in the euro area.

1. Has the Commission been monitoring the IMF's lowering of expectations for growth in Germany and its diagnosis of the causes behind it?

2. Does it think that some of the ongoing uncertainties in the euro area are a result of tackling the issues of growth and employment late and relying for too long on the solution of consolidating public finances without considering the social and economic consequences?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

1. The Commission has taken note of the revised assessment of economic prospects for the German economy by the IMF. Taking into consideration revised and new GDP figures, the IMF's outlook for real GDP growth in 2013 of 0.3% (working-day adjusted) announced within the context of the statement on the 2013 Article IV Consultation does not significantly differ from the Commission's Spring 2013 Forecast (0.4% in 2013). Factors limiting Germany's growth prospects and risks to the outlook mentioned by the IMF have been taken into account in the Commission's projection as well.

2. Ensuring sound public finances is critical for restoring growth and jobs. The Commission has always advocated that consolidating public finances goes hand-in-hand with structural reforms to ensure growth and employment ([1]). The Honourable Member is referred to the latest issue of the Quarterly report on the euro area which analyses the magnitude over time of policy uncertainty and its impact on economic activity, which demonstrates that policy uncertainty has declined since 2012 due to improvements in the governance of the euro area ([2]).

([1]) See Section 4.3. of the EU2020 Communication http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/qr_euro_area/2013/pdf/qrea2_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006668/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Condenação por uso de amianto em fábricas

O empresário suíço Stephan Schmidheiny viu a sua sentença agravada para 18 anos de prisão pelo Tribunal de Apelação de Turim, tendo sido reiterada a sua responsabilidade na morte de quase 3 mil pessoas, entre trabalhadores e moradores, pelo uso de fibra de amianto nas fábricas da Eternit Itália de que foi acionista maioritário. Esta condenação recorda não apenas o sucedido na empresa referida mas também a perigosidade para a saúde pública das construções em que se tenha empregado amianto.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Dispõe de informações quanto à existência de construções em que se tenha empregado amianto no território da União Europeia? Estão as mesmas ainda a ser utilizadas?

2. Dispõe, também, de dados quanto ao número de casos de doenças de foro oncológico decorrentes da exposição ao amianto na União Europeia?

3. Tomou ou prevê tomar medidas de divulgação dos riscos para a saúde pública do amiantoem colaboração com os Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão não dispõe de informações específicas sobre a presença de amianto em edifícios existentes na União Europeia.

Poucas tentativas foram feitas para quantificar a incidência global de mesotelioma (provocado pelo amianto), principalmente porque é um dos casos relativamente raros de cancro e não é reportado por muitos países em desenvolvimento à escala global; consequentemente, o mesotelioma não é incluído na base de dados mundial em matéria de incidência e mortalidade do cancro publicada pelo Centro Internacional de Investigação do Cancro (CIIC). Contudo, o projeto Rarecare (Surveillance of Rare Cancers in Europe) ([1]), apoiado pelo programa em matéria de saúde da UE, estima um número anual de 8 009 novos casos de mesotelioma da pleura e do pericárdio e 7 912 mortes por ano na União Europeia. O projeto Rarecare recolhe dados dos registos oncológicos sobre doentes diagnosticados entre 1978 e 2002, com informações sobre o estatuto vital disponíveis até 31 de dezembro de 2003 ou após essa data.

A fim de compreender melhor os aspetos de saúde pública do mesotelioma do pulmão, a Comissão lançou, no âmbito do plano de trabalho de 2013 para fins de execução do programa de saúde, uma ação (a selecionar os durante o corrente ano) subordinada ao tema «apoio a uma rede de informação sobre o mesotelioma do pulmão». O objetivo dessa ação é apoiar a criação de uma rede de informação que incida sobre as melhores práticas para o tratamento do mesotelioma do pulmão. Espera-se que a congregação de competências especializadas contribua para reduzir os custos para cada sistema de saúde.

([1]) http://www.rarecare.eu/aims/aims.asp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006668/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Sentence for using asbestos in factories

The Swiss businessman Stephan Schmidheiny has had his sentence increased to 18 years' imprisonment by the Turin Court of Appeal. The Court upheld the ruling that he was responsible for the deaths of almost 3 000 people — workers and members of the public — caused by the use of asbestos in the factories of Eternit Italia, of which he was the majority shareholder. This sentence not only brings home what happened in the company in question but also the danger posed to public health by buildings in which asbestos has been used.

1. Does the Commission have any information on buildings in the EU in which asbestos has been used? Are such buildings still in use?

2. Does it also have any figures on the number of cases of cancer caused by exposure to asbestos in the EU?

3. Has it taken or does it plan to take steps to raise awareness about the public health risks of asbestos, in collaboration with the Member States?

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

The Commission has not specific information on the presence of asbestos in existing buildings in the European Union.

Few attempts have been made to quantify the global incidence of mesothelioma (caused by asbestos), mainly because it is a comparatively rare cancer and is not reported in many developing countries worldwide; consequently, mesothelioma is not included in the cancer incidence and mortality worldwide database published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). However the RARECARE (Surveillance of Rare Cancers in Europe) Project ([1]), supported by the EU Health Programme, has estimated that for the mesothelioma of the pleura and pericardium, an estimated number of 8 009 new cases per year and an estimated of 7 912 deaths per year could be expected in the European Union. RARECARE gathered Cancer Registries data on patients diagnosed from 1978 up to 2002, with vital status information available up to 31st December 2003 or later.

In order to better understand public health aspects of lung mesothelioma the Commission has launched, under the Work Plan 2013 for the Implementation of the Health Programme, an action (to be selected during this year) 'Support to an information network on lung mesothelioma'. The aim of this action is to support the creation of an information network focusing on best practices for treatment of lung mesothelioma. The pooling of expertise is expected to contribute to reduce costs for individual health systems.

([1]) http://www.rarecare.eu/aims/aims.asp.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006669/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: E-books: Apple acusada de concertação para aumento de preços

A Apple foi acusada pelo Departamento de Justiça dos Estados Unidos de desempenhar um papel central de coordenação num acordo com grandes editoras para aumentar o preço dos livros eletrónicos em 2010 enquanto preparava o lançamento do seu tablet iPad.

A francesa Hachette, as americanas HarperCollins (grupo News Corp) e Simon&Schuster (CBS), a britânica Penguin (Pearson) e uma subsidiária da alemã Bertelsmann, Macmillan, concordaram em mudar as suas práticas e em pagar um total de aproximadamente 170 milhões de dólares em multas e restituição aos consumidores lesados.

Segundo a acusação, a Apple obrigou os seus consumidores americanos a pagar dezenas de milhões de dólares a mais pelos livros eletrónicos.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento deste processo judicial?

2. Considera haver motivos para que seja intentada ação semelhante por lesão dos consumidores europeus?

3. Dispõe de informações ou estimativas acerca do montante a mais que possa ter sido pago pelos consumidores europeus em circunstâncias semelhantes às que motivaram a ação judicial por parte das autoridades norte-americanas?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão iniciou processos similares em dezembro de 2011 contra a Apple e cinco editoras internacionais (Simon & Schuster, Harper Collins, Hachette, Holtzbrinck — proprietário da Macmillan — e Penguin) devido às suas vendas de livros eletrónicos no EEE. A Comissão trabalhou em estreita cooperação com o Departamento de Justiça dos Estados Unidos para resolver as preocupações resultantes de uma eventual prática concertada destinada a aumentar os preços de venda a retalho dos livros eletrónicos no EEE. Em 12 de dezembro de 2012, a Comissão adotou uma decisão nos termos do artigo 9.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1/2003, que tornou juridicamente vinculativos os compromissos propostos pelas editoras Simon & Schuster, Harper Collins, Hachette, Holtzbrinck/Macmillan e pela Apple, considerados adequados para restabelecer a concorrência dos preços de venda a retalho dos livros eletrónicos no EEE.

Após a decisão da Comissão, de 12 de dezembro de 2012, também a editora Penguin propôs compromissos. Em 25 de julho de 2013, a Comissão adotou outra decisão, nos termos do artigo 9.° do Regulamento n.° 1/2003, que tornou juridicamente vinculativos tais compromissos.

A Comissão não dispõe de estimativas sobre o montante a mais que os consumidores da UE podem ter pago antes da adoção coletiva do modelo de agência. Tal como afirmou nas suas decisões de 12 de dezembro de 2012 e 25 de julho de 2013, no entanto, a investigação preliminar da Comissão no mercado do Reino Unido indicou que a alteração pode ter conduzido a um aumento nos preços de venda a retalho dos livros eletrónicos no Reino Unido praticados por certas editoras.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006669/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: E-books: Apple accused of conspiring to increase prices

Apple has been accused by the United States Department of Justice of playing a central role in brokering an agreement with major publishers to increase the price of e-books in 2010 as it was preparing to launch its iPad tablet.

The French publisher Hachette, the US publishers HarperCollins (part of the News Corporation group) and Simon & Schuster, Penguin (owned by Pearson) in the UK and a subsidiary of the German publisher Bertelsmann, Macmillan, have agreed to change their practices and to pay a total of around USD 170 million in fines and damages to consumers.

Apple is accused of forcing its US customers to pay tens of millions of dollars more for e-books.

1. Is the Commission aware of these legal proceedings?

2. Does it think there are grounds for bringing similar proceedings against Apple for having harmed the interests of EU consumers?

3. Does it have any information or estimates of how much more EU consumers may have paid in similar circumstances to those that led to legal proceedings being brought by the US authorities?

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

The Commission initiated similar proceedings in December 2011 against Apple, and five international publishers (Simon & Schuster, Harper Collins, Hachette, Holtzbrinck owner of *inter alia* Macmillan, and Penguin) for their conduct in connection with sales of e-books in the EEA. The Commission worked closely with the US Department of Justice (DOJ) to seek a solution to the concerns concerning a possible concerted practice with the object of increasing the retail prices of e-books in the EEA. On 12 December 2012, the Commission adopted a decision under Article 9 of Regulation 1/2003 that made legally binding commitments offered by Simon & Schuster, Harper Collins, Hachette, Holtzbrinck/Macmillan and Apple and concluded that these commitments were suitable to restore retail price competition for the sale of e-books in the EEA.

After the Commission's decision of 12 December 2012, Penguin also offered commitments. On 25 July 2013 the Commission adopted another decision under Article 9 of Regulation 1/2003 that made legally binding such commitments.

The Commission does not have estimates on how much more EU consumers may have paid absent the joint switch to the agency model. As stated in its 12 December 2012 and 25 July Decisions, however, its preliminary investigation in the UK market indicated that the move may have led to an increase in retail prices for e-books in the UK sold by certain publishers.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006670/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Fabrico de armas químicas por parte da Al-Qaeda

O ministério iraquiano da Defesa anunciou o desmantelamento de uma célula da Al-Qaeda que fabricava armas químicas, como gás sarin e gás mostarda, em duas instalações de Bagdade. O grupo havia colocado em funcionamento duas instalações para fabricar estes gases seguindo as instruções de outra célula da Al-Qaeda e preparava-se para realizar ataques no Iraque, contando além disso com uma rede para infiltrar as armas químicas em países vizinhos para além da Europa e dos Estados Unidos da América.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento do desmantelamento da célula em questão e da detenção dos seus membros?

2. Que comentários lhe merece?

3. Crê que, de momento, existe um risco acrescido para a segurança europeia?

4. De que modo julga que as agências de informação dos Estados-Membros devem cooperar para minorar os riscos inerentes a ataques químicos e biológicos e em que medida devem as instituições europeias ser envolvidas neste esforço comum e respetiva partilha de informações?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

1. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente (AR/VP) é mantida regularmente informada sobre os acontecimentos importantes, relacionados com o terrorismo, em países terceiros.

2. A AR/VP está especialmente preocupada com a possibilidade de os grupos terroristas terem acesso a qualquer tipo de armas de destruição maciça.

3. A AR/VP tem plena confiança nos serviços de segurança e de informações dos Estados-Membros e na sua capacidade de apreciação dos riscos para a segurança que os vários grupos terroristas representam.

4. Deve recordar-se que o trabalho dos serviços de segurança e de informação dos Estados-Membros, bem como a cooperação entre eles são uma competência exclusiva dos Estados-Membros e a UE não tem competência nesta matéria. A UE não está, portanto, envolvida na cooperação entre esses serviços.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006670/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Production of chemical weapons by al-Qaeda

The Iraqi Defence Ministry has announced that an al-Qaeda cell which manufactured chemical weapons, such as sarin gas and mustard gas, in two factories in Baghdad, has been broken up. The group had set up two facilities to manufacture these gases on the instructions of another al-Qaeda cell, and was getting ready to carry out attacks in Iraq; a network was also in place for smuggling chemical weapons into neighbouring countries as well as to Europe and the United States.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the cell in question having been broken up and its members having been taken into custody?

2. What does she have to say about it?

3. Does she believe that there is a heightened risk to European security at present?

4. How does she think that the Member States' intelligence agencies should work together to lower the risks of chemical and biological attacks and to what extent should the European institutions be involved in this joint effort and the associated sharing of intelligence?

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

1. The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is kept regularly informed about important, terrorism related, events in third states.

2. The HR/VP is especially worried about terrorist groups gaining access to any kind of weapons of mass destruction.

3. HR/VP has full confidence in the security and intelligence services of Member States and their judgment of the security risks posed by various terrorist groups.

4. It should be recalled that the work of the security and intelligence services of the Member States as well as the cooperation between them are an exclusive competence of the Member States and the EU has no competence in this matter. The EU is therefore not involved in the cooperation between these services.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006671/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Fornecimento de as armas à oposição síria

A possibilidade de fornecimento de armas à oposição síria deverá obedecer a garantias estritas, nomeadamente quanto ao seu destino final das armas e quanto aos seus utilizadores.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Considera estarem reunidas as condições que permitem verificar o cumprimento de tais garantias?

2. Como pretende contribuir para assegurar que os fornecimentos ocorrerão efetivamente nos termos preconizados?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(2 de setembro de 2013)

O embargo de armas da UE contra a Síria chegou ao fim em 31 de maio. A possibilidade de exportar armas para a Síria é agora uma questão de política nacional dos Estados-Membros.

Na Declaração do Conselho sobre a Síria, de 27 de maio, os Estados-Membros comprometeram-se a respeitar critérios rigorosos no âmbito das suas políticas nacionais, nomeadamente que as armas só deveriam ser fornecidas à coligação da oposição síria para a proteção dos civis e mediante o fornecimento de garantias quanto aos seus utilizadores finais. Cabe aos Estados-Membros garantir o respeito destes critérios, no caso de se estudar a possibilidade de fornecer armas à Síria.

A este respeito, em 27 de maio os Estados-Membros declararam igualmente que não forneceriam armas à Síria nesta fase. Além disso, vários Estados-Membros declararam bilateralmente que continuariam a não fornecer armas à Síria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006671/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Supplying arms to the opposition in Syria

Any supply of arms to the opposition in Syria will have to come with strict guarantees, particularly in terms of where the arms end up and who will be using them.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative think that the conditions have been met to make it possible to check that these guarantees are being upheld?

2. How will she help ensure that the arms are actually supplied as advocated?

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

The EU arms embargo against Syria has expired on 31 May. Possible export of arms to Syria is now a matter of Member States' national policies.

Member States have declared in a Council Declaration on Syria on 27 May that they are to proceed in their national policies on the basis of strict criteria notably that arms would be supplied, only to the Syrian Opposition Coalition, for the protection of civilians and with guarantees about who the end-users will be. It is for Member States to ensure that these criteria are fulfilled in case delivery of arms to Syria would be considered.

In this respect Member States have also declared on 27 May that they would not deliver arms to Syria at this stage. In addition, a number of Member States have bilaterally declared that they would continue not to deliver arms to Syria at all.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006672/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Ligação do ataque em Paris à estratégia terrorista da Al Qaeda

O ministro do Interior de França, Manuel Valls, considerou que o recente ataque contra um soldado do seu país faz parte de uma estratégia da Al Qaeda para instrumentalizar e atrair indivíduos para a violência radical.

Esta estratégia passa pela manipulação de convertidos ao islamismo, perpetradores de atos de delinquência e que se radicalizam após períodos na prisão ou devido a contactos na internet.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que comentários lhe merecem as declarações de Manuel Valls?

2. Considera que as medidas entretanto desenvolvidas destinadas a estancar e inverter o processo de radicalização em curso se têm demonstrado aptas a atingir o objetivo desejado?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

Tal como salienta o «EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2013», da Europol, o terrorismo continua a ser uma forte ameaça na Europa e a evoluir, desde as redes e grupos estruturados até grupos mais pequenos estabelecidos na UE e terroristas individuais ou agentes isolados ([1]).

A responsabilidade de enfrentar o desafio que constitui a radicalização e o recrutamento de terroristas cabe essencialmente aos Estados-Membros. A Comissão continua a desenvolver métodos para os ajudar a enfrentar este desafio, que constitui uma das prioridades da segurança interna. A prevenção do processo de radicalização exige um empenhamento constante, recursos e tempo.

A rede de sensibilização para a radicalização (RAN), lançada pela Comissão em 2011, colabora com um vasto leque de profissionais de toda a Europa para trocar informações sobre a melhor forma de responder a este desafio. As conclusões da RAN confirmam que, desde que a estratégia da UE de combate à radicalização e ao recrutamento de terroristas foi concebida, as tendências, os meios e os tipos de radicalização evoluíram.

Consequentemente, o Conselho «Justiça e Assuntos Internos», de 7 de junho de 2013, adotou conclusões que apelam para uma atualização da estratégia da UE e convidam a Comissão a apresentar uma comunicação que enuncie medidas concretas de prevenção e combate ao extremismo violento, baseando-se, designadamente, na experiência da RAN. A comunicação terá em conta o papel dos profissionais de primeira linha e proporcionará elementos de apoio aos esforços dos Estados-Membros para tratar esta questão.

([1]) Te-Sat 2013, Europol, https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/te-sat-2013-eu-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006672/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Link between the attack in Paris and al-Qaeda's terrorist strategy

The French Interior Minister, Manuel Valls, has claimed that the recent attack on a French soldier was part of a strategy by al-Qaeda to exploit individuals and draw them into radical violence.

This strategy involves manipulating converts to Islam who have committed crimes and become radicalised after spells in prison or over the Internet.

1. What does the Commission have to say about Manuel Valls's claims?

2. Does it think that measures taken in the meantime to stop and reverse the ongoing radicalisation process have proved to be suitable for achieving the desired goal?

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

As highlighted in the 'EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2013' by Europol the threat from terrorism remains strong in Europe. It also continues to evolve from structured groups and networks to smaller EU-based groups and solo terrorists or lone actors ([1]).

The responsibility for confronting the challenge posed by radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism rests primarily with Member States. The Commission continues to work on ways to assist them in addressing this challenge, as one of the internal security priorities. Preventing the process of radicalisation requires sustained commitment, resources and time.

The Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) launched by the Commission in 2011 works with a wide range of practitioners from all over Europe to exchange information on how best to address the challenge. The findings of the RAN confirm that since the EU Strategy for Combatting Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism was devised, the trends, means and patterns of radicalisation have evolved.

Consequently, the Justice and Home Affairs Council of 7 June 2013 adopted conclusions calling for an update of the EU Strategy and inviting the Commission to present a communication outlining concrete measures to prevent and counter violent extremism, based, among other things, on the experience of the RAN. The communication will take into account the role of first line practitioners and provide elements to support Member States' efforts to address this issue.

([1]) Te-Sat 2013, Europol, https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/te-sat-2013-eu-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006673/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Empresas francesas envolvidas em fraude em programa da ONU

O caso conhecido como «Petróleo por Alimentos» conduziu à acusação de 14 empresas francesas suspeitas de terem depositado 10 por cento em dinheiro do valor de contratos adquiridos em Bagdade, em troca da assinatura desses contratos com o Iraque, sob o regime de Saddam Hussein. Para o Iraque, que sofria com o embargo internacional, o objetivo era recuperar divisas sem o conhecimento das Nações Unidas.

Em vigor de 1996 a 2003, o programa «Petróleo por Alimentos» foi concebido pela Organização das Nações Unidas para atenuar os efeitos sobre a população de um embargo económico imposto ao Iraque após a invasão do Koweit em 1990. Este programa permitia a Bagdade vender uma quantidade limitada de petróleo sob estrita supervisão da ONU em troca de ajuda humanitária e de bens de consumo.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Acompanha o desenrolar deste processo?

2. Dispõe de meios que lhe permitam verificar adequadamente se as empresas e organizações através das quais canaliza fundos e apoios para os países em desenvolvimento os usam adequadamente?

3. Nomeadamente quanto ao esquema de recuperação de divisas desenhado pelo regime de Saddam Hussein, acredita não ser hoje possível verificar-se um esquema semelhante que envolva fundos da União?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

1. O referido programa da ONU não envolveu quaisquer fundos da UE, apenas receitas provenientes do petróleo iraquiano. Por conseguinte, a Comissão não esteve envolvida em nenhum processo de monitorização de fundos do orçamento da UE e não temos conhecimento de nenhuma monitorização pela UE do Fundo de Desenvolvimento para o Iraque.

2. O Acordo de Contribuição-tipo (SCA — *Standard Contribution Agreement*) que a Comissão assina com cada organização internacional (OI) no quadro da cooperação em gestão conjunta prevê que a entidade disponibilize informações financeiras e que a Comissão realize controlos, nomeadamente no local.

Estes controlos no local implicam um exame do sistema do SCA e da utilização pela organização internacional dos fundos da UE. Além disso, antes de assumir a gestão conjunta, a Comissão deve proceder a uma verificação *ex ante* dos procedimentos da OI.

A utilização correta dos fundos da UE canalizados para os países em desenvolvimento é verificada através de auditorias, controlos *ex post* e avaliações. O âmbito destas auditorias abrange todos os projetos, programas e instrumentos de ajuda externa financiados pelo orçamento da UE e pelo Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento (FED). A auditoria aos projetos ou programas de ajuda externa é efetuada por ou em nome dos serviços da Comissão a nível dos beneficiários, contratantes ou intermediários. O principal objetivo destas auditorias é fornecer garantias quanto à legalidade e regularidade da operação de ajuda externa. Trata-se de verificar se a legislação e regulamentação aplicáveis estão a ser cumpridas e se os fundos atribuídos aos projetos foram efetivamente afetados aos fins previstos.

3. Caso seja estabelecido atualmente um plano conexo para um determinado país em desenvolvimento, e assumindo que estão envolvidos fundos do orçamento da UE ou do FED, a Comissão tomará as medidas necessárias para garantir a legalidade, a regularidade e a boa gestão financeira desses recursos financeiros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006673/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: French companies involved in defrauding UN programme

The so-called 'Oil-for-Food' scandal led to 14 French companies being accused of depositing 10% of the cash value of contracts acquired in Baghdad in exchange for signing these contracts with Saddam Hussein's Iraq. For Iraq, which was under international embargo, the aim was to recover foreign currency without UN knowledge.

In force from 1996 to 2003, the 'Oil-for-Food' programme was designed by the UN to alleviate the effects on the Iraqi people of an economic embargo imposed following the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. This programme enabled Baghdad to sell a limited quantity of oil under strict UN supervision, in exchange for humanitarian aid and consumer goods.

1. Is the Commission monitoring developments with this process?

2. Does it have adequate means of checking whether companies and organisations through which funds and aid are being channelled into developing countries are using them properly?

3. Specifically as regards the scheme for recovering foreign currency devised by the Saddam regime, does it believe that it would be possible to check for a similar scheme today involving EU funds?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

1. This UN programme did not involve any EU funds, only proceeds from Iraqi oil. Therefore the Commission has not been involved in any monitoring process on EU Budget funds and we are not aware of any EU monitoring concerning the Development Fund for Iraq.

2. The Standard Contribution Agreement (SCA) the Commission signs with every International Organisation (IO) when cooperating in Joint Management provides for the entity to make available financial information and for the Commission to carry out checks, including on the spot.

These on the spot checks involve a review of the system of the SCA and the IO's use of the EU funds. Moreover before entering into joint management the Commission is requested to perform an *ex-ante* check of the IO's procedures.

The proper use of EU funds channelled to developing countries is verified with audits, *ex-post* controls and evaluations. The scope of these audits concerns all external aid projects, programmes and instruments financed by the EU budget and the European Development Fund (EDF). The audit of external aid projects or programmes is carried out by or on behalf of Commission services at the level of beneficiaries, contractors or intermediaries. The main purpose of these audits is to provide assurance as to the legality and regularity of external aid operation. This concerns compliance with the applicable legislation and rules and whether project funds have been used for their intended purpose.

3. In case that a related scheme is established nowadays for a particular developing country, and assuming that EU Budget or EDF funds are involved, the Commission will take the necessary steps to ensure the legality, regularity and sound financial management of the implementation of those financial resources.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006674/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Rússia: mísseis S-300 para a Síria

Após encontro com os Presidentes do Conselho e da Comissão Europeia em Ecaterimburgo, o Presidente Vladimir Putin declarou que a Rússia ainda não entregou os mísseis de defesa anti-aérea S-300 prometidos à Síria, ao mesmo tempo que destacou que Moscovo não pretende modificar as relações de força no Médio Oriente.

Putin advertiu que qualquer intervenção militar na Síria estaria «votada ao fracasso» e terá «pesadas consequências humanitárias» e criticou a retirada do embargo da União Europeia sobre o fornecimento de armas à oposição síria, que, segundo o próprio, representa um «obstáculo» para a organização da conferência de paz sobre a Síria.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Que comentários lhe merecem as declarações do Presidente russo?

2. Está em condições de confirmar que os mísseis S-300 ainda não foram disponibilizados às forças armadas sírias?

3. Considera que a Rússia assumiu uma posição construtiva na resolução da questão síria ou que persiste em amparar o desacreditado regime de Assad?

Resposta dada pela Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(19 de agosto de 2013)

A UE é favorável a uma solução política para o conflito na Síria, apoiando, nesse sentido, a iniciativa dos Estados Unidos-Rússia de organizar a Conferência de Paz sobre a Síria em Genebra (Genebra II). A UE gostaria que a Rússia mantivesse a sua posição coerente que visa promover uma solução política.

Quanto aos pontos levantados na pergunta, o embargo da UE sobre o fornecimento de armas terminou em 31 de maio e os Estados-Membros comprometeram-se a continuar a implementar as suas políticas nacionais em conformidade com os princípios estabelecidos na Declaração do Conselho adotada em 27 de maio. Os Estados-Membros da UE não fornecerão equipamento militar nesta fase, enquanto estiverem em curso os preparativos para a Conferência de Genebra II. O Conselho reexaminará a sua posição antes de 1 de agosto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006674/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Russia giving Syria S-300 missiles

After meeting the President of the Council and the President of the Commission in Yekaterinburg, President Vladimir Putin stated that Russia had still not sent the S-300 anti-air missiles it had promised to Syria, and pointed out that Moscow had no intention of changing the balance of power in the Middle East.

Mr Putin warned that any military intervention in Syria would be doomed to failure and would have serious humanitarian consequences; he also criticised the EU's lifting of the embargo on supplying arms to the Syrian opposition, which, in his view, posed an 'obstacle' to holding a Syrian peace conference.

1. What does the Vice-President/High Representative have to say about the Russian President's statements?

2. Can she confirm that the S-300 missiles have still not been provided to the Syrian armed forces?

3. Does she think that Russia has adopted a constructive approach to resolving the Syrian crisis or that it is continuing to support the discredited Assad regime?

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

The EU supports a political resolution of the conflict in Syria. In that respect it supports US-Russian initiative to hold 'the Geneva Peace Conference on Syria' (Geneva 2). The EU would like RU to retain its consistent stance on promoting the political solution.

As to the arguments quoted in the question, the EU arms embargo expired on 31 May and Member States committed to proceed on with their national policies in accordance with the principles set out in the Council Declaration adopted on 27 May. EU Member States will not deliver military equipment at this stage, while preparations to Geneva II are ongoing. Council will review its position before 1 August.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006675/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Síria: Comissão da ONU denuncia uso de armas químicas no país

A comissão de investigação da ONU sobre a Síria denunciou o uso de agentes químicos em pelo menos quatro ocasiões no território sírio, entre março e abril, num relatório recentemente apresentado ao Conselho dos Direitos Humanos da ONU.

Segundo este relatório, até ao momento as investigações «não permitiram identificar a natureza dos agentes, os sistemas de armas usados ou quem os utilizou».

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Face a mais esta prova do recurso a armas químicas no conflito sírio, qual considera que deve ser a reação da comunidade internacional?

2. Crê que as conversações de paz visando pôr termo ao conflito têm condições de se realizar?

3. Dispõe de informações acerca da efetiva vontade negocial das partes?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(26 de agosto de 2013)

A AR/VP tem conhecimento de vários relatórios sobre a alegada utilização de agentes químicos na Síria. A AR/VP emitiu uma declaração sobre esta questão a 14 de junho de 2013, segundo a qual «esta avaliação, combinada com outras que foram divulgadas, torna ainda mais urgentes os nossos repetidos apelos para que se chegue a acordo quanto ao envio imediato de uma missão de verificação das Nações Unidas para investigar estas alegações no terreno».

Neste momento, sem o envio de uma missão desse tipo, é difícil confirmar a utilização de armas químicas por qualquer uma das partes. A UE continuará a instar a Síria a aderir à Convenção sobre Armas Químicas e ratificar a Convenção sobre Armas Biológicas com urgência. A UE recorda que o uso de armas químicas, por qualquer pessoa e em quaisquer circunstâncias, é um ato condenável e que viola gravemente as normas da comunidade internacional. As autoridades sírias são especialmente responsáveis por assegurar que as suas armas químicas são armazenadas em segurança, enquanto não são destruídas e sujeitas a um controlo independente, e que não caem nas mãos de qualquer outro interveniente no conflito, estatal ou não.

A UE apoia a iniciativa EUA-Rússia para promover a «Conferência de Genebra sobre a Síria» (Genebra 2). Os organizadores apelaram a que as duas partes se sentassem à mesa das negociações sem impor condições prévias. As declarações oficiais da coligação da oposição síria e do regime mostraram-se favoráveis à negociação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006675/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Syria: UN commission reports use of chemical weapons in the country

In a report recently submitted to the UN Human Rights Council, the UN commission of inquiry into Syria reported the use of chemical agents in Syrian territory on at least four occasions in March and April.

The report states that, to date, 'the precise agents, delivery systems or perpetrators could not be identified' by the investigation.

Can the High Representative state:

1. How does she believe the international community should react to this further proof that chemical weapons are being used in the Syrian conflict?

2. Does she believe that the situation allows for holding peace talks to bring an end to the conflict?

3. Does she have information about whether the parties actually want to negotiate?

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

The HR/VP is aware of various reports related to the alleged use of chemical agents in Syria. The HR/VP released a statement on that matter on 14 June 2013, which stated that 'this assessment, combined with others that have been circulated, makes even more urgent our repeated calls for an agreement to immediately deploy a UN verification mission to investigate these allegations on the ground.'

At this time, without a successful deployment of a UN investigation mission, it is difficult to confirm the use of chemical weapons by either side. The EU will continue to urge Syria to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention and to ratify the Biological Weapons Convention as a matter of urgency. The EU recalls that any use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances would be reprehensible and completely contrary to the legal norms and standards of the international community. The Syrian authorities bear a particular responsibility to ensure that their chemical weapons are stored securely pending independently verified destruction and are not permitted to fall into the hands of any other State or non-state actor.

The EU supports the US-Russian initiative to hold 'the Geneva Conference on Syria' (Geneva 2). The organisers called for both sides to sit down to talk without preconditions. The official statements by the Syrian Opposition Coalition and the regime side declare openness to negotiations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006676/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Proibição de venda de aparelhos da Apple por violação de patentes da Samsung

A Comissão de Comércio Internacional dos Estados Unidos proibiu a importação e a venda de alguns aparelhos antigos da Apple, ao considerar que aquela empresa violou patentes da sua rival, a marca sul-coreana Samsung. Desta decisão ainda cabe recurso.

Numa outra questão judicial nos Estados Unidos da América, a Samsung foi obrigada a pagar, em agosto último, mais de mil milhões de dólares por infringir patentes da Apple, o que também poderá levar à proibição da comercialização de aparelhos da Samsung.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem acompanhado os processos judiciais que correm termos nos Estados Unidos da América e que opõem a Apple à Samsung?

2. Face às decisões dos tribunais americanos que indiciam a violação de patentes de parte a parte, crê que na União Europeia se deverão tomar medidas equivalentes de modo a assegurar a manutenção da sã e leal concorrência entre empresas?

3. A Apple ou a Samsung já foram objeto de averiguações por parte da Comissão no tocante ao respeito das leis da concorrência?

4. Que conclusões retirou das mesmas?

Resposta dada por Joaquin Almunia em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão acompanha de perto a evolução da situação relativa às patentes.

Os litígios entre empresas privadas relativos à violação dos direitos de propriedade intelectual são geralmente tratados pelos tribunais nacionais.

Dito isto, se as patentes tiverem sido declaradas essenciais pelo seu proprietário para a execução de uma norma industrial, e se o proprietário tiver acordado um compromisso consequente no sentido de licenciar essas patentes em condições justas, razoáveis e não discriminatórias, a Comissão receia que a interposição de ações inibitórias baseadas nessas patentes contra licenciados numa base voluntária possam ser contrárias ao artigo 102.° do TFUE. Neste contexto, em 21 de dezembro de 2012, a Comissão adotou uma comunicação de objeções em que expunha o seu parecer preliminar de que a interposição de determinadas ações inibitórias pela Samsung contra a Apple pode ser contrária ao artigo 102.° do TFUE. Mais pormenores sobre este processo podem ser consultados em: (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1448_en.htm). A investigação está em curso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006676/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Ban on sale of Apple products for breaching Samsung patents

The United States International Trade Commission has banned the import and sale of some old Apple products because it considers the company to have breached patents owned by its rival, the South Korean company Samsung. An appeal could still be lodged against this judgment.

Last August, another court judgment in the US ordered Samsung to pay over USD 1 billion for breaching Apple patents, which could lead to a ban on the sale of Samsung devices.

1. Has the Commission been monitoring legal proceedings between Apple and Samsung in the US?

2. In view of the US court judgments that the parties have violated each other's patents, does it believe that the EU should take equivalent measures to ensure a level playing field between the companies?

3. Has it investigated Apple or Samsung as regards competition law?

4. What were the conclusions of these investigations?

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

The Commission closely monitors developments relating to patents.

Disputes between private companies relating to the infringement of intellectual property rights are generally dealt with by national courts.

That being said, where patents have been declared essential by their owner for the implementation of an industry standard, and where the owner has given an associated commitment to license such patents on Fair, Reasonable and Non-Discriminatory (FRAND) terms, the Commission is concerned that the seeking of injunctions based on such patents against willing licensees may be contrary to Article 102 TFEU. In this context, on 21 December 2012, the Commission adopted a Statement of Objections outlining its preliminary view that the seeking of certain injunctions by Samsung against Apple may be contrary to Article 102 TFEU. More details on this case can be found at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1448_en.htm. The investigation is ongoing.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006677/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Adaptação do Ariane 5

O novo diretor da empresa europeia Arianespace solicitou uma rápida modificação do foguete lançador Ariane 5 para que este possa passar a ser apto a colocar em órbita satélites de maiores dimensões.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apreciação faz desta proposta?

2. Qual o custo que a sua concretização acarretaria?

3. Crê que o mesmo se justifica?

4. A que tipo de produtos e mercados se destinaria a adaptação do Ariane 5?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(10 de setembro de 2013)

1.-3. Com a rápida evolução da oferta e da procura em matéria de serviços de lançamento em todo o mundo (por exemplo, aumento da massa e do volume dos satélites convencionais, novos operadores no setor dos lançadores), a AEE e a Arianespace estão a analisar soluções técnicas no sentido de introduzir alterações na configuração do lançador Ariane 5 ECA até 2015. É, assim, prematuro que a Comissão se pronuncie sobre a proposta de melhoramento do Ariane 5 ECA.

A Comissão é um dos principais intervenientes institucionais europeus no domínio dos serviços de lançamento e será também um dos maiores clientes desses serviços, nos próximos anos, com o lançamento dos satélites para os seus programas emblemáticos, Galileo e Copernicus. A Comissão apoia, por conseguinte, o objetivo de acesso independente ao espaço.

Tal como se refere na Comunicação «Explorar o potencial de crescimento económico no setor espacial» ([1]), a Comissão propõe desenvolver e implementar uma verdadeira política de lançadores europeus, o que permitiria à Europa dispor de um sistema de lançadores que seja:

— Fiável do ponto de vista técnico;

— Seguro, o que pode exigir que os lançamentos se efetuem a partir de um porto espacial em solo europeu;

— Disponível e independente;

— Eficaz em termos de custos, uma vez que esta condição contribui para a acessibilidade.

4. Prevê-se que a modificação do lançador Ariane 5 ECA solicitada lhe confira a capacidade para pôr em órbita satélites maiores, nomeadamente satélites de propulsão elétrica de maior dimensão, o que constitui um dos segmentos mais promissores do mercado dos satélites.

([1]) COM(2013) 108.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006677/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Adapting the Ariane 5

The new chairman of the European company Arianespace has called for rapid modification of the Ariane 5 rocket launcher in order to adapt it for the purpose of putting larger rockets into orbit.

1. What is the Commission's view of this proposal?

2. What will implementing it cost?

3. Does it consider the cost justified?

4. For what type of products and markets will adapting the Ariane 5 be intended?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

1-3. With the rapid evolution of worldwide launch service offer and demand (e.g. increase of the conventional satellite mass and volume, new entrants in the launcher sector) technical solutions are under assessment by ESA and Arianespace to introduce changes in the Ariane 5 ECA configuration by 2015. It is thus premature for the Commission to express views on the proposed improvement of Ariane 5 ECA.

The Commission is one of the major European institutional actors in the domain of launch services and will also be one of the main customers for such services over the next few years with the launching of the satellites for its flagship programmes Galileo and Copernicus. The Commission therefore supports the objective of independent access to space.

As stated in the communication 'Releasing the potential for economic growth in the space sector' ([1]), the Commission proposes to establish and implement a real European launcher policy which should ensure that Europe has at its disposal a launcher system that is:

— Reliable from a technical point of view

— Secure, which may require launches to take place from a space port on European soil

— Available and independent

— Cost efficient, as this contributes to affordability.

4. The requested modification of the Ariane 5 ECA launcher is expected to give the launcher the capability of delivering larger satellites to orbit in particular larger electric-propelled satellites, one of the most promising market segments of the satellite market.

([1]) COM(2013)108.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006678/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Desenvolvimento do Ariane 6

Em novembro de 2012, os ministros dos Estados-Membros que integram a Agência Espacial Europeia (ESA) concordaram em financiar o desenvolvimento de um foguete sucessor do atual Ariane 5, o Ariane 6.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apreciação faz do atual estado do projeto?

2. Qual o custo que a sua concretização acarretaria?

3. Crê que o mesmo se justifica?

4. A que tipo de produtos e mercados se destinaria o futuro Ariane 6?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(12 de setembro de 2013)

1.-3. A Comissão é um dos principais agentes institucionais europeus no domínio dos serviços de lançamento e é suscetível de se tornar um dos principais clientes de tais serviços nos próximos anos, com o lançamento dos satélites para os seus programas emblemáticos Galileo e Copernicus. Esta é uma das razões pelas quais a Comissão considera que a autonomia neste setor estratégico se reveste de uma importância fundamental.

Como anunciado na sua Comunicação «Política Industrial Espacial da UE — Explorar o Potencial de Crescimento Económico no Setor Espacial» ([1]), a Comissão pretende estabelecer e implementar uma verdadeira política de lançamentos europeia que possa garantir que a Europa dispõe de um sistema de lançadores que seja:

— Fiável do ponto de vista técnico

— Seguro, o que pode exigir que os lançamentos se efetuem a partir de um porto espacial em solo europeu

— Disponível e independente

— Eficaz em termos de custos, uma vez que esta condição contribui para a acessibilidade.

Os debates sobre a conceção técnica e as especificações destes dois programas deverão estar concluídos, quando se realizar o próximo Conselho ministerial da AEE em 2014. Por conseguinte, é prematura a pronúncia da Comissão sobre esta matéria.

4. A pergunta sobre o tipo de produtos e mercados a que Ariane 6 se destinaria não é da competência da Comissão. Por conseguinte, deve ser dirigida à empresa responsável pela sua exploração, Arianespace.

([1]) COM(2013) 108.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006678/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Development of the Ariane 6

In November 2012, ministers of the Member States that make up the European Space Agency agreed to fund the development of a successor to the current Ariane 5 rocket: the Ariane 6.

1. What is the Commission's view of the state of play of this project?

2. What will implementing it cost?

3. Does it consider the cost justified?

4. For what type of products and markets will the future Ariane 6 be intended?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

1-3. The Commission is one of the major European institutional actors in the domain of launch services and is likely to become one of the main customers for such services over the next few years with the launching of the satellites for its flagship programmes Galileo and Copernicus. This is one of the reasons why the Commission considers of fundamental importance the autonomy in this strategic sector.

As stated in the communication 'EU Space industrial policy — Releasing the potential for economic growth in the space sector' ([1]), the Commission proposes to establish and implement a real European launcher policy which should ensure that Europe has at its disposal a launcher system that is:

— Reliable from a technical point of view

— Secure, which may require launches to take place from a space port on European soil

— Available and independent

— Cost efficient, as this contributes to affordability.

Discussions on technical design and specifications for these two programmes are expected to be concluded at the upcoming ESA Council at Ministerial level to be held in 2014. It is thus premature for the Commission to express views on this matter.

4. The question of what types of products and markets shall Ariane 6 address does not fall under the Commission's competencies. It should be therefore addressed to Arianespace — the company responsible for operating it.

([1]) COM(2013)108.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006679/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Toyota anuncia potencial problema em 242 000 veículos

A empresa japonesa Toyota anunciou que 242 000 veículos híbridos Prius e Lexus estão em risco de ter uma falha no sistema de freios. Estes veículos foram fabricados entre março e outubro de 2009. O problema afetaria potencialmente 117 000 automóveis no Japão, 91 000 nos Estados Unidos, 30 000 na Europa e 3 000 na Ásia.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento de diligências da Toyota destinadas a colmatar os problemas potenciais dos referidos veículos na União Europeia?

2. Foi informada de quantos veículos correspondendo àquelas características foram já objeto de revisão por parte da Toyota no espaço da União?

3. Considera que a segurança dos condutores destes veículos recomenda que o alerta daToyota seja difundido o mais amplamente possível?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2013)

Em junho de 2013, a Comissão recebeu informações sobre problemas potenciais nos veículos híbridos da Toyota, suscetíveis de gerar avarias nos sistemas de travagem.

A Grécia apresentou uma notificação, no âmbito do sistema de informações RAPEX, relativa aos veículos Toyota Prius, na qual chamava a atenção para o risco de, devido a fissuras causadas por desgaste de um elemento do sistema de travagem, o desempenho dos travões poder vir a diminuir gradualmente durante a condução do veículo, o que resultaria numa distância de travagem cada vez maior. A Toyota procedeu a uma campanha voluntária de convocação de veículos na Grécia. Em reação a essa informação, diversos Estados-Membros notificaram da convocação desse mesmo modelo de veículos nos seus territórios.

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de quantos veículos na UE já foram convocados pela Toyota.

Para além do intercâmbio de informações previsto pelo sistema RAPEX, e dependendo da avaliação do risco num determinado caso, incumbe ao fabricante tomar medidas adequadas para informar os proprietários dos veículos em questão, através dos seus concessionários e dos prestadores de serviços, assim como disponibilizando informação a divulgar pelas autoridades de registo a nível nacional.

Ademais, a legislação da UE relativa à homologação de veículos obriga o fabricante a informar a entidade homologadora em situações em que uma convocação de veículos seja obrigatória, devido a um sério risco para a segurança rodoviária, a saúde pública ou a proteção do ambiente.

Tendo em conta os procedimentos e as disposições supramencionadas, a Comissão considera que a informação sobre o problema potencial em causa foi amplamente divulgada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006679/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Toyota announces potential problem with 242 000 vehicles

The Japanese company Toyota has announced that 242 000 Prius and Lexus hybrid vehicles are at risk of developing a fault in the braking system. These vehicles were manufactured in March-October 2009. The problem potentially affects 117 000 motor vehicles in Japan, 91 000 in the United States, 30 000 in Europe and 3 000 in Asia.

1. Is the Commission aware of attempts by Toyota to solve potential problems with the aforementioned vehicles in the EU?

2. Has it been informed how many vehicles with these characteristics within the EU have already been reviewed by Toyota?

3. Does it believe that the safety of drivers of these vehicles makes it advisable for Toyota's warning to be disseminated as widely as possible?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

In June 2013 the Commission received information about the potential problems of Toyota hybrid vehicles which may risk developing a fault in the braking system.

Greece has submitted a notification under the RAPEX information system concerning Toyota Prius vehicles pointing to the risk that due to a fatigue crack in an element of the braking system, the braking performance could diminish gradually while driving the vehicle, resulting in a gradually greater stopping distance. Toyota proceeded to a voluntary recall of vehicles in Greece. In reaction to that information, several Member States informed about recalls of the same vehicle type in their territories.

The Commission is not aware how many of the concerned vehicles in the EU have already been recalled by Toyota.

In addition to the exchange of information forseen by the RAPEX system, and depending on the risk assessment in a given case, it is the task of the manufacturer to take adequate steps to inform the owners of the vehicles concerned, through their dealerships and service providers and also with the information available from the national registration authorities.

EU type approval legislation would furthermore oblige the vehicle manfacturer to inform the type approval authority in situations where a recall is mandatory due to a serious risk to road safety, public health or environmental protection.

In view of the above procedures and provisions the Commission considers that the information about the potential problem has been disseminated widely.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006680/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Futura entrada da Letónia na zona do euro: riscos e oportunidades

A Comissão Europeia aprovou a adoção do euro por parte da Letónia a partir de 1 de janeiro de 2014, fazendo deste o décimo oitavo país a integrar a moeda única, considerando que a Letónia alcançou um equilíbrio económico significativo.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como avalia a manutenção da atratividade do euro apesar da crise económica e financeira vigente?

2. Considera que a Letónia tenderá a manter o equilíbrio económico significativo de que agora dispõe e que a Comissão reconhece após a sua adesão ao euro?

3. Quais os principais riscos e as principais oportunidades que esta adesão comporta para o país e para a zona do euro?

4. Como avalia o esforço desenvolvido pelo governo da Letónia, nomeadamente quanto à correção dos desequilíbrios económicos e financeiros que afetavam o país?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de remeter o Senhor Deputado para o relatório de convergência de 2013 ([1]), que foi publicado em 5 de junho e avalia a possibilidade de a Letónia aderir à área do euro. O relatório apresenta uma avaliação aprofundada da sustentabilidade a nível da inflação, do orçamento, das taxas de juro, do setor financeiro, da competitividade e de outros indicadores futuros, descrevendo os potenciais riscos e oportunidades económicas e financeiras da eventual adesão da Letónia à área do euro. Reconhece igualmente os esforços do Governo na correção dos desequilíbrios económicos e financeiros que afetaram o país nos últimos anos.

Em novembro de 2012, a Comissão também publicou um estudo exaustivo da experiência de ajustamento económico da Letónia e dos ensinamentos obtidos — «Programa de apoio da UE à balança de pagamentos da Letónia: as bases do sucesso» ([2]) — que fornece uma análise útil das políticas aplicadas pelas autoridades, bem como os mutuantes internacionais.

Por último, o relatório de 2013 sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta ([3]) considera que a Letónia não está sujeita a desequilíbrios económicos ou financeiros que exijam uma maior supervisão ou ações suplementares.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/ee3_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op120_en.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/Result.do?T1=V5&T2=2012&T3=751&RechType=RECH_naturel&Submit=Search

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006680/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Latvia's future adoption of the euro: risks and opportunities

Since Latvia has achieved a well-balanced economy, the Commission has approved its adoption of the euro from 1 January 2014, making it the 18th country to join the single currency.

1. Why does the Commission think the euro is still attractive despite the current economic and financial crisis?

2. Does it think that Latvia will be able to keep its economy as well balanced as it currently is — as the Commission acknowledges — after adopting the euro?

3. What are the main risks and opportunities that this accession represents for the country itself and for the euro area?

4. What is its assessment of the Latvian Government's efforts, particularly as regards correcting the economic and financial imbalances that were affecting the country?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the 2013 Convergence Report ([1]), which was published on 5 June and assesses Latvia's readiness to join Euro Area. The report provides an extensive assessment of sustainability of inflation, budgetary, interest rate, financial sector, competitiveness and other indicators going forward, as well as outlines potential economic and financial risks and opportunities for Latvia when joining the Euro Area. It also acknowledges the Government's efforts as regards correcting the economic and financial imbalances that affected the country in the past few years.

The Commission has also published in November 2012 a comprehensive study of Latvia's economic adjustment experience and lessons learned — 'EU Balance of Payments assistance for Latvia: Foundations of Success' ([2]) — that provides useful analysis of the policies undertaken by the authorities, as well as the international lenders.

Lastly, the 2013 Alert Mechanism Report ([3]) concludes that Latvia is not subject to economic or financial imbalances that would require further surveillance or action.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/ee3_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op120_en.htm
([3]) http://eurlex.europa.eu/Result.do?T1=V5&T2=2012&T3=751&RechType=RECH_naturel&Submit=Search

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006681/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2009/30/CE — tensão de vapor máxima da gasolina

A Diretiva 2009/30/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 23 de abril de 2009, alterou a Diretiva 98/70/CE no que se refere às especificações da gasolina e do gasóleo rodoviário e não rodoviário e à introdução de um mecanismo de monitorização e de redução das emissões de gases com efeito de estufa e alterou a Diretiva 1999/32/CE do Conselho no que se refere às especificações dos combustíveis utilizados nas embarcações de navegação interior e que revoga a Diretiva 93/12/CEE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

2. Está em condições de avaliar o impacto e a suficiência da alteração introduzida pela Diretiva 2009/30/CE?

3. Considera que as derrogações introduzidas à tensão de vapor máxima da gasolina para o período de verão não atingem desrazoavelmente os níveis de qualidade do ar e não implicam efeitos negativos nem riscos significativos para a saúde humana e o ambiente?

Resposta dada por Connie Hedegaard em nome da Comissão
(7 de agosto de 2013)

1. Até à data, todos os Estados-Membros notificaram à Comissão as suas medidas de transposição, com exceção da Bélgica e da Polónia, que notificaram apenas uma transposição parcial. Em consequência, foram lançados processos por infração para fazer face a esta situação.

2. A alteração introduziu várias alterações à diretiva mas nem todas produzem efeitos imediatos. Consequentemente, até à data a Comissão não recebeu qualquer avaliação do respetivo impacto, só os relatórios de progresso foram adotados (por exemplo, sobre os biocombustíveis ([1]) e a qualidade dos combustíveis ([2])).

3. A aprovação das derrogações à tensão de vapor máxima da gasolina para o período de verão tem por base a análise da Comissão da sua conformidade com a legislação da União Europeia em matéria de qualidade do ar. Em conformidade com o artigo 3.°, n.° 5, da Diretiva 98/70/CE, a Comissão é obrigada a rejeitar quaisquer derrogações que resultem numa violação da legislação em vigor relativa à qualidade do ar.

([1]) Disponível em: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/reports/reports_en.htm
([2]) Disponível em: http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/fuel/documentation_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006681/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2009/30/EC — Maximum petrol vapour pressure

Directive 2009/30/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 amending Directive 98/70/EC as regards the specification of petrol, diesel and gas-oil and introducing a mechanism to monitor and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and amending Council Directive 1999/32/EC as regards the specification of fuel used by inland waterway vessels and repealing Directive 93/12/EEC

Can the Commission state:

1. Which Member States have still not transposed this directive?

2. Is it in a position to assess the impact of the amendment introduced by Directive 2009/30/EC and whether it goes far enough?

3. Does it believe that the summer time maximum petrol vapour pressure exemptions introduced achieve reasonable levels of air quality and that they do not give rise to significant negative impacts on, or risks to, human health and the environment?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

1. To date, all Member States have notified the Commission of their transposing measures with the exception of Belgium and Poland which have notified only partial transposition. As a consequence infringement procedures have been launched to address this situation.

2. The amendment introduced multiple changes to the directive which did not all take immediate effect. As a consequence, the Commission has so far not undertaken any assessment of the impacts, but progress reports (for example for biofuels ([1]) and fuel quality ([2])) have been adopted.

3. The approval of summer time maximum petrol vapour pressure waivers is based on the Commission's analysis of compliance with European Union air quality legislation. In accordance with Article 3(5) of Directive 98/70/EC the Commission is obliged to reject any waiver that will result in non-compliance with this air quality legislation.

([1]) Available at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/reports/reports_en.htm
([2]) Available at http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/fuel/documentation_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006682/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2009/31/CE — armazenamento geológico de dióxido de carbono

A Diretiva 2009/31/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 23 de abril de 2009, relativa ao armazenamento geológico de dióxido de carbono alterou a Diretiva 85/337/CEE do Conselho, as Diretivas 2000/60/CE, 2001/80/CE, 2004/35/CE, 2006/12/CE e 2008/1/CE e o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1013/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

2. Está em condições de avaliar o impacto e a suficiência das medidas constantes da Diretiva 2009/31/CE e das alterações introduzidas por aquela nas diretivas acima elencadas? O que destaca?

3. A modalidade de captura e armazenamento geológico do dióxido de carbono e a sua injeção em formações geológicas subterrâneas adequadas para efeitos de armazenamento permanente tem-se revelado à altura das expectativas nela depositadas?

4. O seu desenvolvimento teve algum impacto negativo nos esforços para apoiar políticas de poupança de energia, energias renováveis e outras tecnologias de baixo teor de carbono seguras e sustentáveis, quer em termos de investigação, quer em termos financeiros?

5. A aplicação da diretiva tem estado em linha com as estimativas preliminares que a acompanhavam, nomeadamente quanto à redução das emissões de gases com efeito de estufa?

Resposta dada por Connie Hedegaard em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

1. Em julho de 2011, a Comissão lançou 26 processos por infração (a todos os Estados-Membros com exceção da Espanha), por não terem sido comunicadas as medidas nacionais de transposição da Diretiva CAC. Até à data, foram encerrados nove processos, dado terem sido entretanto notificadas as medidas de transposição ([1]); permanecem, contudo, em aberto 17 processos devido à não comunicação total ou parcial das referidas medidas. Até julho de 2013, foram comunicadas à Comissão medidas de transposição relativas à maioria dos casos; a Comissão procede atualmente à verificação da exaustividade dessas medidas.

2. A Comissão prepara atualmente um relatório para o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho sobre a aplicação da Diretiva CAC, como previsto pelo artigo 38.°, n.° 1, da mesma, relatório esse que deverá estar concluído antes do final de 2013 ([2]). O relatório avaliará o impacto das medidas previstas na Diretiva CAC, nomeadamente das alterações às diretivas pertinentes no domínio ambiental.

3. e 5. Na sua comunicação sobre o futuro da captura e armazenagem de carbono na Europa ([3]), a Comissão concluiu que a mesma não registou ainda grandes avanços, nomeadamente em virtude da falta de interesse comercial a longo prazo, reforçada pelo baixo preço do carbono e pelo custo das tecnologias em causa. Contudo, as avaliações efetuadas no contexto do Roteiro da UE de transição para uma economia hipocarbónica competitiva em 2050 e do Roteiro da Energia para 2050 consideram que a comercialização da CAC poderá constituir uma importante contribuição tecnológica para a transição para uma economia hipocarbónica na UE. A UE continua, pois, a apoiar o desenvolvimento da CAC, nomeadamente através do financiamento de projetos de demonstração em grande escala, por exemplo no contexto dos programas EEPR e NER 300.

4. A Comissão não considera que o desenvolvimento da CAC possa ter um impacto negativo nas iniciativas de apoio à eficiência energética, às energias renováveis e a outras tecnologias hipocarbónicas.

([1]) Dinamarca, França, Itália, Lituânia, Malta, Países Baixos, Portugal, Roménia e Eslováquia.
([2]) Devido aos atrasos registados na transmissão dos relatórios nacionais exigida pelo artigo 27.°, n.° 1.
([3]) COM(2013) 180 de 27 de março de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006682/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2009/31/EC — Geological storage of carbon dioxide

Directive 2009/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the geological storage of carbon dioxide and amending Council Directive 85/337/EEC, European Parliament and Council Directives 2000/60/EC, 2001/80/EC, 2004/35/EC, 2006/12/EC, 2008/1/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006.

Can the Commission state:

1. Which Member States have still not transposed this directive?

2. Is it in a position to assess the impact of the measures in Directive 2009/31/EC and of the amendments that it introduces to the aforementioned directives, and whether they go far enough? What are the key elements?

3. Has the method of capturing carbon dioxide and storing it in geological formations suitable for permanent storage purposes met expectations?

4. Has its development had a negative impact on efforts to support energy-saving policies, renewable energies, and other safe and sustainable low carbon technologies, in both research and financial terms?

5. Has transposition of the directive been in line with the preliminary estimates that accompanied it, particularly as regards reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

1. In July 2011, the Commission launched 26 infringement cases for non-communication of national measures transposing the CCS Directive (for all Member States except Spain). While 9 cases were closed to date due to notification of complete transposing measures ([1]), 17 cases remain open due to full or partial non-communication. The Commission has received transposition measures for most cases until July 2013 and is currently performing the completeness check.

2. The Commission is preparing a report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the CCS Directive, foreseen by Article 38(1) of that directive, which is expected to be finalised before the end of 2013 ([2]). This report will assess the impact of the measures in the CCS Directive, including the amendments to the relevant environmental Directives.

3 and 5. In its communication on the Future of Carbon Capture and Storage in Europe ([3]) the Commission concluded that CCS has not yet taken off in Europe, mainly due to the lack of a long term business case, worsened by the low carbon price, and the cost of the CCS technology. Nevertheless, assessments made in the context of the EU's Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 and the Energy Roadmap 2050 see CCS, if commercialised, as an important technology contributing to low carbon transition in the EU. Therefore, the EU remains committed to supporting CCS development, including through the financing of large scale demonstration projects, e.g. by the EEPR and NER 300 funding programmes.

4. The Commission is not aware that the development of CCS would have a negative impact on efforts to support energy efficiency, renewable energy or other low carbon technologies.

([1]) Denmark, France, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia.
([2]) The delay is due to delays in transmission of national reports under Article 27(1).
([3]) COM(2013) 180 of 27 March 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006683/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2009/126/CE — fase II da recuperação de vapores de gasolina em estações de serviço

Em 21 de outubro de 2009 foi adotada a Diretiva 2009/126/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, relativa à fase II da recuperação de vapores de gasolina durante o reabastecimento de veículos a motor nas estações de serviço.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

2. Está em condições de avaliar o impacto e a suficiência das medidas constantes da Diretiva 2009/126/CE?

3. Dispõe de informações acerca da efetiva realização de inspeções periódicas aos equipamentos de recuperação de vapores de gasolina de fase II e dos seus resultados?

4. O Comité Europeu de Normalização elaborou uma metodologia harmonizada para as verificações conforme preconizado? Esta já se encontra em aplicação?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(31 de julho de 2013)

1. A Diretiva 2009/126/CE relativa à fase II da recuperação de vapores de gasolina durante o reabastecimento de veículos a motor nas estações de serviço ([1]) foi transposta por todos os Estados-Membros.

2. No seu artigo 7.°, a diretiva exige que, até 31 de dezembro de 2014, a Comissão efetue uma avaliação da sua aplicação. Essa avaliação deverá incidir, nomeadamente, no registo de conformidade dos sistemas da fase II de recuperação de vapores de gasolina em serviço. Além disso, terá em conta a revisão em curso da estratégia da UE em matéria de poluição atmosférica e quaisquer questões mais vastas que esta identifique, relacionadas com o controlo das emissões de compostos orgânicos voláteis (COV).

3. A Comissão não dispõe de informações sobre as inspeções periódicas do equipamento da fase II de recuperação de vapores de gasolina.

4. Em conformidade com o artigo 8.° da Diretiva 2009/126/CE, o Comité Europeu de Normalização está em processo de formalização de metodologias harmonizadas para verificar o desempenho dos equipamentos de captura de vapores de gasolina.

([1]) JO L 285 de 31.10.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006683/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2009/126/EC — Stage II petrol vapour recovery at service stations

On 21 October 2009, Directive 2009/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on Stage II petrol vapour recovery during refuelling of motor vehicles at service stations was adopted.

Can the Commission state:

1. Which Member States have still not transposed this directive?

2. Is it in a position to assess the impact of the measures included in Directive 2009/126/EC and whether they go far enough?

3. Does it have information on the actual carrying out of periodic inspections of the equipment for Stage II petrol vapour recovery and their results?

4. Has the European Committee for Standardisation drafted a harmonised methodology for inspections, as advocated? Is it already being applied?

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

1. This directive is transposed in all Member States.

2. Article 7 of Directive 2009/126/EC ([1]) on Stage II petrol vapour recovery during refuelling of motor vehicles at service stations requires the Commission to review, by 31 December 2014, the implementation of the directive. This review will, in particular, include consideration of the in-service compliance record of Stage II petrol vapour recovery systems. Furthermore, it will take account of the current, ongoing review of the EU 'Strategy on Air Pollution' and any wider issues that this identifies with the controls on emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs).

3. The Commission does not have information on periodic inspections of the equipment for Stage II petrol vapour recovery.

4. In accordance with Article 8 of Directive 2009/126/EC, the European Committee for Standardisation is in the process of formalising harmonised methodologies for checking the performance of petrol vapour capture equipment.

([1]) OJ L 285, 31.10.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006684/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/37/EU — veículos em fim de vida

A Diretiva 2011/37/UE da Comissão, de 30 de março de 2011, alterou o anexo II da Diretiva 2000/53/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa aos veículos em fim de vida.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

2. Está em condições de avaliar o impacto das alterações introduzidas no anexo II?

3. Considera suficiente o elenco dos materiais e componentes de veículos isentos da proibição de utilização de chumbo, mercúrio, cádmio ou crómio hexavalente?

4. Existiram alterações recentes do ponto de vista científico ou técnico que justifiquemalterações neste elenco?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(8 de agosto de 2013)

Todos os Estados-Membros transpuseram a Diretiva 2011/37/UE da Comissão ([1]).

A Diretiva 2000/53/CE ([2]), relativa aos veículos em fim de vida, identifica o chumbo, o mercúrio, o cádmio e o crómio hexavalente como sendo as substâncias perigosas que não podem ser utilizadas em veículos colocados no mercado da UE depois de 1 de julho de 2003. O Anexo II concede derrogações quando a utilização destas substâncias é considerada inevitável. O anexo II é revisto e alterado, numa base regular, de acordo com o progresso técnico e científico e consultas às partes interessadas, em conformidade com o artigo 4.°, n.° 2, alínea b), da diretiva (ver os relatórios publicados no sítio Web da DG ENV: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/elv_index.htm). A sexta alteração do Anexo II conduziu à Diretiva 2013/28/UE ([3]) de 17 de maio de 2013. A Comissão irá em breve lançar uma nova consulta junto das partes interessadas para avaliar as isenções que terminam em 2014.

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada às perguntas escritas E-000243/2013 e E-000655/2009.

([1]) JO L 85 de 31.3.2011.
([2]) JO L 269 de 21.10.2000.
([3]) JO L 135 de 22.5.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006684/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/37/EU — End-of-life vehicles

Commission Directive 2011/37/EU of 30 March 2011 amending Annex II to Directive 2000/53/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on end-of-life vehicles.

Can the Commission state:

1. Which Member States have still not transposed this directive?

2. Is it in a position to assess the impact of the amendments introduced to Annex II?

3. Does it consider the list of materials and vehicle components exempt from the ban on using lead, mercury, cadmium or hexavalent chromium sufficient?

4. Have there been recent scientific or technical changes that justify amending this list?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

All Member States have transposed Commission Directive 2011/37/EU ([1]).

Directive 2000/53/EC ([2]) on end-of-life vehicles identifies lead, mercury, cadmium & hexavalent chromium were identified as the hazardous substances that may not be used in vehicles put on the EU market after 1 July 2003. Annex II grants exemptions when the use of these substances is considered unavoidable. Annex II is revised and amended on a regular basis according to technical and scientific progress and stakeholders consultations, in accordance with Article 4.2 (b) of the directive (see the reports published on the DG ENV website: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/elv_index.htm). The sixth amendment of Annex II resulted in Commission Directive 2013/28/EU ([3]) of 17 May 2013. The Commission will shortly launch a new stakeholder consultation to assess the exemptions expiring in 2014.

The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-000243/2013 and E-000655/2009.

([1]) OJ L 85, 31.3.2011.
([2]) OJ L 269, 21.10.2000.
([3]) OJ L 135, 22.5.2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006685/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2010/79/UE — método analítico ISO 11890-1

A Diretiva 2010/79/UE da Comissão, de 19 de novembro de 2010, adaptou ao progresso técnico o anexo III da Diretiva 2004/42/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa à limitação das emissões de compostos orgânicos voláteis.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

2. Está em condições de avaliar o impacto das adaptações introduzidas no anexo III?

3. Nomeadamente, em termos práticos, que informações tem quanto à efetiva utilização do método analítico ISO 11890-1 na verificação dos limites aplicáveis ao teor máximo autorizado de compostos orgânicos voláteis?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(19 de julho de 2013)

De acordo com as notificações enviadas à Comissão pelos Estados-Membros sobre a transposição da Diretiva 2010/79/UE da Comissão, esta diretiva foi transposta em todos os Estados-Membros.

As alterações introduzidas pela referida diretiva no Anexo III da Diretiva 2004/42/CE ([1]) relativa à limitação das emissões de compostos orgânicos voláteis resultantes da utilização de solventes orgânicos em determinadas tintas e vernizes e em produtos de retoque de veículos visavam refletir o progresso técnico no que respeita aos métodos analíticos para os compostos orgânicos voláteis. Além disso, para certos produtos, foi autorizado um método analítico mais simples e mais barato descrito na norma ISO 11890-1, o qual visa reduzir os custos de ensaio suportados pelos Estados-Membros e pelos operadores abrangidos pela Diretiva 2004/42/CE.

Em 2010, a Comissão levou a cabo uma análise do cumprimento pelos Estados-Membros da Diretiva 2004/42/CE. Porém, uma vez que a Diretiva 2010/79/UE ([2]) que adapta ao progresso técnico o Anexo III da Diretiva 2004/42/CE só foi adotada em 2010, existem poucas informações práticas sobre a utilização do método analítico descrito na norma ISO 11890-1 para se poder verificar a limitação das emissões dos compostos orgânicos voláteis e a redução de custos obtida.

([1]) JO L 143 de 30.4.2004.
([2]) JO L 304 de 20.11.10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006685/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2010/79/EU — ISO 11890-1 analytical method

Commission Directive 2010/79/EU of 19 November 2010 on the adaptation to technical progress of Annex III to Directive 2004/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the limitation of emissions of volatile organic compounds.

Can the Commission state:

1. Which Member States have still not transposed this directive?

2. Is it in a position to assess the impact of the amendments introduced to Annex III?

3. Specifically, what practical information does it have regarding the actual use of the ISO 11890-1 analytical method to verify the limits applicable to the maximum authorised level of volatile organic compounds?

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

According to the notifications to the Commission of the Member States regarding the transposition of Commission Directive 2010/79/EU, this directive is transposed in all Member States.

The amendments made through that directive to Annex III of Directive 2004/42/EC ([1]) on the limitation of emissions of volatile organic compounds due to the use of organic solvents in certain paints and varnishes and vehicle refinishing products were to reflect technical progress in analytical methods for volatile organic compounds. In addition, for certain products a simpler and cheaper analytical method as described in ISO 11890-1 was allowed, which intended reducing testing costs for Member States and for operators affected by Directive 2004/42/EC.

In 2010, the Commission undertook an analysis of Member States' implementation of Directive 2004/42/EC. However, since Directive 2010/79/EU ([2]) on the adaptation to technical progress of Annex III to Directive 2004/42/EC was only adopted in 2010 there is little practical information on the use of the ISO 11890-1 analytical method to verify the volatile organic compound limits or on the cost reductions this has delivered.

([1]) OJ L 143, 30.4.2004.
([2]) OJ L 304, 20.11.2010.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006686/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2008/8/CE

A Diretiva 2008/8/CE do Conselho, de 12 de fevereiro de 2008, alterou a Diretiva 2006/112/CE no que diz respeito ao lugar das prestações de serviços.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

2. Está em condições de avaliar o impacto das alterações introduzidas pela Diretiva 2008/8/CE?

3. Considera que as exceções vigentes à regra geral quanto ao lugar de tributação são suficientes e adequadas ao bom funcionamento do mercado?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(19 de julho de 2013)

1. A Diretiva 2008/8/CE do Conselho ([1]), que remodelou as regras relativas ao lugar das prestações de serviços, prevê uma entrada em vigor gradual. Os elementos que entraram em vigor em 2010, 2011 e 2013 foram todos transpostos corretamente pelos Estados-Membros. Alguns deles, contudo, entrarão em vigor em 2015 e os Estados-Membros ainda dispõem de tempo suficiente para a sua transposição.

2. Com base nas informações recebidas das empresas e dos Estados-Membros, o impacto geral dessas alterações é considerado positivo. Relativamente às alterações de 2015, o artigo 6.° da Diretiva 2008/8/CE prevê a apresentação pela Comissão, até ao final de 2014, de um relatório sobre a viabilidade da aplicação das regras em causa.

3. O objetivo das alterações introduzidas pela Diretiva 2008/8/CE era de adaptar as regras a um mercado em mutação e crescimento constantes. O objetivo global era aplicar ao máximo possível o princípio da tributação no lugar do consumo.

O fator mais importante para o bom funcionamento das regras em matéria de lugar de tributação no mercado interno é a sua aplicação harmonizada, de modo a evitar a dupla tributação ou a dupla não tributação. A Comissão acompanha de uma forma permanente a situação e adota todas as medidas necessárias para assegurar uma aplicação uniforme, nomeadamente através de propostas de medidas de execução quando tal seja necessário ([2]).

([1]) Diretiva 2008/8/CE do Conselho, de 12 de fevereiro de 2008, que altera a Diretiva 2006/112/CE no que diz respeito ao lugar das prestações de serviços (JO L 44, 20.2.2008, p. 11).

([2]) Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 282/2011 do Conselho, de 15 de março de 2011, que estabelece medidas de aplicação da Diretiva 2006/112/CE relativa ao sistema comum do imposto sobre o valor acrescentado; Regulamento (UE) n.° 967/2012 do Conselho, de 9 de outubro de 2012, que altera o Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 282/2011 no que diz respeito aos regimes especiais aplicáveis a sujeitos passivos não estabelecidos que prestem serviços de telecomunicações, de radiodifusão e televisão ou serviços eletrónicos a pessoas que não sejam sujeitos passivos; Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 815/2012 da Comissão, de 13 de setembro de 2012, que estabelece as regras de aplicação do Regulamento (UE) n.° 904/2010 do Conselho, no que diz respeito aos regimes especiais aplicáveis a sujeitos passivos não estabelecidos que prestem serviços de telecomunicações, serviços de radiodifusão e televisão ou serviços eletrónicos a pessoas que não sejam sujeitos passivos; Proposta de Regulamento do Conselho, da Comissão, que altera o Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 282/2011 no que diz respeito lugar das prestações de serviços [COM(2012) 763 final] a adotar formalmente pelo Conselho a breve prazo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006686/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2008/8/EC

Council Directive 2008/8/EC of 12 February 2008 amending Directive 2006/112/EC as regards the place of supply of services.

Can the Commission state:

1. Which Member States have still not transposed this directive?

2. Is it in a position to assess the impact of the amendments introduced by Directive 2008/8/EC?

3. Does it consider the exemptions in force to the general rules regarding the place of taxation sufficient and appropriate for the market to work properly?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

1. Council Directive 2008/8/EC ([1]), which remodelled the rules on the place of supply of services, provides for a gradual entry into force. Those elements which entered into force in 2010, 2011 and 2013, were all transposed correctly by Member States. Some elements however will enter into force in 2015, and Member States still have time for their transposition.

2. On the basis of information received from business and Member States, the general impact of these amendments is recognised as being positive. In relation to the 2015 changes, Article 6 of Directive 2008/8/EC provides that the Commission will prepare a report by the end of 2014 on the feasibility of the application of those rules.

3. The purpose of the amendments introduced by Directive 2008/8/EC was to adapt the rules to an ever-changing and growing market. The overall objective was to apply taxation at the place of consumption to the fullest extent possible.

The most important factor for the smooth operation of the place of taxation rules within the internal market is their harmonised application, so that double taxation or non-taxation can be avoided. The Commission is constantly monitoring the situation and takes all necessary steps to ensure a uniform application, in particular by proposing implementing measures where necessary ([2]).

([1]) Council Directive 2008/8/EC of 12 February 2008 amending Directive 2006/112/EC as regards the place of supply of services (OJ L 44, 20.2.2008, p. 11).

([2]) Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 282/2011 of 15 March 2011 laying down implementing measures for Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax (recast); Council Regulation (EU) No 967/2012 of 9 October 2012 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 282/2011 as regards the special schemes for non-established taxable persons supplying telecommunications services, broadcasting services or electronic services to non-taxable persons; Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 815/2012 of 13 September 2012 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EU) No 904/2010, as regards special schemes for non-established taxable persons supplying telecommunications, broadcasting or electronic services to non-taxable persons; Commission's Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 282/2011 as regards the place of supply of services (COM(2012) 763 final) soon to be adopted formally by the Council.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006687/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2009/110/CE

A Diretiva 2009/110/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 16 de setembro de 2009, relativa ao acesso à atividade das instituições de moeda eletrónica, ao seu exercício e à sua supervisão prudencial, alterou as Diretivas 2005/60/CE e 2006/48/CE e revogou a Diretiva 2000/46/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

2. Está em condições de avaliar o impacto das alterações introduzidas pela Diretiva 2009/110/CE?

3. Considera que o surgimento de um verdadeiro mercado único de serviços de moeda eletrónica beneficiou com a adoção da Diretiva 2009/110/CE? Em que termos?

4. Nomeadamente, julga que são asseguradas condições mais equitativas de concorrência a todos os prestadores de serviços de pagamento?

5. Dispõe de informações quanto ao número de instituições de moeda eletrónica devidamente autorizadas ou que beneficiam de uma isenção ao abrigo da Diretiva 2009/110/CE que presentemente emitem moeda eletrónica na União Europeia?

6. Que avaliação faz da sua atividade?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(9 de agosto de 2013)

1. A Diretiva 2009/110/CE ([1]), a seguir designada diretiva da moeda eletrónica (DME2), estabelece as regras de exercício da atividade de emissão de moeda eletrónica. Todos os Estados-Membros transpuseram a diretiva, à exceção da Polónia, que a transpôs apenas parcialmente. A tabela de transposição pode ser consultada no sítio Web da Comissão ([2]).

2. No outono, a Comissão irá encomendar um estudo sobre o impacto da DME2. Esta avaliação foi adiada devido à transposição tardia da diretiva em vários Estados-Membros.

3.-4. O estudo irá igualmente analisar se a DME2 teve impacto no mercado das atividades de moeda eletrónica e contribuiu para uma maior igualdade de circunstâncias em condições de exploração idênticas.

5.-6. A Comissão pode desde já informar que, de acordo com o estudo sobre o impacto da Diretiva 2007/64/CE ([3]) relativa aos serviços de pagamento (DSP) e a aplicação do Regulamento (CE) n.° 924/2009 relativo aos pagamentos transfronteiriços na Comunidade, que encomendou no ano passado e será publicado neste verão, o regime de licenciamento e de emissão de autorizações introduzido pela DSP e estendido às instituições de moeda eletrónica pela DME2 parece ter um efeito positivo para as instituições de pagamento inovadoras. Permitiu que estas instituições acedessem a mercados de que estavam anteriormente excluídas e atingissem a escala necessária para funcionar de forma sustentável. O número total de prestadores de serviços de pagamento não tem aumentado substancialmente. No entanto, uma grande percentagem dos serviços de pagamento autorizado consiste em serviços de transferência de fundos (cerca de 40 %). Quase todas as pequenas instituições de pagamento (cerca de 2 200) solicitaram uma autorização de transferência de fundos.

O estudo sobre a DME2 avaliará com mais pormenor a natureza das atividades destas instituições.

([1]) JO L 267 de 10.10.2009, p. 7-17.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/payments/emoney/transposition/index_en.htm
([3]) JO L 319 de 5.12.2007, p. 1-36.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006687/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2009/110/EC

Directive 2009/110/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 on the taking up, pursuit and prudential supervision of the business of electronic money institutions amending Directives 2005/60/EC and 2006/48/EC and repealing Directive 2000/46/EC.

Can the Commission state:

1. Which Member States have still not transposed this directive?

2. Is it in a position to assess the impact of the amendments introduced by Directive 2009/110/EC?

3. Does it consider the adoption of Directive 2009/110/EC beneficial to the emergence of a genuine single market for electronic money services? How has it been beneficial?

4. Specifically, does it believe that all payment service providers are assured more equitable payment conditions?

5. Does it have information about the number of electronic money institutions, duly authorised or exempt under Directive 2009/110/EC, that are presently issuing electronic money in the EU?

6. What is its assessment of their activity?

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

1. Directive 2009/110/EC ([1]), hereafter the E-money Directive (EMD2), lays down rules for the pursuit of the activity of issuing electronic money. All Member States have transposed the directive except for Poland which has only partially transposed it. The transposition table can be found on the Commission's website ([2]).

2. In autumn, the Commission will contract a study on the impact of EMD2. This assessment has been delayed due to the late transposition of the EMD2 by several Member States.

3-4. The impact study will also analyse if the EMD2 has had an impact on the market for e-money activities and if it has contributed to a better level playing field with equal operating conditions.

5-6. The Commission can already inform that according to the study on the impact of Directive 2007/64/EC ([3]) on payment services (PSD) and the application of Regulation (EC) No 924/2009 on cross-border payments in the Community, which it commissioned last year and which will be published this summer, the licencing and passporting regime introduced by the PSD and extended to e-money institutions by EMD2 seems to have a positive effect on innovative payment institutions. It has allowed these institutions to access markets from which they were previously excluded and achieve the scale required to operate sustainably. The total number of payment service providers has not increased substantially. However, a large percentage of the authorised payment services is accounted for by money remittance services (around 40%). Nearly all small payment institutions (around 2,200) applied for an authorisation for money remittance.

The study on EMD2 will assess in more detail the nature of activities of these institutions.

([1]) OJ L 267, 10.10.2009, pp. 7-17.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/payments/emoney/transposition/index_en.htm
([3]) OJ L 319, 5.12.2007, pp. 1-36.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006688/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Birmânia: anunciada libertação de presos políticos

O presidente birmanês Thein Sein anunciou a libertação para breve de todos os presos políticos que não cometeram quaisquer atos violentos.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Que apreciação faz das declarações do presidente da Birmânia?

2. Dispõe de informações fiáveis quanto ao número efetivo de presos políticos na Birmânia?

3. Desenvolve ou desenvolveu contactos com as autoridades birmanesas a seu respeito, nomeadamente visando apurar qual o seu estado de saúde e promover a sua libertação?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente acompanha de muito perto a questão dos presos políticos na Birmânia/Mianmar. O Presidente U Thein Sein anunciou em princípios de junho, num discurso pela rádio, que os últimos presos políticos seriam libertados em breve, com exceção dos igualmente condenados por violência com motivação política. O Presidente declarou também que a controversa disposição decorrente da secção 401 do Código Penal — anulação de uma amnistia na eventualidade de outra condenação — não seria posta em prática. O discurso de U Thein Sein foi o primeiro compromisso público de libertação incondicional de todos os presos políticos remanescentes. Com efeito, não consta que os recentemente libertados tenham sido obrigados a assinar declarações no âmbito da secção 401. Vários dos que permanecem em reclusão poderão ter sido condenados devido ao envolvimento em atos criminosos, como ataques bombistas e campanhas armadas. A definição do grupo remanescente de presos políticos é ponto de discórdia, mesmo entre grupos ativistas. Torna-se, pois, difícil determinar um número definitivo de casos remanescentes. A UE está em contacto permanente com várias partes interessadas, a fim de identificar casos plausíveis de presos políticos remanescentes, para os quais chamará a atenção das autoridades. A UE mantém um diálogo com a comissão nacional dos direitos humanos em Rangum e com a comissão responsável pela apreciação dos casos remanescentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006688/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Myanmar: release of political prisoners announced

The President of Myanmar, Thein Sein, has announced the forthcoming release of all political prisoners who have not committed any violent acts.

1. How does the Vice-President/High Representative view the President of Myanmar's statement?

2. Does she have reliable information on the actual number of political prisoners in Myanmar?

3. Is she developing, or has she developed, contacts with the authorities in Myanmar in this regard, in particular, with a view to determining the state of prisoners' health and promoting their release?

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

The HR/VP follows the issue of political detainees in Myanmar very closely. President U Thein Sein announced in a radio address in early June that remaining prisoners of conscience would be released soon, except those also convicted for politically-motivated violence. He also said that the controversial order under Section 401 of the Criminal Code — relating to the cancellation of an amnesty in case of another conviction — would not be enforced. The President's speech was a first public commitment to unconditionally release all remaining political detainees. It seems that indeed those released recently had not been asked to sign an order under Section 401. Several of those still in prison may have been convicted due to involvement in criminal acts, such as bombings and armed campaigns. For the remaining group of political prisoners, the definition is a point of contention, even among activist groups. It is therefore difficult to ascertain a final number of remaining cases. The EU is in permanent contact with various stakeholders, in order to identify plausible cases of remaining political prisoners and bring them to the attention of the authorities. The EU is in a dialogue with the national Human Rights Commission in Yangon and with the commission tasked with the review of remaining cases.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-006689/13
au Conseil
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(10 juin 2013)

Objet: Imposition d'un droit antidumping sur les panneaux photovoltaïques chinois importés dans l'Union européenne

La Commission européenne a pris la décision, le 4 juin dernier, d'imposer un droit antidumping sur les panneaux photovoltaïques chinois importés en Europe. Cette décision courageuse, prise malgré la désapprobation de plusieurs États membres, était nécessaire pour défendre l'industrie photovoltaïque européenne.

La Chine est un pays ami et un partenaire commercial incontournable, mais nous devons établir nos échanges sur des règles claires de réciprocité. Il s'agit d'un principe essentiel afin d'équilibrer nos échanges commerciaux, et ainsi protéger les entreprises et les emplois en Europe.

Le droit antidumping décidé par la Commission sur les panneaux photovoltaïques chinois rappelle que l'Europe a véritablement les moyens d'agir pour protéger l'économie européenne. Mais ce droit n'est que provisoire, et il reviendra au Conseil de décider, avant le 5 décembre 2013, s'il faut imposer un droit antidumping définitif sur ces importations, ou y mettre un terme.

Mais il est nécessaire que le Conseil adopte une position forte dans ce dossier afin d'envoyer un message clair à nos partenaires commerciaux. Il est aussi nécessaire de défendre d'autres secteurs, dont le secteur vinicole européen, qui ne doivent pas devenir les otages de notre différend commercial sur le photovoltaïque.

En l'absence d'un signal positif pour une résolution rapide de ce différend, les Européens attendent du Conseil une réponse forte. Aussi je le demande très clairement: quelle va être la position du Conseil défendre notre industrie, nos produits, notre compétitivité et nos emplois face aux pratiques déloyales sur le marché mondial?

Réponse
(21 octobre 2013)

La procédure à suivre en ce qui concerne l'institution de droits antidumping est définie dans le règlement (CE) n° 1225/2009 du Conseil du 30 novembre 2009 relatif à la défense contre les importations qui font l'objet d'un dumping de la part de pays non membres de la Communauté européenne ([1]).

La Commission a décidé d'instituer des droits provisoires sur les panneaux solaires après avoir consulté les États membres au sein du comité antidumping. Le Conseil, en tant qu'institution, n'était pas concerné à ce stade.

Comme le sait sans doute l'Honorable Parlementaire, la Commission a adopté le 2 août une décision portant acceptation de l'engagement offert par des producteurs-exportateurs chinois de panneaux solaires, ainsi qu'un règlement exonérant ces entreprises participantes du paiement de droits antidumping provisoires ([2]). Par voie de conséquence, les entreprises chinoises participant à l'engagement de prix seront exonérées du paiement de droits antidumping provisoires à partir du 6 août, alors que les entreprises qui n'y participent pas paieront les droits antidumping provisoires plus élevés annoncés le 5 juin 2013.

([1]) JO L 343 du 22.12.2009, p. 51.
([2]) JO L 209 du 3.8.2013, pp. 26 et 1, respectivement.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006689/13
to the Council
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Imposition of an antidumping duty on Chinese photovoltaic panels imported into the European Union

On 4 June 2013, the Commission decided to impose an antidumping duty on Chinese photovoltaic panels imported into Europe. This brave decision, which was taken despite the disapproval of several Member States, was necessary to defend the European photovoltaic industry.

China is a friend and a trading partner which cannot be ignored, but we must base our trade on clear rules of reciprocity. This is a vital principle with a view to balancing our trade and thus protecting businesses and jobs in Europe.

The antidumping duty which the Commission has imposed on Chinese photovoltaic panels reminds us that Europe really does have the means to take action to protect the European economy. But this duty is only temporary, and the Council will have to decide by 5 December 2013 whether to impose a definitive antidumping duty on these imports or whether to lift it.

But it is necessary for the Council immediately to adopt a strong position on this matter in order to send a clear message to our trading partners. It is also necessary to defend other sectors, including European wine-growing, which must not be allowed to become hostages to our trade dispute over photovoltaics.

In the absence of a positive signal with a view to settling this dispute quickly, the people of Europe expect the Council to respond firmly. I therefore wish to put a very clear question: what position will the Council adopt, as of now, to defend our industry, our products, our competitiveness and our jobs in the face of unfair practices on the world market?

Reply
(21 October 2013)

The procedure regarding the imposition of anti-dumping duties is established by Regulation 1225/2009 of 30 November 2009 on protection against dumped imports from countries not members of the European Union ([1]).

The imposition of provisional duties on solar panels was decided by the Commission, after consultation of the Member States in the Anti-Dumping Committee. The Council, as an institution, was not involved at this stage.

As the Honourable Member might know, on 2 August the Commission adopted a decision to accept the undertaking offered by Chinese exporting producers of solar panels, as well as a regulation exempting these participating companies from the payment of provisional anti-dumping duties ([2]). As a consequence, those Chinese companies participating in the price undertaking will be exempted from paying provisional anti-dumping duties as from 6 August, whereas those companies not participating will pay the increased provisional anti-dumping duties that have been announced on 5 June 2013.

([1]) OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 51.
([2]) OJ L 209, 3.8.2013, p. 26 and 1 respectively.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006690/13
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: EU Platform for Tax Good Governance, Aggressive Tax Planning and Double Taxation

Can the Commission list the number and the names of all applicants to join the EU's Platform for Tax Good Governance, Aggressive Tax Planning and Double Taxation and outline the reasons each of the member organisations were chosen to be members of the Platform?

Can the Commission explain why this group is being set up, what interactions the Platform will have with Member States and whether its mandate includes looking at changes to corporation tax systems or corporation tax bases in the EU?

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

The members of the Platform for Tax good governance, aggressive tax planning and double taxation are the Member States' tax authorities and fifteen members from business, civil society and tax practitioner's organisations. The names of the 15 organisations selected were published on 4 June 2013 ([1]) on the website of DG Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD). All other organisations who met the eligibility criteria were placed on a reserve list. Following a request at the meeting on 10 June 2013 these are also to be published on DG TAXUD's website. Each application was reviewed in accordance with the criteria published in the Commission decision of 23 April 2013 (C(2013)2236) and the Call for applications ([2]) and the fifteen who best fulfilled the criteria were selected. The reasons for setting-up the Platform and its mandate are contained in the abovementioned Commission Decision.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/pr_taxgoods.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/tax_fraud_evasion/platform_call-applications_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006692/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Prohibición de publicar estudios independientes por consumidores

El Partido Popular español ha presentado en el Congreso de España una enmienda al Proyecto de Ley de medidas para mejorar el funcionamiento de la cadena alimentaria con la que pretende retirar estudios independientes publicados que analicen irregularidades en los alimentos.

Esta modificación legislativa supone un renovado impulso a la persecución con la que este Gobierno está sometiendo a las organizaciones de consumidores que demandan una mejora de la información sobre los productos que se venden en el mercado español. Esta prohibición de estudios independientes surge tras los recientes escándalos en la industria alimentaria española sobre el contenido de carne equina en determinados preparados alimentarios. Esta ley pretende perpetuar conscientemente la falta de transparencia en el sector para que la industria pueda seguir incumpliendo a su antojo.

Las grandes empresas de la industria alimentaria española han sufrido numerosos escándalos en los últimos años y el Partido Popular, en lugar de forzar mayores exigencias y mejoras en el control de la calidad de los alimentos, desarrolla una ley que protege aún más la opacidad de dichas empresas. Para mejorar la calidad de la industria alimentaria se debe mejorar la información disponible y accesible por el público, así como abrir los sistemas de control a los propios consumidores. La capacidad de desarrollar estudios independientes es una herramienta central para garantizar la producción de información imparcial que permita una defensa efectiva de los derechos del consumidor.

¿Está al tanto la Comisión del cambio que plantea el Partido Popular español en la citada ley que regula la información en la cadena alimentaria?

¿Considera que la modificación legislativa que trata de desarrollar el Gobierno de España se adapta a los objetivos estipulados en la Directiva 2011/83/UE?

¿Considera que la posibilidad de retirar informes independientes sobre incumplimientos en el etiquetado de los productos que plantea el Partido Popular español mejorará la defensa de los consumidores españoles y europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de julio de 2013)

1. La Comisión no sabe de ningún proyecto de ley presentado por el Partido Popular español que regule la información sobre la cadena alimentaria.

2. El plazo de transposición de la Directiva sobre los derechos de los consumidores ([1]) finaliza el 13 de diciembre de 2013 y la Comisión está ayudando a los Estados miembros, incluida España, en este proceso. La Directiva sobre los derechos de los consumidores impone una serie de requisitos de información a los vendedores, como el de informar sobre las características principales del producto, pero no contempla las cuestiones relativas a los estudios independientes sobre productos. No obstante, la Directiva sobre prácticas comerciales desleales ([2]) prohíbe proporcionar información falsa o que induzca a engaño sobre el producto, incluida su composición, que pueda hacer que el consumidor medio tome una decisión de compra que de otro modo no habría tomado. La Directiva ha sido transpuesta a la legislación española mediante la Ley 29/2009, de 30 de diciembre de 2009 ([3]).

3. La Directiva sobre los derechos de los consumidores no contempla las cuestiones relativas a los estudios independientes sobre etiquetado de productos.

([1]) Directiva 2011/83/UE, de 25 de octubre de 2011, DO L 304 de 22.11.2011, p. 64. Los Estados miembros han de adoptar medidas de aplicación de dicha Directiva a más tardar el 13 de diciembre de 2013 y aplicar dichas medidas a partir del 13 de junio de 2014.
([2]) Directiva 2005/29/CE, de 11 de mayo de 2005, DO L 149 de 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([3]) Ley 29/2009, de 30 de diciembre de 2009, por la que se modifica el régimen legal de la competencia desleal y de la publicidad para la mejora de la protección de los consumidores y usuarios.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006692/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Ban on the publication of independent studies by consumers

The Spanish People's Party has submitted to the Spanish parliament an amendment to the Draft Bill of measures to improve the functioning of the food supply chain by means of which it intends to remove published independent studies analysing food irregularities.

This legislative amendment gives fresh impetus to the Government's persecution of consumer organisations, which are demanding better information about products being sold on the Spanish market. This ban on independent studies comes after the recent scandals in the Spanish food industry on horse meat contained in processed food. This law seems intent on knowingly perpetuating the lack of transparency in the sector enabling the industry to continue violating the rules at will.

Large companies in the Spanish food industry have suffered numerous scandals in recent years, but instead of imposing greater demands and improvements in the quality control of food, the Spanish People's Party is formulating yet another law that protects the opacity of such companies. To improve the quality of the food industry, they need to improve the information available and accessible by the public as well as opening up the systems of control to the consumers themselves. Being able to carry out independent studies is a central tool for ensuring that the information produced is unbiased, thereby effectively defending consumer rights.

Is the Commission aware of the changes being considered by the Spanish People's Party to the law regulating information about the food supply chain?

Does it believe that the legislative amendment which the Spanish Government is trying to develop accommodates the objectives set out in Directive 2011/83/EU?

Does it believe that the option to withdraw independent reports on breaches in the labelling of products, as suggested by the Spanish People's Party, will improve Spanish and European consumer protection?

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

1. The Commission is not aware of a draft law presented by the Spanish People's Party regulating information about the food supply chain.

2. The transposition deadline for the Consumer Rights Directive (CRD) ([1]) is 13 December 2013 and the Commission is currently assisting Member States, including Spain, in this process. The CRD imposes a number of information requirements on sellers, including the requirement to inform about the main characteristics of the product, but it does not deal with issues related to independent studies on products. However, providing false or otherwise deceiving information about the product, including its composition, which is likely to cause the average consumer to take a purchase decision that he would not have taken otherwise, is already prohibited by the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([2]). The directive has been transposed in Spanish law by Law 29/2009 of 30 December 2009 ([3]).

3. Issues related to independent studies about product labelling are not addressed in the Consumer Rights Directive.

([1]) Directive 2011/83/EU of 25 October 2011, OJ L 304 of 22.11.2011, p. 64. Member States have to adopt measures transposing this directive by 13 December 2013 and to apply those measures from 13 June 2014.
([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC of 11 May 2005, OJ L 149 of 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([3]) Law 29/2009 of 30 December 2009 amending the statutory regime of unfair competition and advertising in order to enhance protection afforded to consumers and users.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006693/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Retrasos en la financiación de proyectos de investigación

En anteriores ocasiones me he interesado por los problemas que denuncian muchos profesores e investigadores europeos a raíz de los retrasos en recibir la financiación de los proyectos de investigación que se les han otorgado (por ejemplo, pregunta E-001278/2013). Como catedrático de universidad y partícipe hace años en proyectos de investigación ya conocía la posibilidad de solicitar prórrogas de los períodos inicialmente fijados en los proyectos, como recuerda la Comisión en la respuesta a la citada pregunta. Sin embargo, debería advertir esa institución la diferencia que existe entre las prórrogas que derivan del interés de los investigadores para insistir en el análisis del estudio o ante la necesidad de nuevas pruebas e investigaciones y aquellos casos en que se piden porque las administraciones y universidades que gestionan esas subvenciones retrasan la disponibilidad de esas ayudas a los investigadores. Esta situación se ha incrementado en los últimos meses ante la falta de liquidez de muchas instituciones universitarias.

Por ello, y ante la respuesta que se me ha dado donde se afirma que «la Comisión sigue de cerca la evolución de los proyectos de investigación financiados por los programas marco en todos los aspectos —científicos, administrativos y financieros— relacionados con el acuerdo de subvención. Ese seguimiento lo efectúa de tres maneras: evaluando los informes que le presentan los coordinadores de proyecto al final de cada período de información, participando en las reuniones de los proyectos y velando por que haya una comunicación permanente entre ella y los coordinadores», insisto en preguntar:

1. ¿Qué noticia tiene la Comisión de los retrasos y problemas para el adecuado desenvolvimiento de investigaciones científicas en los países miembros de la Unión Europea con relación a los proyectos financiados por los programas europeos en los dos últimos años?

2. ¿Puede facilitarme información de cuántos proyectos de investigación han solicitado una prórroga en los dos últimos años por causa de no contar con la subvención otorgada en el momento oportuno?

3. ¿Tiene la Comisión el dato de la financiación a la que han renunciado algunos investigadores en los dos últimos años ante los problemas burocráticos que les planteaban las universidades administradoras provisionales de esas ayudas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Geoghegan-Quinn en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión sigue de cerca el desarrollo de los proyectos de investigación financiados dentro del Séptimo Programa Marco de Investigación, Desarrollo Tecnológico y Demostración (2007-2013).

En este sentido, lleva por cada proyecto un registro centralizado de sus informes, evaluaciones, evaluaciones financieras y actas de reuniones, así como de sus resultados y prestaciones. Cuando ello es posible, toda esta información se registra con un formato estructurado que permite atender de manera eficaz a las solicitudes de datos y someter a un análisis completo la información recibida.

No toda la información, sin embargo, puede registrarse con ese formato estructurado. Hay todavía gran cantidad de datos que solo pueden registrarse como texto libre, lo que dificulta y retrasa su análisis. Desafortunadamente, las preguntas que plantea Su Señoría hacen referencia a datos que están registrados como texto libre, y esto impide que la Comisión pueda reunir y presentar cifras concretas.

Así, por ejemplo, en respuesta a la pregunta 2, la Comisión puede informarle de que, desde junio de 2011, ha habido un total de 1 259 proyectos de investigación que han solicitado, y obtenido, una prórroga, pero no puede ofrecerle un análisis de los motivos que han forzado a los consorcios de investigación a solicitarla. No obstante, dado que durante los dos últimos años el plazo de concesión de las subvenciones ([1]) del Séptimo Programa Marco ha disminuido significativamente (57 días naturales) en comparación con los primeros años, parece altamente improbable que las solicitudes de prórroga puedan deberse a retrasos en la firma o en la financiación de los acuerdos de subvención.

([1]) El plazo de concesión de las subvenciones es el tiempo que transcurre entre la fecha de cierre de una convocatoria (fecha límite para la presentación de las propuestas) y la fecha en que la Comisión Europea firma la subvención.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006693/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Delays in funding research projects

On previous occasions I have been interested in the problems reported by many European lecturers and researchers as a result of delays in receiving the funding awarded to them for research projects (for example, Question E-001278/2013). As a university professor involved for many years in research projects, I was well aware that you could ask for an extension of the duration initially specified in the projects, as the Commission pointed out in response to the above question. However, the Commission should realise the difference between extensions required by the researchers themselves to develop their analysis further, because additional tests and investigations are needed, and those cases where extensions are requested because the authorities or universities managing these grants delay the availability of such aid to researchers. This situation has been getting worse in recent months due to a lack of liquidity in many universities.

Therefore, given the answer I received, which states that 'the Commission is closely monitoring the progress of research projects funded under the framework programmes in all aspects related to the grant agreement — scientific, administrative and financial issues. This monitoring is performed in three ways: through the assessment of the reports submitted by project coordinators to the Commission at the end of each reporting period, through the participation of the Commission in the project's meetings and through continuous communication between the Commission and the project's coordinators', I must again ask:

1. Does the Commission have any news about the delays and problems for the appropriate development of scientific research in the Member States of the European Union in relation to projects funded by European programmes in the last two years?

2. Can it provide me with information on how many research projects have applied for an extension in the last two years because they have failed to receive a grant on time?

3. Does the Commission hold any information on funding refused to some researchers in the last two years due to bureaucratic problems caused by universities, the provisional administrators of this aid?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

The Commission monitors closely the progress of research projects funded under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).

In this respect, it maintains records, centrally registered, of project reports along with their respective assessments, financial statements, minutes of project meetings, and project deliverables. Where feasible, this information is registered in a structured format that allows for efficient data queries and comprehensive analyses.

However, not all information can be registered in a structured format; there is still a great deal of data that can only be registered as free text thereby rendering data analysis difficult and time consuming. Unfortunately, the questions posed by the Honourable Member refer to data registered as free text and, therefore, the Commission is not in position to compile and provide concrete figures.

For example, with reference to question 2, the Commission can report that, since June 2011, 1259 research projects applied for, and were granted, an extension of the project duration but it cannot readily offer an analysis of the reasons that forced the research consortia to apply for such extensions. However, given that during the past two years, the average FP7 time- to-grant ([1]) has decreased significantly in comparison to earlier years by 57 calendar days, it seems highly unlikely that such requests were due to delayed signature or funding of grant agreements.

([1]) The time to grant is defined as the time lapsed from a call's closing date (deadline for submission of proposals) to that of a grant signature by the European Commission.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006694/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Subvenciones a las televisiones autonómicas en España

Sucesivos informes de la Comisión del Mercado de Telecomunicaciones de España han destacado el singular incremento de las subvenciones a las televisiones públicas. Una de las principales causas ha sido el significativo descenso de los ingresos que estas empresas públicas recibían por la publicidad. En este sentido, por ejemplo, se afirma que la cuantía de las subvenciones en el pasado año superó los 2000 millones de euros, cifra que no alcanzan los ingresos publicitarios del sector audiovisual.

También se han publicado otros recientes informes de empresas privadas que analizan la cuantiosa deuda de las televisiones autonómicas.

Ante esta información, que sin duda conoce la Comisión Europea, y teniendo en cuenta que muchas de esas televisiones públicas emiten su señal fuera del territorio español, lo que incide en el mercado europeo audiovisual ¿ha abierto la Comisión alguna investigación sobre la compatibilidad de tanta subvención con el Derecho europeo de ayudas públicas? ¿Lo considera conforme con la normativa europea de la leal competencia al existir en el mercado audiovisual europeo otras empresas privadas de televisión que no reciben ayudas públicas y han visto muy mermados sus ingresos por publicidad?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión evalúa cada expediente de ayuda estatal a una televisión pública de forma individual y conforme a los principios fijados en la Comunicación sobre radiodifusión ([1]), en virtud de la cual toda financiación pública de un organismo público de radiodifusión, incluidos los estatales, debe limitarse a los costes netos de su cometido de servicio público, teniendo en cuenta los ingresos derivados de la totalidad de sus actividades comerciales. La aplicación de este principio puede haber hecho que la considerable disminución de los ingresos procedentes de la publicidad en las cadenas de televisión autonómicas españolas haya generado un aumento de la compensación necesaria para el cumplimiento de su misión de servicio público.

([1]) Comunicación de la Comisión sobre la aplicación de las normas en materia de ayudas estatales a los servicios públicos de radiodifusión, DO C 257/1 de 27.10.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006694/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: Subsidies for Spain's regional broadcasters

Successive reports from Spain's Commission for the Telecommunications Market have highlighted an exceptional increase in subsidies to state-owned broadcasters. One of the main reasons for this has been a significant decrease in these state-owned companies' advertising revenue. By way of example, the reports say that subsidies in the past year exceeded EUR 2 billion, an amount which is higher than the audiovisual sector's advertising revenue.

Private companies have also recently published reports analysing regional broadcasters' substantial debt.

In light of this information, which the Commission is undoubtedly aware of, and given that many of these state-owned companies broadcast their signal outside the Spanish territory, which affects the European audiovisual market, has the Commission launched an investigation into whether this subsidisation complies with EU State aid regulations? Does it believe that it is pursuant to EU fair competition law when other private broadcasters in the European audiovisual market, whose advertising revenue has taken a large hit, do not receive state aid?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The Commission *assesses state aid* to public service broadcasting strictly on a case-by-case basis, in line with the principles set out in the Broadcasting Communication ([1]). That Communication requires that any public financing of public service broadcasters, including state-owned, needs to be limited to the net costs of their public service mission, taking into account revenues from all commercial activities derived from it. By applying this principle, a significant decrease in the advertising revenue of regional public service broadcasters in Spain may indeed have resulted in the increase of the compensation necessary for the fulfilment of their public service remit.

([1]) Communication from the Commission on the application of state aid rules to public service broadcasting. OJ C 257/1 of 27.10.2009.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006696/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — En defensa de la libertad de expresión y de comunicación

Muchos medios de comunicación europeos se han hecho eco de las denuncias que empiezan a aparecer contra el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos por el programa PRISM. Como se ha difundido, mediante ese sistema la Agencia nacional estadounidense recibe, a través de conocidas empresas que prestan servicios de acceso o facilitan contenidos en Internet, información privada de los usuarios con independencia del país en que se encuentren.

¿Tiene intención la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de pedir alguna explicación al Gobierno de los Estados Unidos por esas intromisiones en la privacidad de los ciudadanos europeos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión ha solicitado al Gobierno de los Estados Unidos explicaciones respecto de los programas de los que se han hecho eco los medios de comunicación, así como sobre su posible repercusión en los derechos fundamentales de los ciudadanos europeos. La Vicepresidenta Reding planteó directamente la cuestión al Fiscal General de ese país, Eric Holder, en la reunión de ministros de Justicia e Interior UE-EE.UU. celebrada en Dublín el pasado 14 de junio. Además, la Comisión ha creado, en colaboración con la Presidencia de la UE, un grupo de trabajo de alto nivel UE-EE.UU. sobre protección de datos a fin de que examine estas cuestiones más en profundidad. Basándose en la información recopilada, la Comisión informará al respecto al Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo en octubre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006696/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Defending freedom of expression and communication

Emerging complaints against the US Government's PRISM program have been widely reported in the European media. As has been well documented, the National Security Agency, through well-known Internet service providers and online content providers, uses this system to obtain users' private information, regardless of which country they are in.

Will the Vice-President/High Representative request an explanation from the US Government for these invasions of EU citizens' privacy?

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

The Commission has requested clarifications from the US Government regarding the programmes reported in the media and the potential impact on the fundamental rights of Europeans. Vice-President Reding raised this issue directly with the US Attorney-General Eric Holder at the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial in Dublin on 14 June. In addition, the Commission has set up, together with the Presidency of the EU, an ad-hoc high-level EU-US working group on data protection to examine these issues further. Based on the information gattered, the Commission will report back to the European Parliament and the Council in October.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-006697/13
alla Commissione
Franco Frigo (S&D)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Dazio austriaco sull'acquisto di autovetture all'estero

La Mormverbrauchsabgabe (NoVa) è un nuovo dazio che l'Austria ha deciso di applicare come tassa ecologica all'acquisto di autovetture all'estero. Può raggiungere il 16 % del valore dell'automezzo ed è applicata anche ai cittadini dell'UE che hanno una seconda casa in Austria a meno che dimostrino che l'autovettura non è prevalentemente utilizzata nel territorio austriaco.

Questo tipo di imposta rischia di creare seri danni economici alle concessionarie di autoveicoli italiane che si trovano nelle regioni confinanti con l'Austria poiché potrebbero subire una concorrenza sleale dovuta a una tassa in contrasto con la libera concorrenza delle merci all'interno dell'UE.

Quali sono le previsioni della Commissione in merito alle conseguenze a breve e lungo termine che queste misure avranno sull'acquisto di vetture fuori dai confini austriaci?

Ritiene essa che la suddetta misura alteri il principio della libera concorrenza all'interno dell'Unione europea?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2013)

Va innanzitutto osservato che a livello dell'Unione europea non vi è alcuna armonizzazione nel settore della tassazione delle autovetture. Gli Stati membri rimangono perciò liberi di imporre questo tipo di tasse. Secondo la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea, neanche tasse molto elevate sono contrarie al diritto dell'UE. Per questo motivo, nel 2005 la Commissione ha presentato una proposta di direttiva del Consiglio al fine di migliorare il funzionamento del mercato interno e promuovere la sostenibilità. Tale proposta non ha ricevuto un sostegno sufficiente da parte degli Stati membri.

L'Austria è autorizzata a imporre una tassa che tenga conto delle emissioni dei veicoli. Tuttavia questi sviluppi devono essere conformi alle pertinenti disposizioni dell'UE, in particolare al principio di non discriminazione nei confronti dei prodotti provenienti dagli altri Stati membri. L'articolo 110 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea è inteso a garantire che le tasse siano applicate sia ai prodotti nazionali che a quelli importati da altri Stati membri.

In base alle informazioni disponibili, tutti i veicoli immatricolati in Austria che sono stati acquistati in tale paese o importati da altri Stati membri sono soggetti a un supplemento a integrazione della NoVA ad aliquota fissa. Il sistema non sembra quindi discriminare le autovetture importate.

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che i livelli delle tasse di immatricolazione possono variare considerevolmente tra gli Stati membri. Tuttavia, essa non dispone di prove sufficienti per dimostrare che tali variazioni abbiano l'effetto di destabilizzare in misura significativa le reti di distribuzione nei paesi a bassa tassazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006697/13
to the Commission
Franco Frigo (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Austrian tax on purchases of vehicles abroad

The Normverbrauchsabgabe (NoVa) is a new ecotax that Austria has decided to apply to the purchase of vehicles outside its borders. It can amount to up to 16% of the value of the vehicle and also applies to EU citizens with a second home in Austria, unless they can show that the vehicle is not used chiefly in Austria.

This tax may seriously financially harm Italian car dealers based in regions bordering Austria, as they could experience unfair competition owing to a tax that conflicts with the concept of freedom of competition on the EU's internal markets.

What are Commission's estimates of the short- and long-term consequences of this measure on the purchase of vehicles beyond Austria's borders?

Does it view this measure as distorting freedom of competition within the European Union?

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

At the outset it should be noted that there is no harmonisation on the European Union level in the field of car taxes. Therefore, the Member States remain at liberty to levy such taxes. Even very high taxes, according to the Court of Justice of the European Union, are not contrary to EC law. For this reason, the Commission presented a car tax proposal for a Council Directive in 2005 in order to improve the functioning of the internal market and to promote sustainability. That proposal did not receive enough support from the Member States.

Austria is allowed to levy a tax taking into account the emissions of the vehicles. However, such developments must be in compliance with the relevant EU provisions, in particular with the principle of non-discrimination against products from the other Member States. Article 110 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is designed to ensure that taxes are applied to both domestic products and those imported from other Member States.

According to the available information, all vehicles registered in Austria which were acquired in that country or imported from other Member States are subject to a supplement on top of the fixed-rate NoVA. Consequently, the system does not seem to discriminate against imported cars.

The Commission is aware that registration tax levels can vary substantially between Member States. However, it has no evidence to demonstrate that such variations have the effect of significantly destabilising distribution networks in low-tax countries.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006698/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Homologación de productos para discapacitados. Desarrollo de bienes y servicios de diseño universal

La adquisición de bienes y servicios y la información pertinente y accesible acerca de ellos debería incluir soluciones comerciales adecuadas, así como bienes y servicios diseñados para ser accesibles a largo plazo.

Considerando la Resolución del Parlamento Europeo, de 25 de octubre de 2011, sobre la movilidad y la inclusión de las personas con discapacidad y la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020;

Considerando que, sobre la base de los derechos promulgados en la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales de la UE, la Comisión cuenta con el enfoque correcto para lograr aumentar la sensibilización sobre la discapacidad, incluidos los conceptos de «diseño para todos» y «diseño universal», y destacar la importancia de los ajustes razonables;

Considerando que el artículo 4 de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad establece la obligación de «emprender o promover la investigación y el desarrollo de bienes, servicios, equipo e instalaciones de diseño universal»;

Considerando que el artículo 2 de la Convención afirma que por «diseño universal» se entenderá el diseño de productos, entornos, programas y servicios que puedan utilizar todas las personas, en la mayor medida posible, sin necesidad de adaptación ni diseño especializado;

1. ¿Qué medidas ha adoptado la Comisión para homologar los productos para personas con discapacidad a la normativa europea?

2. ¿Qué tiene pensado hacer la Comisión a fin de garantizar la adopción de las medidas oportunas para fomentar el desarrollo de bienes y servicios de diseño universal y el acceso a los mismos, con arreglo a lo contemplado en el artículo 4 de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

Durante años la Comisión ha apostado por el desarrollo de normas voluntarias comunes en material de accesibilidad en ámbitos específicos. Actualmente las organizaciones europeas de normalización están elaborando normas siguiendo tres mandatos de la Comisión Europea:

— El mandato 376 se centra en normas de accesibilidad para productos y servicios en el campo de las TIC.

— El mandato 420 se dirige al desarrollo de normas de accesibilidad en el entorno construido.

— El mandato 473 se dirige a la inclusión de normas de accesibilidad, siguiendo el concepto de «diseño para todos» (o diseño universal), en las normas generales pertinentes y al desarrollo de normas orientadas a los procesos para los fabricantes y proveedores de servicios sobre la forma de incluir la accesibilidad en su ciclo de desarrollo del producto y de prestación del servicio. Este mandato responde al artículo 4, letra f) de la Convención.

Por otra parte, la Comisión está examinando actualmente la posibilidad de presentar un instrumento jurídico sobre la aproximación de las disposiciones legales, reglamentarias y administrativas de los Estados miembros en lo que respecta a los requisitos de accesibilidad aplicables a productos y servicios.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006698/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Approval of products for disabled persons. Development of universally designed goods and services

The purchase of goods and services and relevant and accessible information on them should include appropriate commercial solutions, as well as goods and services designed to be accessible in the long term.

Given the European Parliament resolution of 25 October 2011 on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020;

Given that, based on the rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the Commission has adopted the right approach to raise awareness of disability, including the concepts of 'design for all' and 'universal design', and to highlight the importance of reasonable accommodation;

Given that Article 4 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities establishes the obligation to 'undertake or promote research and development of universally designed goods, services, equipment and facilities';

Given that Article 2 of the Convention defines 'universal design' as the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design;

1. What measures has the Commission adopted to ensure that products approved for disabled persons meet European standards?

2. How will it ensure that appropriate steps are taken to promote the development of universally designed goods and services and access to them, in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of the UN Convention?

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

The Commission has been investing for years in the development of common voluntary standards on accessibility in specific areas. Currently, European standardisation organisations are preparing standards following three mandates given by the European Commission:

— Mandate 376 focuses on accessibility standards for ICT goods and services;

— Mandate 420 aims at developing accessibility standards for the built environment;

— Mandate 473 aims at including accessibility, following 'Design for all' (or Universal Design), in relevant mainstream standards and to develop process oriented standards for manufacturers and service providers on how to include accessibility in their product development cycle and service provision. This Mandate addresses Article 4 (f) of the Convention.

In addition, the Commission is currently examining the possibility to present a legal instrument on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States as regards the accessibility requirements of goods and services.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006699/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Intercambios formativos en materia de turismo europeo

En la Comunicación de la Comisión Europea al Parlamento Europeo titulada «Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo: un nuevo marco político para el turismo europeo», la quinta de las acciones previstas apoya la formación en el sector turístico mediante la promoción de las posibilidades de los diferentes programas de la UE, como Leonardo, el Programa marco para la Competitividad y la Innovación (PCI), con sus subprogramas «Erasmus para Jóvenes Empresarios» y «Competencias Electrónicas para la Innovación».

Dada la importancia del turismo en los intercambios formativos de países ¿qué previsiones tiene la Comisión de incorporar el turismo dentro de los campos que abarca el ambicioso programa «Erasmus para todos» que está previsto que se inicie en enero de 2014?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

Según lo previsto en la Comunicación sobre el turismo «Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo: un nuevo marco político para el turismo europeo» ([1]), la Comisión desea garantizar que la competitividad del sector turístico se tiene en cuenta en sus actividades y políticas, incluyendo la cuestión de la mejora de las aptitudes profesionales ([2]).

La propuesta de la Comisión «Erasmus para todos» está dirigida a todas las organizaciones que trabajan en los ámbitos de la educación, la formación, la juventud y el deporte; por lo tanto, el programa puede facilitar el desarrollo de capacidades en el sector del turismo. Mediante el acuerdo provisional entre el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo se modificó el nombre de la propuesta de la Comisión por «Erasmus+», que debe adoptarse oficialmente en otoño de 2013.

Con arreglo a la propuesta, los agentes del sector turístico podrán participar en asociaciones estratégicas que tienen por finalidad establecer o reforzar la cooperación entre las instituciones de educación o de formación profesional y las empresas, siempre que las asociaciones y los proyectos tengan un valor añadido para la UE. Ello significa que en los proyectos de cooperación/asociaciones deben participar socios de al menos tres Estados miembros.

Además de las asociaciones estratégicas, también serán de interés las acciones de movilidad del programa. Los estudiantes (de la enseñanza superior y la formación profesional) y los profesionales de la formación del sector pueden beneficiarse de la participación en proyectos de movilidad siempre y cuando se ajusten a los criterios que se establecerán en las convocatorias de propuestas para el nuevo programa.

La información técnica se incluirá en la Guía del usuario. Se espera que la publicación de la primera convocatoria de propuestas y de la Guía del usuario tenga lugar a finales de 2013.

([1]) COM(2010) 352 final de 30.6.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/skills/index_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006699/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Educational exchanges on European tourism

The fifth action planned in the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament entitled 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe' supports training in the tourism sector by promoting the opportunities offered by various EU programmes such as Leonardo and the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), with its 'Erasmus for young entrepreneurs' and 'E-skills for innovation' strands.

Given the importance of tourism in educational exchanges between countries, how does the Commission plan to incorporate it into the areas covered by the ambitious 'Erasmus for all' programme, which is scheduled to start in January 2014?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

As foreseen in the communication on tourism 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe' ([1]), the Commission would like to ensure that the competitiveness of the tourism sector is taken into account in its activities and policies, including the issue of professionalization of skills ([2]).

The Commission proposal 'Erasmus for all' is addressed to all bodies active in the fields of Education, Training, Youth and Sport; therefore, the programme can support skills development in the tourism sector. The provisional agreement between the European Parliament and Council changed the name of the Commission proposal to 'Erasmus+' which should be formally adopted in autumn 2013.

Under the proposal, tourism stakeholders will be able to participate in strategic partnerships which aim at establishing/reinforcing the cooperation between education/vocational institutions and enterprises, provided that the partnerships and the projects present an EU added value. This means that the cooperation projects/partnerships must involve partners from at least three Member States.

In addition to strategic partnerships, the mobility actions of the programme will also be of interest. Students (from higher and vocational education) and training professionals in the sector can benefit from participation in learning mobility projects, provided they meet the criteria that will be established in the calls for proposals for the new programme.

The technical information will be included in the Users' Guide. The first call for proposals, as well as the Users' Guide, is expected to be published towards the end of 2013.

([1]) COM(2010) 352 final of 30.6.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/skills/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006700/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Erneuerung der Gas-Transitleitung in der Ukraine

Im März 2013 wurde bekannt, dass die Ukraine von der Europäischen Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung einen Kredit über 308 Mio. EUR erhält, um die wichtigste Transitleitung zu erneuern, die Gas von Russland nach Westeuropa befördert. Nun wurde bekannt, dass im Jahr 2012 mit 81 Milliarden Kubikmetern rund 20 % weniger Gas nach Westeuropa befördert wurde als im Jahr 2011.

1. Ist die Gewährung des Kredites an einen konkreten Zeitplan für die Erneuerung der Gas-Transitleitung gebunden? Wenn ja, bis wann muss die Transitleitung erneuert sein? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

2. Bis wann rechnet die Kommission mit der Beendigung der Erneuerungsarbeiten?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(26. Juli 2013)

Am 23. März 2009 fand in Brüssel eine hochrangige Investorenkonferenz mit Vertretern der EU und der Ukraine zur Modernisierung des ukrainischen Gastransportsystems statt. Seitdem haben die EU und internationale Finanzinstitutionen wie die Europäische Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung (EBWE) die Modernisierung des ukrainischen Gastransportsystems aktiv unterstützt, indem sie der Ukraine Kredite der EBWE und der Europäischen Investitionsbank (EIB) als Gegenleistung für die Reform des ukrainischen Gasmarkts (seit Dezember 2010 in Übereinstimmung mit den Verpflichtungen der Ukraine im Rahmen der Energiegemeinschaft) angeboten haben. Eine Finanzierung im Schnellverfahren wird zurzeit für ein konkretes prioritäres Investitionsprojekt mit einem Investitionsumfang von 308 Mio. EUR geprüft; es handelt sich um die erste Phase der Modernisierung einer wichtigen Gastransitleitung, der Gasleitung Urengoy-Pomary-Uschhorod. Es gibt keine spezielle Frist für die Gewährung dieser Kredite oder für den Abschluss der Modernisierung des Gastransportsystems. Sie ist abhängig von den Fortschritten der Ukraine bei der Umsetzung der vereinbarten Reformen des Gassektors.

Die Sicherstellung der Zuverlässigkeit und Transparenz des ukrainischen Gastransitsystems hat für die EU große Bedeutung. Aus diesem Grund ist die Kommission bereit, die Modernisierung der Gastransitinfrastruktur in der Ukraine weiterhin aktiv zu unterstützen und dafür zu sorgen, dass sie ein entscheidender Bestandteil des gesamteuropäischen Energienetzes bleibt. Die Kommission wird auch künftig mit den internationalen Finanzinstitutionen auf dieses Ziel hinarbeiten. Die Beschlüsse über etwaige Kredite werden von jeder dieser Finanzinstitutionen nach eigenen Regeln und Verfahren getroffen. Die Europäische Kommission handelt hier nur als Vermittler und kann in deren Namen keine Verpflichtungen eingehen. Wie bereits oben erklärt, wird der Erfolg des Projekts letztendlich vom Fortschritt der Ukraine bei der Umsetzung der vereinbarten Reformen des Gassektors abhängen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006700/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Renewal of the gas transit pipeline in Ukraine

In March 2013, it became known that Ukraine was receiving a credit of over EUR 308 million from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for renewal of the most important transit pipeline carrying gas from Russia to Western Europe. It has now become known that the amount of gas transported to Western Europe in 2012 was 81 billion cubic metres, or around 20%, less than in 2011.

1. Is the guaranteeing of the credit linked to a specific timetable for renewing the gas transit pipeline? If so, by when must the transit pipeline be renewed? If not, why not?

2. When does the Commission expect the renewal work to be completed?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

A high-level Joint EU-Ukraine International Investment Conference on the modernisation of the Ukrainian gas transmission system took place on 23 March 2009 in Brussels. Since then, the EU and International Financial Institutions (IFIs), including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), have actively been supporting the modernisation of the Ukrainian gas transportation system by offering Ukraine loans from the EBRD and EIB in exchange for gas market reforms in Ukraine (since December 2010 in line with Ukraine's Energy Community obligations). A concrete priority investment project of EUR 308 million for the first phase of the modernisation of a key transit gas pipeline, the Urengoy-Pomary-Uzgherod pipeline, is being considered for 'fast-track' financing by the EBRD and the EIB. There is no specific deadline for granting these loans or for completing the modernisation of the gas transmission system. It will depend on Ukraine's progress in implementing the agreed gas sector reforms.

The EU attaches great importance to ensuring the reliability and transparency of the Ukrainian gas transmission system. In this sense, the Commission stands ready to continue its active support to the upgrading of the gas transmission infrastructure in Ukraine and to ensure that it remains a key part of the pan-European energy network. The Commission will continue working with the IFIs towards this aim. The decisions on possible loans will be taken by each of the IFIs according to their own rules and procedures. The European Commission is acting only as a facilitator and cannot take commitments on their behalf. As stated above, the success of the project will ultimately depend on Ukraine's progress in implementing the agreed gas sector reforms.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006701/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Gratisangebote für Beamte und Zeitbedienstete der EU

Beamte und Zeitbedienstete der Europäischen Union sind oft Ziel von Organisationen, die Einfluss auf die EU-Gesetzgebung nehmen wollen. Häufig werden Einladungen zu für die Teilnehmer kostenlosen Veranstaltungen mit Gratisangeboten wie Getränken, Speisen oder sonstigen Dienstleistungen unaufgefordert an Beamte oder Zeitbedienstete geschickt. Bei solchen Veranstaltungen wird gezielt Einfluss genommen.

1. Müssen Beamte und Zeitbedienstete melden, wenn sie Einladungen zu Veranstaltungen mit Gratisangeboten erhalten?

2. Müssen Beamte und Zeitbedienstete melden, wenn sie Einladungen zu Veranstaltungen mit Gratisangeboten annehmen?

3. Müssen Beamte und Zeitbedienstete melden, wenn sie Einladungen zu Veranstaltungen mit Gratisangeboten annehmen, deren Thematik mit ihrer Arbeit in Zusammenhang steht oder stehen könnte?

4. Falls die Kommission eine der Fragen 1-3 mit Ja beantwortet, wie viele solcher Fälle wurden in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 jeweils gemeldet?

5. Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission, um für eine entsprechende Kontrolle und Transparenz zu sorgen?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juli 2013)

De Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf Artikel 11 Absatz 2 des Statuts. Demzufolge darf ein Beamter ohne Zustimmung der Anstellungsbehörde von einer Stelle außerhalb seines Organs keine Vergünstigungen, Geschenke oder Vergütungen annehmen. Gastfreundschaft ist als eine besondere Form von Vergünstigung anzusehen.

2012 hat die Kommission Leitlinien zu Geschenken und Gastfreundschaft für ihre Beamten und Bediensteten angenommen (s. Anlage). Bedienstete der Kommission sollten Geschenke und Gastfreundschaft generell zurückweisen, es sei denn, sie entsprächen den Regeln der Höflichkeit oder wären aus Gründen der Höflichkeit oder wegen gesellschaftlicher oder diplomatischer Gepflogenheiten erforderlich. Jeder Fall ist nach den jeweiligen Gegebenheiten zu beurteilen.

Zur Praxis in anderen Organen, Agenturen oder anderen EU-Einrichtungen kann die Kommission nicht Stellung nehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006701/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Products offered free of charge to EU officials and temporary staff

Officials and temporary staff of the European Union are often targeted by organisations seeking to influence EU legislation. Unsolicited invitations to free events that include products offered free of charge, such as drinks, meals or other services, are often sent to officials and temporary staff. A deliberate attempt is being made to purchase influence at these events.

1. Do officials and temporary staff have to file a report if they receive invitations to events that include products offered free of charge?

2. Do officials and temporary staff have to file a report if they accept invitations to events that include products offered free of charge?

3. Do officials and temporary staff have to file a report if they accept invitations to events that include products offered free of charge, the subject matter of which is connected or could be connected to their work?

4. If the Commission answers yes to any of questions 1-3, how many incidents of this type were reported in 2010, 2011 and 2013?

5. What measures is the Commission planning to take to ensure appropriate monitoring and transparency?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to Article 11(2) of the Staff Regulations which provides that an official shall not accept any favour, gift or payment from sources outside of the institution without the authorisation of the Appointing Authority. Hospitality is considered to be a particular type of favour.

In 2012, the Commission adopted Guidelines on Gifts and Hospitality for its staff (see annex). As a general rule Commission staff members should refuse any gifts or hospitality unless it is in line with, or required by courtesy or by social or diplomatic usage. Each case has to be judged on its own merits.

The Commission cannot provide an answer with regard to practices in other institutions, agencies or other EU bodies.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006702/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Kosten für EU-Gefechtsverbände (EU-Battlegroups)

Die im Juni 2004 ins Leben gerufenen EU-Gefechtsverbände kamen bisher noch nie zum Einsatz. Die Gefechtsverbände werden jeweils zeitweise von einem oder mehreren truppenstellenden Mitgliedsländern finanziert. Laut Medienberichten werden nun von verschiedenen Mitgliedstaaten alternative Szenarios für die Gefechtsverbände diskutiert. So schlägt der deutsche Verteidigungsminister vor, diese in „Ausbildungs-Gefechtsverbände" umzuwandeln. Großbritannien möchte die Gefechtsverbände in kleinere Einheiten zerlegen. Schweden, die Niederlande, Lettland und Litauen wollen die Gefechtsverbände mehr im Sinne einer dynamischen „Tool Box" nutzen.

1. Wird eines dieser Konzepte oder ein anderes Konzept derzeit von der Hohen Vertreterin für die Zukunft der Gefechtsverbände in Erwägung gezogen?

2. In welchem Zeitraum kann mit einer Reform der Gefechtsverbände gerechnet werden?

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

Die EU-Gefechtsverbände spielen eine herausragende operative und transformative Rolle im Rahmen der GSVP. Sie sind die einzigen militärischen Einsatzkräfte der EU, die für mögliche Krisenreaktionsoperationen der EU bereitstehen, und haben dazu beigetragen, die Interoperabilität und Wirksamkeit der Streitkräfte der Mitgliedstaaten zu erhöhen.

Doch während sie ihre transformative Rolle weiterhin voll erfüllen, müssen sie ihre Funktionsfähigkeit als operatives Instrument erst noch beweisen. Effektiv kamen sie seit ihrer Schaffung nie konkret zum Einsatz. Außerdem hat es sich als schwierig erwiesen, die bestehende Diskrepanz zwischen Bereitschaft und Einsatz der EU-Gefechtsverbände zu überwinden.

Trotz anhaltender erheblicher Bemühungen zur Erhöhung der operativen Relevanz und Effektivität der EU-Gefechtsverbände in den letzten Jahren konnten die Voraussetzungen für ihren Einsatz nicht wesentlich verbessert werden.

Mehrere Mitgliedstaaten haben vor kurzem darauf hingewiesen, dass die Gefechtsverbände effektiver eingesetzt werden müssen. In politischen Debatten in der EU wurde außerdem gefordert, die EU-Gefechtsverbände in den umfassenderen Kontext des Krisenreaktionsmechanismus der EU einzubeziehen. Die EU sollte in der Lage sein, Sicherheitsprobleme nicht nur schnell, sondern auch flexibel zu lösen, indem sie die erforderlichen Streitkräfte möglicherweise in Verbindung mit anderen Instrumenten mobilisiert.

Im Hinblick auf die Tagung des Europäischen Rates im Dezember 2013 zum Thema Sicherheit und Verteidigung soll ein innovatives, flexibleres Instrument zur Anpassung der Gefechtsverbände an den sich ändernden Bedarf der Krisenreaktion der EU und zur Verbesserung ihrer Einsatzfähigkeit verstärkt gefördert werden. Auf der Grundlage der wertvollen Beiträge des EAD und der Mitgliedstaaten soll so erreicht werden, dass die EU-Gefechtsverbände ein breiteres Spektrum möglicher Aufgaben übernehmen können und so die Krisenreaktion der EU verbessert wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006702/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Cost of EU battlegroups

The EU battlegroups established in June 2004 have never been deployed to date. The battlegroups are each temporarily financed by one or more troop-contributing Member States. Media reports suggest that alternative scenarios for the battlegroups are now being discussed by various Member States. The German Defence Minister proposes converting them into 'training battlegroups'. The United Kingdom would like to break the battlegroups up into smaller units. Sweden, the Netherlands, Latvia and Lithuania want to use the battlegroups more as a kind of dynamic 'toolbox'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative currently considering any of these approaches or another approach to the future of the battlegroups?

2. When can battlegroup reform be expected to take place?

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

EU Battlegroups (EUBGs) are the flagship CSDP operational and transformation tool. They are the only EU military capabilities on stand-by for possible EU rapid response operations, and have helped reinforce the interoperability and effectiveness of Member States' military forces.

However, whilst they have been and still are instrumental for transformation, they are yet to prove their viability as an operational tool. Indeed since their creation they have never been deployed. Moreover, it has proven difficult to fill the existing gaps in the roster of EUBGs' offers and commitments.

Despite considerable and persistent efforts over the past years to increase the operational relevance and effectiveness of EUBGs, it has not been possible to improve significantly the conditions for using them.

Member States have recently underlined the need to improve the effective employment of the Battlegroups. The political discussions in EU have also identified the need to put the EU Battlegroups into the wider context of the overall EU rapid response capabilities. The EU should be able to address security challenges not only in a rapid — but also in a flexible way, mobilising the required capabilities, possibly in combination with other instruments.

In view of the December 2013 European Council on security and defence, the intention is to intensify efforts to develop an innovative, more flexible approach to adapting the Battlegroups to the changing needs of EU response to crises and increasing their usability. Building on EEAS' and Member States' valuable contributions, this work aims at making the EUBGs better answerable to a wider spectrum of possible tasks, thus improving the EU rapid response to crises.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006703/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Förderung schwimmender Strömungskraftwerke

Ein österreichisches Unternehmen hat nach eigenen Angaben ein schwimmendes Strömungskraftwerk entwickelt, das die Nutzung der kinetischen Energie des Wassers frei fließender Flüsse möglich macht. Die sogenannte „Strom-Boje" lässt die Energiegewinnung aus Wasserkraft zu, ohne bauliche Maßnahmen wie Staumauern, Dämme, Schleusen oder Fischaufstiegshilfen zu benötigen.

1. Fördert die Europäische Union die Entwicklung von schwimmenden Strömungskraftwerken? Wenn ja, welche konkreten Projekte werden mit europäischen Mitteln finanziert?

2. Welche alternativen Möglichkeiten der Energiegewinnung aus Wasserkraft werden mit EU-Mitteln gefördert?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(29. Juli 2013)

1. Ein schwimmendes Strömungskraftwerk ist eine von vielen Technologien zur Umwandlung der Wasserkraft aus Flüssen in elektrische Energie. Diese Technologie hätte von der Europäischen Kommission über ihre Forschungsrahmenprogramme gefördert werden können. Weder in einem früheren noch im jetzigen Forschungsrahmenprogramm wurde jedoch ein Förderantrag für ein schwimmendes Strömungskraftwerk gestellt.

2. Eine vollständige Übersicht über die aus dem Siebten Forschungsrahmenprogramm geförderten Projekte findet sich unter folgenden Links:
http://energy-research.eu/projects-listing?field_proj_country_tid=&field_proj_categorie_tid=Ocean+energy&field_proj_plan_technologies_value=All&title=&field_proj_acronym_value=&=Apply
http://energy-research.eu/content/policy-brochures

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006703/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Promotion of floating hydroelectric power stations

An Austrian company claims to have developed a floating hydroelectric power station which makes use of the kinetic energy of water in free-flowing rivers. The so-called 'Power Buoy' generates hydroelectric energy without the need for structures, such as dam walls, dams, sluices or fish ladders.

1. Is the European Union promoting the development of floating hydroelectric power stations? If so, which specific projects are being financed with EU funds?

2. What alternative options for hydroelectric energy generation are being promoted using EU funds?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 2013)

1. A floating hydroelectric power station is one of many technologies to convert energy from rivers into electricity. This technology could have been supported by the European Commission in the past in its research framework programmes. However, to date no floating hydroelectric power station project has been submitted to the past and current research framework programmes.

2. A full overview of all supported FP7 projects can be found under the following links:
http://energy-research.eu/projects-listing?field_proj_country_tid=&field_proj_categorie_tid=Ocean+energy&field_proj_plan_technologies_value=All&title=&field_proj_acronym_value=&=Apply
http://energy-research.eu/content/policy-brochures

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006704/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Streiktage der Beamten der Kommission

Für Juni 2013 hatten die Beamten des Rates und der Kommission einen Streik angekündigt.

An wie vielen Tagen streikten Teile der Beamtenschaft der Kommission jeweils in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012?

An wie vielen Diensttagen streikten einzelne Beamte der Kommission durchschnittlich in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(12. August 2013)

Nach Artikel 28 der Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union können die Gewerkschaften und Personalvertretungen der Kommissionsbediensteten die Beamten und anderen Beschäftigten dazu aufrufen, an Kollektivmaßnahmen, zu denen auch Streiks gehören, teilzunehmen, um ihre Interessen zu verteidigen.

Die Kommissionsbediensteten streikten 2012 an 1,5 Tagen und 2010 und 2011 überhaupt nicht.

2 806 Beamte und andere Bedienstete beteiligten sich an dem halbtägigen Streik und 5 237 an dem ganztägigen.

Die Kommission zieht den Betrag, der den Streiktagen entspricht, von den Bezügen der Bediensteten ab, die am Streik teilgenommen haben.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006704/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Days lost to strikes by Commission officials

Council and Commission officials called a strike for June 2013.

How many days were lost to strikes by Commission officials, as a body, in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively?

How many days were lost to strikes by individual Commission officials, on average, in 2010, 20111 and 2012 respectively?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

In accordance with the provisions of Article 28 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the trade unions and staff associations of the Commission staff may call the officials and other servants for the defence of their interests to collective actions including strike actions.

The Honourable Member is informed that there were 1.5 strike days by Commission officials in 2012, none in 2010 and 2011.

2806 officials and other agents participated in the half day and 5237 in the full day strike action.

The Commission deducts the corresponding amount for the strike days, from the salaries of its staff having participated in the strike action.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006705/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Zusammenarbeit bei der Hochwasserbekämpfung

Anfang Juni 2013 führten starke Regenfälle in einigen Staaten Mitteleuropas zu schweren Überschwemmungen. Besonders Deutschland, Polen, Tschechien, Österreich und die Schweiz waren von den Unwettern betroffen. In einigen Ländern wurde der Notstand ausgerufen und das Militär zur Bekämpfung der Fluten eingesetzt.

1. In welcher Form unterstützt die Kommission die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den von Überflutungen betroffenen Staaten?

2. Koordiniert die Kommission Krisen- und Nothilfemaßnahmen in der Abteilung „Humanitäre Hilfe und Katastrophenschutz", oder werden Krisen- und Nothilfemaßnahmen auf EU-Ebene über eine spezielle Agentur koordiniert?

3. Plant die Kommission ein spezifisches Krisen-Koordinationszentrum für Naturkatastrophen?

Antwort von Frau Georgieva im Namen der Kommission
(31. Juli 2013)

2001 wurde das europäische Katastrophenschutzverfahren eingeführt, um die Mobilisierung von Soforthilfe im Fall größerer Katastrophen zu unterstützen. An dem Verfahren beteiligen sich 32 Länder; neben den 28 Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union sind dies Island, Liechtenstein, Norwegen und die ehemalige jugoslawische Republik Mazedonien.

Durch die Bündelung der Katastrophenschutzkapazitäten der beteiligten Staaten sorgt das Verfahren für einen besseren Schutz — vor allem der Menschen, aber auch der Umwelt und des Kulturerbes. Das Verfahren kann bei jeder Art von Naturkatastrophen oder vom Menschen verursachten Katastrophen wie Erdbeben, Überschwemmungen, Waldbränden Industrieunfällen, Meeresverschmutzung oder terroristischen Anschlägen aktiviert werden.

Seit 2010 ist für den Katastrophenschutz ebenso wie für die humanitäre Hilfe die Generaldirektion der Kommission für humanitäre Hilfe und Katastrophenschutz (ECHO) zuständig, die für ein koordiniertes Vorgehen bei Krisen- und Soforthilfeeinsätzen sorgt, wodurch Komplementarität und Effizienz gefördert werden. Das Notfallabwehrzentrum der Kommission (ERC) wurde im Mai 2013 eröffnet und dient als Schnittstelle für die Koordinierung. Dank seiner Ausstattung mit modernster Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie kann es rund um die Uhr sofort auf Katastrophen und Krisen weltweit reagieren.

Während der Hochwasserkrise, von der im Frühjahr 2013 viele europäische Länder betroffen waren, hat das Zentrum die Lage genauestens beobachtet, Frühwarnungen ausgegeben und als Drehscheibe für Informationen fungiert. Es hat außerdem bei Bedarf spezifische Unterstützung geleistet, beispielsweise durch Bereitstellung hochauflösender Satellitenbilder von den überschwemmten Gebieten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006705/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Flood defence cooperation

At the beginning of 2013, heavy rainfall in several central European countries caused severe flooding. Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria and Switzerland were particularly badly affected by the storms. Some countries declared a state of emergency, deploying the military to combat the floods.

1. How is the Commission supporting cooperation between the countries affected by the flooding?

2. Is the Commission coordinating crisis and emergency relief operations through its 'Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection' department, or are crisis and emergency relief operations being coordinated at EU level via a particular agency?

3. Is the Commission planning a specific crisis coordination centre to deal with natural disasters?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

In 2001, the European Civil Protection Mechanism was established to support the mobilisation of emergency assistance in the event of major disasters. 32 countries participate in the European Civil Protection Mechanism: all 28 Member States of the European Union plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

By pooling the civil protection capabilities of the participating states, the Mechanism can ensure better protection, primarily of people, but also of the natural and cultural environment, and property. The Mechanism can be activated in response to any type of natural or man-made disaster, such as earthquakes, floods, forest fires, industrial accidents, marine pollution or terrorist attacks.

Since 2010, both civil protection as well as humanitarian assistance is under the auspices of the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) in the Commission, which ensures a coordinated approach in crisis and emergency relief operations, facilitating complementarity and greater efficiency. The Commission's Emergency Response Centre (ERC) was inaugurated in May 2013 and serves as the coordination hub. It is equipped with sophisticated information and communication technology that will provide 24/7 availability for immediate response to disasters and crises worldwide.

Throughout the flood crisis that struck many European countries earlier in 2013, the Centre closely monitored the situation, provided early warning information and acted as an information hub. The ERC also provided specific support on demand such as high resolution satellite images of the flooded areas.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006706/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Militärische Bewegung im Sudan

Militärische Truppen des Sudans haben neuerdings die Grenze zum Südsudan überschritten und bewegen sich in der entmilitarisierten Pufferzone in Äthiopien; der Öl-Konflikt spitzt sich weiter zu.

1. Kann die Kommission zum gegenwärtigen Zeitpunkt eine Aussage darüber treffen, wie sie sich in diesem Konflikt positioniert, da sowohl der Sudan als auch der Süd-Sudan allein im vergangenen Jahr humanitäre Unterstützung seitens der EU in Höhe von 157 Millionen EUR erhalten haben?

2. Welche Rolle hat die Kommission vor, gegebenenfalls in einer Art Vermittlung einzunehmen, um eine militärische Auseinandersetzung zu verhindern? (Mit der Bitte um ausführliche Erläuterung)

3. Wie plant die Kommission im Falle einer militärischen Auseinandersetzung vorzugehen, um den Zugang zu humanitärer Hilfe aufrechterhalten und vor allem sicher stellen zu können?

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

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin ist äußerst besorgt wegen der derzeitigen Spannungen zwischen Sudan und Südsudan. Diese Spannungen werden noch verstärkt durch die jüngste Drohung der Regierung Sudans, die Ölexporte aus dem Süden zu stoppen und die Anwendung der von beiden Ländern im September 2012 in Addis Abeba unterzeichneten Abkommen einzufrieren. Die EU ruft beide Seiten auf, den Interessen ihrer Bürger Vorrang zu geben und Beziehungen zu fördern, die für beide Seiten von Nutzen sind. Die Abkommen von Addis Abeba sollten ohne jegliche Einschränkung umgesetzt und jegliche Beschwerden sollten im Rahmen bilateraler Mechanismen behandelt werden. Beide Seiten sollten mit dem „High Implementation Panel" der Afrikanischen Union (AU) zusammenarbeiten, um Lösungen für die Zukunft zu finden. Die EU unterstützt die Vermittlungsbemühungen der AU sowohl politisch als auch finanziell.

Die humanitäre Hilfe der EU wird unabhängig vom politischen Engagement der EU nach den humanitären Grundsätzen der Menschlichkeit, der Neutralität, der Unparteilichkeit und der Unabhängigkeit geleistet. Im Fall Sudans (und Südsudans) gewährt die Kommission humanitäre Hilfe durch die Finanzierung von Projekten von UN-Einrichtungen, internationalen Organisationen und internationalen Nichtregierungsorganisationen, sofern diese Zugang zu den Empfängern haben und die Durchführung der Projekte von unabhängigen Stellen überwacht werden kann, um der Rechenschaftspflicht gegenüber den europäischen Steuerzahlern Genüge zu tun. Der Zugang zu Gebieten, in denen Konflikte noch andauern (vor allem die Region Darfur und die Bundesstaaten Südkordofan und Blauer Nil in Sudan sowie der Bundesstaat Jonglei in Südsudan) hat sich als sehr begrenzt erwiesen. Die Kommission setzt sich unermüdlich für einen uneingeschränkten humanitären Zugang ein, damit die Hilfe die Menschen erreichen kann, die von Konflikten betroffen sind bzw. dadurch vertrieben wurden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006706/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Military operations in Sudan

Sudanese troops have recently crossed the border with South Sudan and are operating in the demilitarised buffer zone in Ethiopia. The conflict over oil is deteriorating further.

1. Is the Commission currently able to issue a statement on its position vis-à-vis this conflict in the light of the EUR 157 million in humanitarian aid which both Sudan and South Sudan have received in the past year alone?

2. If necessary, can the Commission act as a kind of intermediary in order to prevent military conflict? (Please provide detailed information.)

3. In the event of a military conflict, what steps is the Commission taking to maintain and in particular to safeguard access to humanitarian aid?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is very concerned about the current tensions between Sudan and South Sudan. These tensions are heightened by the recent threat of the Government of Sudan to stop oil exports from the South and freeze implementation of agreements signed by the two countries in Addis Ababa in September 2012. The EU calls on both sides to prioritise the interests of their citizens and promote mutually beneficial relations. The Addis Agreements should be implemented fully and unconditionally; and any complaints or grievances about security concerns should be addressed through agreed bilateral mechanisms. Both parties should cooperate with the African Union (AU) High Implementation Panel to find a way forward. The EU supports these mediation efforts by the AU both politically and financially.

EU humanitarian aid is provided independently of the political engagement of the EU according to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. In the case of Sudan (and South Sudan), the Commission provides humanitarian aid by financing projects implemented by UN agencies, international organisations and International non-governmental organisations (INGOs) where these can get access to the beneficiaries and where the implementation of the projects can be independently monitored to ensure accountability towards European taxpayers. Access to areas with ongoing conflict (in particular Darfur, Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile States in Sudan and Jonglei State in South Sudan) has proven to be very limited. The Commission is tirelessly advocating for unimpeded humanitarian access in order to be able to deliver aid to the conflict affected and displaced populations.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006707/13
an die Kommission
Jens Geier (S&D)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Wettbewerbs- und Arbeitsschutzrecht in Bezug auf Ladenöffnungszeiten

Die Ladenöffnungszeiten für Einzelhändler und Dienstleister werden von den entsprechenden Mitgliedstaaten bzw. ihren Regionen gesetzlich festgelegt. Diese Gesetze berühren Fragen des Wettbewerbsrechts und des Arbeitsschutzrechts. Durch den Europäischen Binnenmarkt befinden sich Händler in grenznahen Regionen (Beispiel Deutschland und die Niederlande) im Wettbewerb zu Händlern auf der anderen Seite der Grenze.

1. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass durch die national geregelten Rahmenbedingungen von Ladenöffnungsgesetzen eine Wettbewerbsverzerrung vorliegt?

2. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass unterschiedliche Ladenöffnungsgesetze in zwei Mitgliedstaaten (Beispiel Deutschland und die Niederlande) zu einem Wettbewerbsnachteil für Händler eines Mitgliedstaates führen können? Hat die Europäische Kommission Zahlen, die das belegen/widerlegen?

3. Welche Konsequenz ergibt sich aus der Bewertung der Kommission?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(7. August 2013)

1. Die Kommission ist sich der regulatorischen Unterschiede zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten bewusst. Die Öffnungszeiten sind nur einer der zahlreichen Faktoren, die für die Verbraucher bei der Wahl des Einkaufsortes eine Rolle spielen. Die Preise und die Qualität der Produkte sind dabei ebenfalls von Bedeutung.

2. Unterschiede bei den Ladenöffnungszeiten fallen nicht unter die Wettbewerbsvorschriften des AEUV. In mehreren öffentlichen Berichten der Organisation für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung sowie der Europäischen Zentralbank wird das Thema aufgegriffen. Allerdings verfügt die Kommission über keine speziellen Informationen über die Auswirkungen unterschiedlicher Ladenöffnungszeiten in den Mitgliedstaaten sowie darüber, ob unterschiedliche Ladenöffnungszeiten in zwei Mitgliedstaaten zu einem Wettbewerbsnachteil für die Einzelhändler in einem Mitgliedstaat führen können.

3. Nach der ständigen Rechtsprechung des Europäischen Gerichtshofs ist es den Mitgliedstaaten gestattet, Maßnahmen zu ergreifen, die sie aus ordnungspolitischen Gründen im Hinblick auf Ladenöffnungszeiten für notwendig halten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006707/13
to the Commission
Jens Geier (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Competition and occupational safety legislation as it relates to shop opening times

Shop opening times for retailers and service providers are laid down in law by the relevant Member States and their regions. These laws affect matters relating to competition legislation and occupational safety legislation. The European internal market stipulates that retailers in border regions (for example Germany and the Netherlands) are in competition with retailers on the other side of the border.

1. Does the Commission consider that nationally regulated framework conditions for shop opening times distort competition?

2. Does the Commission consider that different shop opening times in two Member States (for example Germany and the Netherlands) may result in a competitive disadvantage for retailers in one Member State? Does it have any figures which prove/disprove this?

3. How does the Commission assess the consequences of this?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

1. The Commission is fully aware of the regulatory differences in Member States. Opening hours is only one of the many factors that consumers consider when choosing where to shop. Prices and quality of products and services are also relevant.

2. Differences in shop opening hours do not fall under the competition rules in the TFEU. Several public reports of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the European Central Bank touch upon the subject. However, the Commission does not have any specific information about the effects of different shop opening hours in Member States and whether different shop opening times in two Member States could result in a competitive disadvantage for retailers in one Member State.

3. It is well established case law of the European Court of Justice that Member States are allowed to take measures which they consider necessary for public policy reasons as regards shop opening hours.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006708/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(11. juni 2013)

Om: Forskelsbehandling af sprogundervisere ved italienske universiteter

Den 26. juni 2001 modtog Italien en dom af EF-Domstolen for forskelsbehandling af sproglektorer ved italienske universiteter.

Italien blev dog ikke idømt nogen bøde, idet:

1. Italien forsikrede, at det ville overholde retsafgørelsen og stoppe forskelsbehandlingen, og

2. Kommissionen lovede at følge op på dette.

Er Kommissionen opmærksom på, at den krævede ligebehandling af de såkaldte sprogeksperter (CEL'er), tidligere kaldet *lettori*, der i henhold til italiensk lov nr. 63/2004 som absolut minimum sikrer dem samme lønninger og rettigheder som deltidsforskere (»ricercatori a tempo definito«), den laveste kategori af italienske akademiske medarbejdere, er blevet udvidet til at omfatte ALLE fremmedsproglige lektorer/CEL'er ved italienske universiteter (herunder dem, der er blevet ansat som CEL'er og aldrig har været *lettori*) i talrige afgørelser fra kassationsdomstolen med det klare formål at undgå »ubegrundet forskelsbehandling«?

Er Kommissionen ligeledes klar over, at disse afgørelser truffet af den italienske kassationsdomstol på ingen måde er blevet efterkommet af Italien, men at der snarere er sket en nedskæring, hvorved CEL'er ved f.eks. universiteterne i Siena, Bergamo, Catania, Salento og Lecce er blevet frataget en betydelig del af deres løn, og at retsafgørelserne, der konsekvent har været til fordel for CEL'erne, således til stadighed overtrædes?

Hvilke foranstaltninger agter Kommissionen at træffe i denne sag?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(25. juli 2013)

Kommissionen holdes underrettet om udviklingen i arbejdsvilkårene for tidligere og nuværende lektorer i fremmedsprog — lettori) og »collaboratori e esperti linguistici (CEL)« i Italien gennem omfattende korrespondance fra ALLSI (Associazione Lettori di Lingua Straniera in Italia).

For så vidt angår de foranstaltninger, som Kommissionen agter at træffe, henviser Kommissionen det ærede medlem til sit svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-4135/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006708/13
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Discrimination against language teachers at Italian universities

On 26 June 2001, Italy was found by the European Court of Justice to be discriminating against foreign language lecturers at its universities.

However, no fine was imposed on Italy, because:

1. Italy assured it was going to adhere to the court ruling and end the discrimination, and

2. the Commission promised to follow up on this.

Is the Commission aware that the requested equal treatment of 'linguistic experts' (CELs), formerly known as *lettori*, which grants them, under Italian law 63/2004, as an absolute minimum the same salaries and rights as part-time researchers ('ricercatori a tempo definito'), the lowest category of Italian academic staff, has been extended to ALL foreign language lecturers/CELs at Italian universities (including those who were taken on as CELs and have never been *lettori*) in numerous cassation rulings, explicitly in order to avoid 'unjustified discrimination'?

Is the Commission likewise aware that these Italian cassation rulings have in no way been implemented by Italy, but rather there has been a roll-back, depriving CELs at universities such as Siena, Bergamo, Catania, Salento and Lecce, of a substantial part of their salary, thus repeatedly violating court rulings which have consistently been in favour of CELs?

What action does the Commission intend to take regarding this matter?

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

The Commission is kept informed of developments in the working conditions of former and current foreign language lecturers (lettori) and 'collaboratori e esperti linguistici' (CELs) in Italy through the abundant correspondence received from the ALLSI (Associazione Lettori di Lingua Straniera in Italia).

As for the action that the Commission intends to take, the Commission would invite the Honourable Member to refer to the answer to Written Question E-4135/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006709/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(11 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Il-parteċipazzjoni taż-żgħażagħ fl-elezzjonijiet Ewropej

Abbażi tar-riżultati tar-rapport finali dwar il-Parteċipazzjoni taż-Żgħażagħ fil-Ħajja Demokratika (EACEA/2010/03), l-istħarriġ tal-Kummissjoni dwar l-istess suġġett jikkalkula li 69 % taż-żgħażagħ Ewropej bħsiebhom jivvutaw fl-elezzjonijiet Ewropej tas-sena d-dieħla. L-istħarriġ juri wkoll li ż-żgħażagħ Ewropej iridu jipparteċipaw aktar fil-politika Ewropea.

Il-Kummissjoni bħsiebha tintroduċi inizjattivi biex tinvolvi aktar ċittadini żgħażagħ Ewropej fil-politika Ewropea?

Il-Kummissjoni tipprevedi l-introduzzjoni ta' tali inizjattiva fit-tħejjija tal-elezzjonijiet Ewropej tal-2014?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(25 ta' Lulju 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni għadha kif bdiet reviżjoni tal-proċess tad-Djalogu strutturat maż-żgħażagħ, introdott fl-2010 fil-kuntest tal-implimentazzjoni tal-qafas imġedded għall-kooperazzjoni Ewropea fil-qasam taż-żgħażagħ (2010-2018); din ir-reviżjoni għandha l-għan, b'mod partikolari, li żżid l-għadd ta' żgħażagħ involuti f'd-djalogu politiku dwar is-suġġetti li jikkonċernawhom. Huwa previst li din ir-reviżjoni tiġi konkluża qabel tmiem l-2013.

Barra minn hekk, l-elezzjonijiet Ewropej li jmiss tqiesu fi ħdan il-qafas ta' ġestjoni 2013 tal-programm Żgħażagħ fl-Azzjoni: minn naħa l-waħda, il-kunsiderazzjoni tal-elezzjonijiet tikkostitwixxi waħda mill-prijoritajiet annwali tal-programm; minn naħa l-oħra, tnediet sejħa speċifika għall-proposti bil-għan li jiġu appoġġati proġetti li l-għan tagħhom huwa is-sensibilizzazzjoni taż-żgħażagħ għal dawn l-elezzjonijiet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006709/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Youth participation in European elections

Based on the findings of the final report on Youth Participation in Democratic Life (EACEA/2010/03), the Commission's survey on the same subject estimates that 69% of young Europeans intend to vote in next year's European elections. The survey also reveals that young Europeans want to participate more in European politics.

Does the Commission intend to introduce initiatives to engage more young European citizens in European politics?

Does the Commission envisage the introduction of any such initiative in preparation for the European elections in 2014?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(25 juillet 2013)

La Commission vient d'initier une révision du processus de Dialogue structuré avec les jeunes, introduit en 2010 dans le contexte de la mise en œuvre du cadre renouvelé pour la coopération européenne dans le domaine de la jeunesse (2010-2018); cette révision vise notamment à accroître le nombre des jeunes impliqués dans ce dialogue politique sur les sujets qui les concernent. Il est prévu de conclure cette révision avant fin 2013.

Par ailleurs, les prochaines élections européennes ont été prises en considération dans le cadre de gestion 2013 du programme Jeunesse en Action: d'une part, la prise en compte des élections constitue une des priorités annuelles du programme; d'autre part, un appel à propositions spécifique a été lancé en vue de soutenir des projets ayant pour objectif la sensibilisation des jeunes à ces élections.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006710/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(11 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: L-appoġġ tal-Kummissjoni u tas-CERN għas-SESAME

Il-Kummissjoni u s-CERN reċentement appoġġaw il-ħolqien tas-SESAME, faċilità ta' riċerka fil-Lvant Nofsani, abbażi tal-MEMO/13/460, li għandha l-għan li tippromwovi l-paċi.

Il-Kummissjoni taħseb li tali inizzjattiva se jkollha effett pożittiv fuq ir-relazzjonijiet tal-UE mal-Lvant Nofsani? Jekk iva, għandha xi attivitajiet ippjanati biex tippromwovi l-paċi permezz ta' kooperazzjoni xjentifika?

Il-Kummissjoni tittama li tuża l-kooperazzjoni xjentifika bħala mezz biex tippromwovi l-paċi f'oqsma oħra?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sna Geoghegan-Quinn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Lulju 2013)

SESAME u l-proġett tiegħu tal-immaniġġjar tad-dejta linkSCEEM-2 ([1]) jinvolvu l-protagonisti ewlenin u l-pajjiżi fil-Lvant Nofsani kollha. Il-faċilità sinkrotroni SESAME hija impriża konġunta unika bbażata fil-Ġordan li tiġbor flimkien xjenzati mill-Baħrejn, Ċipru, l-Eġittu, l-Iran, l-Iżrael, il-Ġordan, il-Pakistan, l-Awtorità Palestinjana u t-Turkija. Bl-appoġġ tagħha għal SESAME (il-forniment ta' kalamita ċentrali fis-sistema — EUR 5 miljun mill-UE) l-UE ngħatat opportunità unika biex tiskjera ruħha flimkien mal-UNESCO fir-reġjun bħala faċilitatur li jipprovdi kontributi deċiżivi għall-kostruzzjoni ta' SESAME sabiex tippromwovi l-paċi permezz tal-kooperazzjoni xjentifika, u tikkontribwixxu lejn il-politika tal-viċinat tal-UE.

Il-Kummissjoni f'dawn l-aħħar żminijiet qed tippromwovi l-paċi permezz ta' kooperazzjoni xjentifika inklużi azzjonijiet għar-Riċerka tal-Infrastrutturi fil-viċinat fin-Nofsinhar u l-Lvant, il-Balkani tal-Punent, il-Kawkażu u l-Asja Ċentrali; azzjonijiet biex jissaħħu x-xjenza u l-edukazzjoni (eż. billi tappoġġa l-istabbiliment u l-interkonnessjoni tan-netwerks nazzjonali tar-riċerka u tal-edukazzjoni); u inizjattivi ewlenin fl-Afrika bħal AfricaConnect ([2]) u l-inizjattivi ERAFRICA ([3]).

([1]) http://www.linksceem.eu/ls2/
([2]) http://www.africaconnect.eu/pages/home.aspx
([3]) http://www.erafrica.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006710/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Commission's and CERN's support for SESAME

The Commission and CERN recently supported the creation of SESAME, a research facility in the Middle East, based on MEMO/13/460, which aims to promote peace.

Does the Commission feel that such an initiative will have a positive effect on the EU's relations with the Middle East? If so, does it have any activities planned to promote peace through scientific cooperation?

Does the Commission hope to use scientific cooperation as a means to promote peace in other areas?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

SESAME and its data management project LinkSCEEM-2 ([1]) involve all major actors and countries in the Middle East. The SESAME synchrotron facility is a unique joint venture based in Jordan that brings together scientists from Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Pakistan, the Palestinian Authority and Turkey. Supporting SESAME (the provision of the central magnet system — EUR 5 million from the EU) provides the EU with a unique opportunity to position itself along Unesco in the region as a facilitator providing decisive contributions to the construction of SESAME so as to promote peace through scientific cooperation, and to contribute to the EU Neighbourhood Policy.

The Commission has been promoting peace through scientific cooperation including Research Infrastructure actions in the Southern and Eastern neighbourhood, the western Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia; actions to strengthen science and education (e.g. through supporting the establishment and interlinking of national research and education networks); and major initiatives in Africa such as the AfricaConnect ([2]) and the ERAFRICA ([3]) initiatives.

([1]) http://www.linksceem.eu/ls2/
([2]) http://www.africaconnect.eu/pages/home.aspx
([3]) http://www.erafrica.eu/

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006711/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(11 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Rakkomandazzjonijiet speċifiċi għal kull pajjiż

Reċentement il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat rakkomandazzjonijiet ġenerali għaż-żona tal-euro għall-perjodu bejn l-2013-14, abbażi tas-sitwazzjoni ekonomika tal-Istati Membri, u tat parir speċifiku għall-ixprunar tal-kompetittività ta' kull pajjiż (COM(2013)0379).

Il-Kummissjoni kif qed tippjana li tissorvelja l-progress ta' kull Stat Membru?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Rehn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Il-monitoraġġ tal-progress jinvolvi rappurtar annwali fuq ir-riformi, fil-qafas tas-Semestru tal-UE. Fejn meħtieġ, jiġi kkumplementat mid-disposizzjonijiet tal-Art. 126 u 148 tat-TFUE, kif ukoll mis-Six— u t-Two-pack.

Il-monitoraġġ bl-implimentazzjoni huwa bbażat fuq l-Art. 121 tat-Trattat. Għall-pajjiżi fiż-żona tal-euro, il-valutazzjoni tal-abbozzi tal-pjanijiet baġitarji tagħhom — li ġew introdotti fil-leġiżlazzjoni "Two-pack" — fil-ħarifa se tipprovdi ċ-ċans li jmiss għal ħarsa ġenerali lejn il-progress. Sussegwentement, ir-reviżjonijiet dettaljati skont il-proċedura ta' żbilanċi makroekonomiċi — introdotta fil-leġiżlazzjoni "Six-pack" — se tipprovdi aktar tagħrif dwar l-implimentazzjoni tar-riformi għall-Istati Membri li huma koperti. Ir-reviżjonijiet isiru wkoll fil-livell tekniku fil-kumitati tal-Kunsill matul is-sena biex jiġi evalwat il-progress f'oqsma ta' politika individwali. Fl-aħħar nett, il-Kummissjoni żżomm kuntatti bilaterali mal-Istati Membri sabiex issegwi l-progress fl-implimentazzjoni tar-rakkomandazzjonijiet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006711/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Country-specific recommendations

The Commission recently issued general recommendations for the euro area for the period 2013-14, based on the Member States' economic situation, and gave specific advice for boosting each country's competitiveness (COM(2013)0379).

How does the Commission plan to monitor the progress of each Member State?

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

Monitoring of progress involves annual reporting on reforms in the framework of the EU semester. Where necessary, it is complemented by the provisions of art 126 and 148 TFEU, as well as the Six- and Two-pack.

The monitoring with implementation is based on art 121 of the Treaty. For the euro area countries, the assessment of their draft budgetary plans — which have been introduced in the Two-pack legislation — in autumn will provide the next occasion for an overview of progress. Subsequently the in-depth reviews under the macroeconomic imbalances procedure — introduced in the Six-pack legislation — will provide further information on reform implementation for the Member States which are covered. Reviews also take place at technical level in the Council committees throughout the year to evaluate progress in individual policy areas. Finally, the Commission maintains bilateral contacts with the Member States in view of following progress with the implementation of the recommendations.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006712/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(11 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Strateġija Industrijali Ewropea Ġdida għall-Elettronika

Fit-23 ta' Mejju 2013 il-Kummissjoni ħabbret l-Istrateġija Industrijali Ewropea Ġdida għall-Elettronika tagħha (COM(2013)0298). Għandha l-għan li tixpruna l-kompetittività tal-Ewropa billi tbiddel ir-riċerka biex tirrifletti l-bżonnijiet tal-industrija u ħabbret ħames proġetti kbar.

Il-Kummissjoni kif se tivvaluta t-tibdiliet li se jirriżultaw minn dawn il-ħames proġetti?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(25 ta' Lulju 2013)

L-istrateġija industrijali mnedija mill-Kummissjoni fit-23 ta' Mejju 2013 timmira lejn it-treġġigħ lura tat-tnaqqis tas-sehem tal-UE tal-provvista dinjija ta' komponenti u sistemi elettroniċi. Bħala waħda mill-azzjonijiet ewlenin, il-Kummissjoni se tipproponi Inizjattiva ta' Teknoloġija Konġunta (ITK) f'dan il-qasam. Din l-ITK ġdida se tikkonċentra b'mod speċjali fuq azzjonijiet ta' kapital intensiv bħal linji bi prova jew indikaturi fuq skala kbira. Għall-ITK ġew iddefiniti għadd ta' indikaturi ewlenin tar-rendiment (IER) li se jkunu mmonitorjati regolarment mill-Impriża Konġunta li għandha titwaqqaf biex timplimenta l-ITK. Dawn l-IERs b'mod partikolari jikkonċernaw l-għadd ta' impjiegi ġodda diretti u indotti, l-għadd ta' impjanti ta' fabbrikazzjoni ta' semikondutturi (fabs) avvanzati fl-Ewropa u p.eż. l-aċċess u l-użu mill-atturi li ma jimplimentawx direttament il-linji bi prova/l-indikaturi.

Il-ħames linji bi prova msemmija jikkonċernaw proġetti li seħħu qabel l-istrateġija. Dawn intgħażlu fl-2012 fi ħdan l-Impriża Komuni ENIAC bħala l-ewwel implimentazzjoni tar-rakkomandazzjonijiet mill-Grupp ta' Livell Għoli dwar it-Teknoloġiji Abilitanti Ewlenin ([1]). Dawn il-proġetti huma mmonitorjati kull sena minn grupp ta' esperti indipendenti li jevalwaw il-progress fil-ksib tal-għanijiet u l-implimentazzjoni tal-pjan ta' ħidma tal-Impriża Konġunta.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/files/kets/hlg_report_final_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006712/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: New European Industrial Strategy for Electronics

On 23 May 2013 the Commission announced its New European Industrial Strategy for Electronics (COM(2013)0298). It aims to boost Europe's competitiveness by shifting research to reflect the needs of industry and has announced five major projects.

How is the Commission going to monitor the changes that will result from these five projects?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The industrial strategy launched by the Commission on 23 May 2013 aims at reversing the decline of the EU's share of the world supply of electronic components and systems. As one of the main actions, the Commission will propose a Joint Technology Initiative (JTI) in the area. This new JTI will have a special focus on capital-intensive actions such as pilot lines or large scale demonstrators. For the JTI a number of key performance indicators (KPI) have been defined that will be regularly monitored by the Joint Undertaking that will be set up to implement the JTI. These KPIs in particular concern the number of new direct and induced jobs, the number of state-of-the-art fabs in Europe and e.g. the access and use by actors not directly implementing the pilot lines/demonstrators.

The five pilot lines referred to concern projects that preceded the strategy. They were selected in 2012 within the ENIAC Joint Undertaking as a first implementation of the recommendations from the High-Level Group on Key Enabling Technologies ([1]). These projects are monitored yearly by a group of independent experts who assess the progress towards achieving the objectives and the implementation of the JU's work plan.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/files/kets/hlg_report_final_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006713/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Impact assessment under the Habitats Directive

Could the Commission please provide a full list of all the parties consulted as part of the impact assessment for Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora?

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

The proposal for the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ([1]) was subject to extensive consultations with the Member States ([2]) as well as with the European Parliament ([3]) and the Economic and Social Committee ([4]).

The requirements for impact assessment of EU legislative proposals only came into being after the adoption of this directive, with the first impact assessments being carried out in 2003.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ C 247, 21.9.1988, p. 3 and OJ C 195, 3.8.1990.
([3]) OJ C 75, 20.3.1991.
([4]) OJ C 328, 7.12.1987.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006714/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Driving examiners

What is the Commission doing to consult with driving examiners?

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

The International commission for driver testing authorities (CIECA), which represents the examination authorities of nearly all Member States, is invited as an observer to the meetings of the committee established under Directive 2006/126/EC that meets usually two times a year to discuss and consult arising question. CIECA is also actively participating in the work of the technical working group set up in the framework of the driving licence Directive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006717/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Invasive alien species and the non-native oak processionary moth

Can the Commission please comment on whether its legislative approach, with regard to invasive alien species, mitigates the impact of the non-native oak processionary moth, *Thaumentopea processionea*, which continues to be a danger to human health and to oak trees within the London region? If so, could the Commission please provide a timeline for when its proposals are scheduled to be published?

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

In relation specifically to the oak processionary moth, *Thaumatopoea processionea*, the Commission is considering a legislative proposal for its recognition in Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([1]) as a harmful organism with quarantine status in areas of the EU which are still free of this insect (protected zones). Therefore, the introduction of the oak processionary moth into the protected zones, for example through the movement of infested host plants, would be prohibited. The United Kingdom has informed the Commission that it would like to be granted a protected zone status for the oak processionary moth. Areas in which this insect is present, such as the London region, could not be part of the protected zone, but it would still be necessary to take measures to control the population and contain this insect in such a region, to prevent its spread into the free area/protected zone.

As outlined in the communication on an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ([2]), the Commission is developing a legislative proposal for the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, which is expected to be published in the coming months. This proposal will prioritize action on a selection of invasive species that are alien to Europe. The oak processionary moth being native to Southern Europe would thus not be eligible as a priority invasive alien species under the proposal.

([1]) OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p. 1.
([2]) COM(2011) 244 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006718/13
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: New financial reporting requirements in Spain

It has been brought to my attention that new financial reporting requirements in Spain are causing panic amongst British expatriates. The Foreign Office estimates that up to 800 000 British nationals live in Spain for all or part of the year ([1]).

The Spanish Government has recently brought in new rules requiring that anyone living in Spain for more than six months or 183 days per year, and who has overseas assets of more than EUR 50 000, must declare them. Failures or delays in doing so, as well as simple administrative errors in declaring assets, incur large fines.

The legislation, although applied across Spain, would seem to be discriminatory against foreign residents as they are far more likely to hold overseas assets. As a result, it is expected that large numbers of expatriates will think about leaving Spain.

— Can the Commission tell me whether these new reporting requirements are legal under EC law?

— Does the Commission agree that this new law targets a certain group of people in Spain, namely foreign residents?

— Does the Commission agree with me that these measures seem somewhat unfair given the large economic contribution made by expats across many areas of Spain?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

The Commission has received a significant number of complaints concerning the obligation imposed by the Spanish authorities on persons liable for tax in Spain to declare overseas assets of more than EUR 50 000, in an effort to fight tax evasion.

The complaints received raise questions concerning the Spanish measure's compatibility with EC law, in particular as regards the administrative difficulties faced by those submitting the foreign-assets' declarations, as well as the size of the fines in case of delay, which vary from those relating to domestic investments. It should be noted that the Commission's concerns not only relate to other EU nationals residing in Spain, but also to any Spanish resident who invests in another EU Member State. As further information is required from the Spanish authorities before the Commission can reach a final position, the Commission intends to contact Spain on the matter and will keep the Honourable Member informed about the result of this contact.

([1]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/personalfinance/expat-money/10046400/Expats-feeling-the-pain-in-Spain-should-think-twice-before-fleeing.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006719/13
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Plantes génétiquement modifiées avec gènes empilés

Les États membres de l'Union européenne ont adopté le 25 février 2013 un règlement ayant trait à l'évaluation des risques sanitaires liés à l'utilisation des organismes génétiquement modifiés (OGM). Dans ce règlement, il est indiqué que les plantes génétiquement modifiées ayant plusieurs événements de transformation ne seraient pas évaluées, sauf exception, si les traits individuels ont été préalablement autorisés par la Commission. Une telle position a pour implication logique l'affirmation selon laquelle les gènes des plantes fonctionnent indépendamment les uns des autres.

La Commission peut-elle certifier que, «sauf exception, les gènes des plantes fonctionnent indépendamment les uns des autres»?

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

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse qu'elle a donnée à la question parlementaire P-006393/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006719/13
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: GM plants with stacked genes

On 25 February 2013, Member States adopted a regulation relating to the evaluation of health risks linked to the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). This regulation states that genetically modified plants that have been subjected to several processes would not be evaluated, unless in exceptional circumstances, if the Commission has previously authorised their individual features. This position logically implies that plant genes operate independently of each other.

Can the Commission certify that 'unless in exceptional circumstances, plant genes operate independently of each other'?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Parliamentary Question P-006393/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006720/13
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Financement du processus de paix au Pays Basque

En octobre 2011, la Conférence d'Aiete a établi une feuille de route en cinq points pour mettre un terme au conflit du Pays Basque, dont la deuxième étape invite l'Espagne et la France à prendre part au dialogue. Le même mois, l'organisation ETA a unilatéralement renoncé définitivement à son action armée. En octobre 2012, le peuple basque a apporté son soutien au processus par les urnes. Aujourd'hui, le dialogue avec la France et l'Espagne est cependant au point mort.

En 1995, la Commission a mis en place le programme PEACE en réponse au processus de paix en Irlande du Nord. Ces fonds ont été absolument cruciaux pour l'inclusion sociale et notamment l'aide aux victimes et la réinsertion des prisonniers. Par ce biais, la Commission a positivement accompagné le processus et joué un rôle majeur.

Un appui financier au processus de paix au Pays Basque améliorerait significativement ses chances de réussite.

— La Commission soutient-elle le processus de paix actuellement en cours au Pays Basque?

— La Commission envisage-t-elle de mettre en place un programme PEACE pour le Pays Basque?

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(5 août 2013)

La Commission n'a pas accordé de soutien financier pour le processus auquel l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence dans sa question. Toute disposition relative à un programme en faveur de la paix nécessiterait l'approbation des autorités espagnoles.

Quoi qu'il en soit, les autorités espagnoles ont la possibilité de déterminer la nature et la portée d'éventuelles actions en faveur de la paix qui doivent être soutenues par les Fonds structurels et d'investissement européens, conformément aux priorités et objectifs de l'Union européenne définis pour la prochaine période de programmation, notamment en vertu de l'objectif «investissement pour la croissance et l'emploi» et de l'objectif de coopération territoriale européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006720/13
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Financing of the peace process in the Basque Country

In October 2011, the Aiete Conference drew up a five-point road-map to put an end to the conflict in the Basque Country, the second stage of which invited Spain and France to enter into a dialogue. In the same month, ETA unilaterally renounced its armed struggle for all time. In October 2012, the Basque people showed their support for the process at the ballot box. Today, however, the dialogue between France and Spain has stalled.

In 1995, the Commission set up the PEACE programme in response to the peace process in Northern Ireland. This funding proved crucial for social inclusion, particularly in assisting victims and reintegrating prisoners into society. The Commission therefore supported the programme positively and played a major role.

Financial help for the peace process in the Basque Country would significantly increase its chances of success.

— Does the Commission support the peace process currently under way in the Basque Country?

— Does the Commission intend to set up a PEACE programme for the Basque Country?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The Commission has not granted any financial support for the process the Honourable Member refers to in her query. Any provision of a peace programme would require the agreement of the Spanish authorities.

In any event, the Spanish authorities have the possibility to set the type and scope of potential peace-type actions to be supported with European Structural and Investment Funds, in line with EU priorities and objectives set out for the next programming period, in particular under the Investment for growth and jobs goal as well as under the goal of European Territorial Cooperation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006722/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego no Distrito de Viana do Castelo

Numa recente visita ao distrito de Viana do Castelo, foi-me relatada uma situação dramática em termos de aumento do desemprego. Em 2008, o número oficial de desempregados era de 7 300, tendo aumentado para 16 516 em abril de 2013. Só no último ano houve um aumento de 4 000 desempregados, o que teve um impacto económico e social devastador no distrito.

Assim sendo, pergunto à Comissão:

— Qual é o montante das ajudas com o objetivo de promover o emprego e apoiar as empresas que foi mobilizado para o distrito de Viana do Castelo nos últimos 5 anos?

— Que financiamentos da UE podem ser mobilizados para apoiar os trabalhadores desempregados no distrito e para incentivar o estabelecimento de novas empresas, criando assim postos de trabalho com direitos?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(6 de agosto de 2013)

Uma vez que estes tipos de financiamento da UE são geridos pelas autoridades nacionais, a Comissão sugere que a Senhora Deputada contacte diretamente as autoridades portuguesas responsáveis pelo Fundo Social Europeu ([1]).

O «Pacote do emprego» ([2]), lançado pela Comissão em abril de 2012, enumera todos os fundos e programas da UE que podem ser mobilizados para apoiar trabalhadores desempregados. Entre estes, os fundos da política de coesão são importantes fontes de investimento, que estimulam o crescimento sustentável e o emprego, podendo ser utilizados para apoiar políticas ativas do mercado de trabalho e para financiar mecanismos de apoio às PME, com vista à manutenção e à criação de emprego. Qualquer empresa pode concorrer aos fundos da UE em todo o território português. No que se refere especificamente ao Fundo Social Europeu, está disponível informação pormenorizada em linha ([3]).

([1]) http://www.igfse.pt
([2]) COM(2012) 173 final de 18 de abril de 2012.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=394http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=394

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006722/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Unemployment in the district of Viana do Castelo

On a recent visit to Viana do Castelo, I was told about the dramatic rise in unemployment in the district. The official number of unemployed rose from 7 300 in 2008 to 16 516 in April 2013. In the last year alone the number of unemployed rose by 4 000, and this has wreaked economic and social havoc on the district.

— How much aid intended to boost employment and support companies has been mobilised for Viana do Castelo in the past five years?

— What EU funds can be mobilised to support unemployed workers in the district and to encourage new companies to set up there so that jobs with rights can be created?

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

Since EU funding of this kind is managed via the National Authorities, the Commission suggests that the Honourable member contacts directly the Portuguese Authorities in charge of the European Social Fund ([1]).

The Employment Package ([2]) launched by the Commission in April 2012 lists all the EU funds and programmes that can be mobilised to support unemployed workers. Among those, Cohesion Policy funds are important sources of investment stimulating sustainable growth and employment and can be used to support active labour market policy and to fund SME support mechanisms aiming at maintaining and creating jobs. Any company can apply to EU funds across the national Portuguese territory. Regarding specifically the European Social Fund, detailed information is available on line ([3]).

([1]) http://www.igfse.pt
([2]) COM(2012) 173 final of 18 April 2012.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=394

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006723/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Despedimentos na Empresa Solvay Portugal, em Santa Iria de Azóia, Portugal

A empresa Solvay Portugal, com sede Póvoa de Santa Iria, Portugal, pertencente ao grupo internacional Solvay — considerada a maior empresa química da Bélgica — com representação em vários países, manifestou no passado dia 6 de junho, a intenção de encerrar a sua unidade fabril da Póvoa de Santa Iria e anunciou a sua deslocalização para a bacia do Mediterrâneo, arrastando cerca de 450 trabalhadores para o desemprego.

Segundo a empresa, a Solvay de Póvoa de Santa Iria enfrenta fraquezas estruturais e a sua rendibilidade tem de ser analisada no contexto europeu, pois é a mais pequena unidade de produção de carbonato de sódio na Europa, o que a torna ainda mais vulnerável à concorrência do carbonato low-cost turco. O seu custo de produção é mais elevado do que em Torrelavega e Devnya, as maiores e mais competitivas unidades europeias da Solvay. Argumenta ainda com o previsível aumento dos custos energéticos. A deslocalização para a bacia do Mediterrâneo deve-se ao facto de os regulamentos ambientais serem menos exigentes.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação? Que avaliação faz da mesma?

2. A referida empresa recebeu quaisquer apoios comunitários?

3. Se sim, com que fins foram concedidos e que compromissos assumiu aquando da concessão dos apoios? Considera que, a existirem compromissos, estes estão a ser postos em causa pela administração da empresa?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de quaisquer planos de deslocalização da Solvay Portugal. Além disso, a Comissão gostaria de sublinhar que não tem competência para intervir em decisões específicas das empresas. No entanto, a Comissão insta as empresas a adotar boas práticas relacionadas com a antecipação e a gestão socialmente responsável da reestruturação. Na sequência do seu Livro Verde de janeiro de 2012 ([1]) e da aprovação pelo Parlamento Europeu em 15 de janeiro de 2013, de uma resolução sobre informação e consulta dos trabalhadores, antecipação e gestão da reestruturação ([2]), a Comissão irá propor uma Comunicação relativa a um quadro de qualidade que vai enquadrar a legislação da UE e as iniciativas comunitárias relevantes para a reestruturação e que apresentará as melhores práticas a serem implementadas por todas as partes interessadas.

De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a empresa Solvay Portugal recebeu um apoio financeiro no valor total de 10 797 810 euros do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) nos períodos de programação de 1989-1993, 1994-1999 e 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.

No que diz respeito ao Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) e ainda de acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a empresa Solvay Portugal recebeu um apoio financeiro no valor total de 4,5 milhões de euros nos períodos de programação de 1989-1993, 1994-1999 e 2000-2006.

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

([2]) Resolução do Parlamento Europeu, de 15 de janeiro de 2013, em matéria de informação e consulta dos trabalhadores, antecipação e a gestão da reestruturação:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0005+0+DOC+XML+V0//PT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006723/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Redundancies at Solvay Portugal in Santa Iria de Azóia, Portugal

The company Solvay Portugal, with headquarters Póvoa de Santa Iria, Portugal, belongs to the Solvay international group, considered to be the largest chemicals company in Belgium, with operations in several countries. On 6 June, Solvay Portugal stated that it intends to close its Póvoa de Santa Iria plant and announced that it is relocating to the Mediterranean basin, making around 450 workers redundant.

According to Solvay, its Póvoa de Santa Iria operation has been hindered by structural weaknesses and its profitability has had to be assessed in the context of Europe: as the smallest sodium-carbonate production plant in Europe, it is more vulnerable to competition from low-cost Turkish carbonates. Its production costs are higher than those of Torrelavega and Devnya, Solvay's largest and most competitive European plants. The company also cited expected rises in energy costs as a factor. The decision to relocate to the Mediterranean basin is driven by the region's less stringent environmental regulations.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation? What is its view of it?

2. Has the company received any Community aid?

3. If so, what was it granted for and what commitments were undertaken at the time? If any commitments were made, does the Commission believe that they are at risk of being undermined by the company management?

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

The Commission is not aware of any relocation plans of Solvay Portugal. The Commission also would like to point out that it has no power to interfere in specific companies' decisions. It urges them, however, 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 a resolution on Information and consultation of workers ([2]), anticipation and management of restructuring, 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.

According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, Solvay Portugal Company has received a total financial support amounting to EUR 10 797 81 from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the programming periods 1989-93, 1994-99 and 2000-06. The operations selected for funding aimed to enhance the employees' potential and complied with EU and national rules throughout the implementation period.

As regards the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and still according to information received from the Portuguese authorities, Solvay Portugal Company has received a total financial support amounting to EUR 4.5 million in the programming periods 1989-93, 1994-99 and 2000-06.

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
([2]) EP Resolution of 15 January 2013 on Information and consultation of workers, anticipation and management of restructuring, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0005+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006724/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Situação da fábrica Rodman — projeto de unidade em Valença

A fábrica espanhola de barcos de recreio Rodman prometeu investir 10,5 milhões de euros na região de Viana do Castelo, mas nunca chegou a abrir a prometida unidade em Valença, tendo apenas contratado 60 trabalhadores que nunca passaram da fase de formação. Alegadamente terá lesado o Estado português em 400 mil euros.

Assim sendo, pergunto à Comissão:

— A empresa espanhola Rodman alguma vez recebeu fundos da UE? Em caso afirmativo, em que países, em que circunstâncias e com que condições?

— De que informações dispõe sobre o processo de abertura de uma unidade fabril da Rodman em Valença?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(29 de julho de 2013)

1. De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a empresa Rodman recebeu um apoio financeiro no valor total de 40 153,07 euros do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) no período de programação de 2000-2006. Este montante foi reembolsado com juros às autoridades portuguesas devido ao facto de a empresa ter cessado a maioria das suas atividades e despedido a maioria dos trabalhadores. As autoridades portuguesas informaram ainda a Comissão de que a empresa Rodman não solicitou qualquer financiamento ao FSE no atual período de programação.

2. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de quaisquer planos de abertura de uma fábrica da Rodman em Valença.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006724/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: The situation of the manufacturer Rodman — planned unit in Valença

The Spanish leisure-boat manufacturer Rodman promised to invest EUR 10.5 million in the region of Viana do Castelo. However, the promised unit never opened in Valença and the 60 workers who were hired never passed the training stage. This has allegedly cost the Portuguese state EUR 400 000.

— Has Rodman ever received funding from the EU? If so, in what countries, under what circumstances and on what conditions?

— What information does the Commission have on the opening of a Rodman plant in Valença?

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

1. According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, the Rodman company has received a total financial support amounting to EUR 40.153,07 from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the programming period 2000-2006. This amount was reimbursed to the Portuguese authorities, including interest, due to the fact that the company ceased most of its activity and made redundant the majority of employees. The Portuguese authorities also informed the Commission that the Rodman Company has not applied for any funding from the ESF in the current programming period.

2. The Commission is not aware of any plans on the opening of a Rodman plant in Valença.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006725/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Resposta à Pergunta E-001809/2013

Na resposta à Pergunta E-001809/2013, o Comissário Olli Rehn considera que o Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal tem sido muito bem-sucedido na realização nos objetivos traçados, uma vez que o «saldo orçamental diminuiu para metade, de cerca de 10 % para menos de 6 % do PIB» e o «défice da balança de transações correntes desceu de cerca de 10 % para menos de 2 % do PIB», considerando ainda que o programa contém «medidas específicas que protegem os grupos mais vulneráveis da sociedade».

Relativamente ao défice, sabemos que se situa acima dos 6 % do PIB, o que quer dizer que um dos objetivos não foi cumprido; quanto à descida do défice da balança de transações, ela deve-se ao drástico abaixamento das importações devido à quebra do poder de compra dos portugueses.

Relativamente às medidas que protegem os grupos mais vulneráveis, não as conhecemos. Constatamos, ao invés, que o salário mínimo nacional é de 485,00 euros, não tendo sido aumentado desde 2011; a indemnização por despedimento sofreu uma brutal redução e que a redução acumulada do poder de compra dos salários entre 2009 e 2013 foi de 12 %.

De acordo com o Banco de Portugal, a projeção para a economia portuguesa aponta para uma contração da atividade económica de 2,3 % em 2013. Esta contração tem subjacente uma forte quebra da procura interna. Por outro lado, de acordo com o Eurostat, a taxa de desemprego em Portugal situava-se, em abril, nos 17,8 %.

Perante este quadro, pergunto à Comissão:

— Mantém a avaliação feita relativamente ao Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal?

— Em sua opinião, a que se deve o aumento do desemprego e da pobreza verificados em Portugal?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(2 de agosto de 2013)

Ao avaliar o ajustamento orçamental, a medida que os economistas preferem analisar não é o saldo nominal mas o saldo estrutural (ou seja, o saldo líquido de medidas pontuais e o impacto do ciclo no orçamento). O saldo estrutural em Portugal melhorou, de -8,8 % do PIB em 2010 prazo de Portugal, tal como confirmado pelo Conselho, é um saldo estrutural de -0,5 % do PIB, Portugal já atingiu quase dois terços do ajustamento estrutural necessário ([1]).

Quanto à melhoria do saldo das contas externas, é de notar que entre 2010 e 2013 se estima um aumento de 11,2 % das exportações portuguesas a preços constantes, enquanto as importações diminuíram 16,5 % durante o mesmo período. Isto demonstra que o papel das exportações na melhoria da balança de transações correntes tem sido muito importante, sobretudo tendo em conta que isto ocorreu num contexto de contração da procura externa por parte dos parceiros comerciais europeus.

Como já foi assinalado à Senhora Deputada, o aumento do desemprego em Portugal é um fenómeno a longo prazo causado por uma fragilidade fundamental da economia para gerar crescimento e emprego. Para alterar esta situação, são necessárias reformas estruturais como as que estão atualmente em curso no quadro do programa de ajustamento económico. Pela sua natureza, essas políticas só gradualmente revelam o seu impacto positivo, tanto mais que alguns fatores de rigidez nominal e real na economia portuguesa continuam a entravar uma rápida transferência de recursos do setor em contração dos bens não transacionáveis para o setor mais dinâmico dos bens transacionáveis A curto prazo, foram criados diversos programas ativos do mercado de trabalho, como «Impulso Jovem» ou «Estímulo» para ajudar a evitar que o desemprego se torne endémico.

([1]) 5,2 pontos percentuais de 8,3 pontos percentuais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006725/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Answer to Question E-001809/2013

In the answer to Question E-001809/2013, Commissioner Olli Rehn states that the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal has been successful in achieving the set objectives, since 'the government balance has halved from close to 10% to below 6% of GDP' and 'the current account deficit has declined from some 10% to less than 2% of GDP'. Commissioner Rehn also states that 'specific measures of the programme protect the more vulnerable groups of the society'.

The deficit is known to be higher than 6% of GDP, which means that one of the objectives has not been met, and the decline in the current account deficit is due to a drastic fall in imports caused by a drop in Portuguese purchasing power.

No measures for protecting more vulnerable groups are known to exist. On the contrary, the national minimum wage is EUR 485 and has not risen since 2011. Redundancy payments have been drastically cut and the purchasing power of wages suffered a cumulative drop of 12% between 2009 and 2013.

The Bank of Portugal forecasts that economic activity will contract by 2.3% in 2013. Underlying this contraction is a marked drop in domestic demand. Moreover, Eurostat has stated that the unemployment rate in Portugal stood at 17.8% in April.

— In view of this situation, does the Commission stand by its assessment of the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal?

— In its opinion, what has caused poverty and unemployment to rise in Portugal?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

When assessing budgetary adjustment, the measure which economists prefer to look at is not the nominal balance but the structural balance (i.e. the balance net of one-off measures and the impact of the cycle on the budget). The structural balance in Portugal has improved from -8.8% of GDP in 2010 to an estimated -3.6% of GDP in 2013. Given that the budgetary Medium-Term Objective of Portugal as confirmed by the Council is a structural balance of -0.5% of GDP, Portugal has already achieved close to two thirds of the necessary structural adjustment ([1]).

As to the improvement of the external balance, it should be noted that between 2010 and 2013 Portuguese exports at constant prices are estimated to have risen by 11.2% while imports have fallen by 16.5% over the same period. This shows that the role of exports in improving the current account has been very important, especially taking into account that this occurred against depressed external demand from European trading partners.

As it has already been pointed out to the Honourable Member, the rise in unemployment in Portugal is a long-term phenomenon caused by a fundamental weakness of the economy to generate growth and employment. In order to change this, structural reforms as currently undertaken in the framework of the Economic Adjustment Programme are necessary. By their nature such policies show their positive impact only gradually, the more so as nominal and real rigidities in the Portuguese economy continue to hamper a fast transfer of resources from the shrinking non-tradable to the more dynamic tradable sector. In the short term, various Active Labour Market Programmes such as 'Impulso Jovem' or 'Estímulo' have been established to help prevent unemployment from becoming entrenched.

([1]) 5.2 percentage points out of 8.3 percentage points.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-006728/13
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(11 juni 2013)

Betreft: Vermeende ontmoetingen tussen de voorzitter van de Commissie en de tabakindustrie in Portugal

1. Hebben in februari of maart 2012 in Lissabon ontmoetingen plaatsgevonden tussen de voorzitter van de Commissire en de tabakindustrie?

2. Hebben er ontmoetingen plaatsgevonden op andere data?

3. Zo ja, wat was het doel van deze ontmoetingen? Wat was de uitkomst? Zijn er notulen gemaakt?

4. Wie nam aan deze ontmoetingen deel?

5. Wie heeft de ontmoetingen georganiseerd?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(15 juli 2013)

1. Het antwoord op deze vraag is neen. Dergelijke ontmoetingen hebben niet plaatsgevonden.

2. Neen.

3.-5. Niet van toepassing (zie het antwoord op de vragen 1 en 2).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006728/13
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Possible meetings between the Commission President and the tobacco industry in Portugal

1. Were there meetings between the Commission President and the tobacco industry in Lisbon in February or March 2012?

2. Were there meetings on other dates?

3. If so, what was the purpose of the meetings? What was the outcome? Were minutes taken?

4. Who took part in the meetings?

5. Who organised the meetings?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

1. The answer to this question is no. No such meetings took place.

2. No.

3-5. Obsolete (see replies to questions 1 and 2)

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006729/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(11 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: En defensa de la libertad de expresión y de comunicación

Muchos medios de comunicación europeos se han hecho eco de las denuncias que empiezan a aparecer contra el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos por el programa «PRISM». Como se ha difundido, mediante ese sistema, la Agencia nacional estadounidense recibe, a través de conocidas empresas que prestan servicios de acceso o facilitan contenidos en Internet, información privada de los usuarios con independencia del país en que se encuentren.

1. ¿Tiene intención la Comisión iniciar alguna investigación para comprobar si las empresas de servicios de Internet, domiciliadas en algún Estado miembro de la Unión, han facilitado información privada —datos o comunicaciones personales—, lo que podría conculcar la normativa europea sobre protección de datos y afectar gravemente al desenvolvimiento de las libertades fundamentales de expresión y comunicación?

2. ¿No considera esa Comisión que pueden padecer las libertades de expresión y comunicación de los ciudadanos europeos si se consolida una especie de panóptico en Internet?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de agosto de 2013)

1. La Comisión Europea está preocupada por los recientes informes de los medios de comunicación en el sentido de que las autoridades de los Estados Unidos acceden y tratan a gran escala los datos de los europeos que utilizan los servicios de los grandes proveedores estadounidenses de Internet. Programas como PRISM y las leyes que los autorizan podrían tener consecuencias negativas en los derechos fundamentales. La Comisión ha pedido aclaraciones a sus homólogos estadounidenses en lo que respecta a los problemas planteados por los informes de los medios de comunicación, en particular en lo referido a la repercusión de los programas de vigilancia en las vidas de los ciudadanos europeos. Sin perjuicio de los poderes de la Comisión como guardiana de los Tratados, la supervisión y el control de la observancia de la legislación sobre la protección de datos es competencia de las autoridades nacionales y, más concretamente, de las autoridades de supervisión responsables de la protección de datos. La Comisión no tiene competencias para supervisar el cumplimiento de la ley por parte de los responsables del tratamiento de datos, ni para investigar posibles casos de incumplimiento, ni para imponer sanciones.

2. La Comisión subraya que el derecho a la libertad de expresión y de información constituye uno de los pilares fundamentales de la Unión Europea y que lo consagra el artículo 11 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea. Al aplicar el Derecho de la Unión, como las disposiciones de la Directiva 95/46/CE, relativa a la protección de los datos personales, los Estados miembros están obligados a respetar los derechos y principios consagrados en la Carta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006729/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Defending freedom of expression and communication

Emerging complaints against the US Government's PRISM program have been widely reported in the European media. As has been well documented, the National Security Agency, through well-known Internet service providers and online content providers, uses this system to obtain users' private information, regardless of which country they are in.

1. Does the Commission intend to launch an investigation into whether Internet service providers, domiciled in any EU Member State, have supplied private information — personal data or communications — which could violate EU data protection rules and seriously affect the fundamental freedoms of expression and communication?

2. Does it not believe that EU citizens' freedom of expression and communication may suffer should a kind of Internet panopticon be established?

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

1. The European Commission is concerned regarding the recent media reports that United States authorities are accessing and processing, on a large scale, the data of Europeans using major US online service providers. Programmes such as PRISM and the laws on the basis of which they are authorised could have adverse consequences for fundamental rights. The Commission has requested clarifications from US counterparts regarding the issues raised by the reports in the media, in particular regarding the impact of surveillance programmes on Europeans. Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, the supervision and enforcement of data protection legislation falls under the competence of national authorities, in particular data protection supervisory authorities. The Commission has no competence to monitor the compliance of data controllers, investigate possible cases of non-compliance, or to impose penalties.

2. The Commission underlines that the right to freedom of expression and information constitutes one of the essential foundations of the European Union, enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. When implementing Union law, such as the provisions in Directive 95/46/EC concerning the protection of personal data, Member States are bound to respect the rights and principles enshrined in the Charter.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006730/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Inclusión de las tradiciones populares de los Estados miembros en la Lista del Patrimonio Mundial

En su informe sobre «Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo», el Parlamento Europeo solicita, en su apartado 10, a la Comisión Europea que apoye la inclusión en la Lista del Patrimonio Mundial de las tradiciones de los Estados miembros con el fin de preservarlas para futuras generaciones.

¿Apoya la Comisión la petición del Parlamento Europeo respecto a la inclusión de dichas tradiciones en la Lista del Patrimonio Mundial?

En tal caso, ¿qué estrategia quiere adoptar la Comisión para promocionar estas tradiciones populares de los Estados miembros a nivel europeo e internacional?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión comparte el punto de vista de Su Señoría de que la protección del patrimonio cultural, incluido el patrimonio cultural inmaterial como en el caso de las tradiciones populares de los Estados miembros, es de gran importancia para nuestras sociedades. Por consiguiente, la Comisión alienta y apoya activamente las actividades de protección del patrimonio cultural en el marco de sus diferentes programas y políticas. Por ejemplo, en 2012, en el marco del Programa Cultura, la Comisión financió 74 proyectos (de un total de 338) en el ámbito del patrimonio cultural, tanto material como inmaterial.

Sin embargo, la Unión Europea tiene unas competencias limitadas en este ámbito. Según el artículo 167 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, «la acción de la Unión favorecerá la cooperación entre Estados miembros y, si fuere necesario, apoyará y completará la acción de estos» en el ámbito de la cultura. Por consiguiente, los nombramientos para la Lista Representativa del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad, o para la Lista del Patrimonio Mundial, son en primera instancia responsabilidad nacional.

Además, la Comisión desearía señalar a Su Señoría que la Unión Europea no es parte ni de la Convención sobre la Protección del Patrimonio Mundial de la Unesco (1972) ni de la Convención para la Salvaguardia del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial (2003). Por tanto, los procedimientos de presentación de candidaturas en el marco de estas convenciones no entran dentro de las competencias de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006730/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Inclusion of Member States' popular traditions on the World Heritage List

In paragraph 10 of its report on 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination', Parliament calls on the Commission to support the inclusion on the World Heritage List of popular traditions within the Member States, with a view to preserving them for future generations.

Does the Commission support Parliament's request regarding these traditions' inclusion on the World Heritage List?

If so, what strategy will it adopt to promote Member States' popular traditions at EU and international level?

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

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's view that the protection of cultural heritage, including intangible cultural heritage such as Member States' popular traditions, is of high importance for our societies. Therefore, the Commission actively encourages and supports cultural heritage activities within the framework of its different programmes and policies. For example, in 2012, in the framework of its Culture Programme, the Commission has financed 74 projects (out of a total of 338) in the field of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

However, the European Union has limited competences in this field. According to Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Union should be 'encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action' in the field of culture. Therefore, the issue of nominations for the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, or for the World Heritage List, is primarily a national responsibility.

Furthermore the Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the European Union is not a party to either the Unesco World Heritage Convention (1972) or the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003). The bidding processes under these Conventions are not therefore a matter of EU competence.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006731/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Objetivo 75 % empleo en la Estrategia 2020

La Estrategia de Discapacidad 2010-2020, como parte de la Estrategia 2020, tiene entre sus principales objetivos dar un impulso a la Europa social y establecer un crecimiento integrador, fomentando una economía con alto nivel de empleo que favorezca la cohesión social y territorial.

La Estrategia de Discapacidad busca potenciar el empleo, y la educación y formación. Entre los diferentes datos que aporta la Estrategia se observa que sólo un 63 % de las personas con discapacidades graves tiene acceso a la educación, en comparación con un 83 % de las personas sin discapacidad. Los índices de paro entre ellos se duplican en comparación con la media comunitaria: trabaja el 46 % de discapacitados moderados y sólo el 24 % de los severos.

Considerando el artículo 15 de la Carta Europea de Derechos Fundamentales;

Considerando el artículo 27 de la Convención de Naciones Unidas de las personas con discapacidad;

¿Qué medidas, a la luz de la Estrategia de Discapacidad, piensa tomar la Comisión para favorecer que los discapacitados que pueden y quieren trabajar se inserten en el mercado laboral, y de esta manera contribuir al objetivo de 75 % de empleo promulgado por la Estrategia 2020?

Teniendo en cuenta las estadísticas de desempleo entre las mujeres con discapacidad, así como las estadísticas de desempleo juvenil en general y el hecho de que muchas discapacidades son de naturaleza crónica y/o degenerativa, ¿tiene previsto la Comisión algún tipo de medidas específicas para favorecer el acceso al mercado laboral en especial de las mujeres y los jóvenes con discapacidad?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de julio de 2013)

En la lista de acciones (2010-2015) adjunta a la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad, la Comisión ha incluido una serie de medidas destinadas a facilitar el empleo de las personas con discapacidad ([1]). En particular, al aplicar la Estrategia Europa 2020 por medio del semestre europeo de coordinación de las políticas económicas, la Comisión hace especial hincapié en la integración de las personas más alejadas del mercado laboral. A este respecto, varias recomendaciones específicas por país (REP) dirigidas a los Estados miembros abordan la situación del empleo, incluidas tres REP centradas en las personas con discapacidad en los años 2012 y 2013.

En lo que se refiere a las medidas dirigidas específicamente a los jóvenes, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-004457/2013.

En cuanto a las medidas destinadas específicamente a las mujeres, la Comisión observa que la dimensión de género se integra en todas las acciones de la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad, mientras que la Estrategia de la UE para la igualdad entre mujeres y hombres 2010-2015, al abordar, por ejemplo, la igualdad en la independencia económica, menciona explícitamente a las mujeres con discapacidad.

([1]) Plan inicial para aplicar la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 — Lista de acciones 2010-2015, COM(2010) 636 final — SEC(2010) 1323 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006731/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: 75% employment target in 2020 strategy

One of the main objectives of the Disability Strategy 2010-2020, which forms part of the 2020 strategy, is to boost social Europe and to establish inclusive growth, promoting a high-employment economy that fosters social and territorial cohesion.

The Disability Strategy aims to promote employment, education and training. The strategy provides various data including the fact that only 63% of severely disabled people have access to education, compared with 83% of people without a disability. Unemployment rates among them are double the EU average: 46% of people with moderate disabilities work compared with only 24% of severely disabled people.

Given Article 15 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;

Given Article 27 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

What steps, in the light of the Disability Strategy, will the Commission take to enable disabled persons who can and want to work to enter the labour market, and therefore contribute to the 75% employment target established by the 2020 strategy?

Bearing in mind the unemployment statistics among disabled women, as well as youth employment statistics in general and the fact that many disabilities are chronic and/or degenerative, will the Commission take any specific steps to help women and young people with disabilities in particular to enter the labour market?

Answer given by Ms Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

In the list of actions (2010-2015) that accompanies the European Disability Strategy, the Commission has included a number of measures that aim to facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities ([1]). Notably, in implementing the Europe 2020 strategy by means of the European Semester of economic policy coordination, the Commission puts considerable emphasis on inclusion of those furthest from the labour market. In this context, a number of Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) to Member States address the employment situation, including three CSRs focusing on persons with disabilities in both 2012 and 2013.

Regarding the measures addressed specifically at young people, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-004457/2013.

Regarding the measures addressed specifically at women, the Commission notes that the gender dimension is 'mainstreamed' into all actions of the European Disability Strategy, while the EU Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015, when addressing for instance equal economic independence, expressly mentions women with disabilities.

([1]) Initial plan to implement the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 List of Actions 2010-2015: COM(2010) 636 final — SEC(2010) 1323 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006732/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Discriminación injustificada de algunas aerolíneas a las personas con movilidad reducida

Considerando que, por regla general, uno de cada seis ciudadanos europeos sufre alguna discapacidad y que la tendencia general al envejecimiento de la población europea acarreará un aumento constante de pasajeros con necesidades de asistencia específicas relacionadas con una discapacidad o con una movilidad reducida;

Considerando la Estrategia de Discapacidad 2012-202 como parte de la Estrategia 2020, que busca potenciar el empleo y la educación y formación de las personas con discapacidad, y que esta iniciativa estará íntima y transversalmente ligada a otros esfuerzos a nivel europeo para fomentar la movilidad profesional y educativa, el turismo, y de otro tipo;

Considerando asimismo el Informe de la Comisión al Parlamento Europeo y al Consejo sobre el funcionamiento y los efectos del Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 5 de julio de 2006, sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad o movilidad reducida en el transporte aéreo y los ejes de mejora propuestos en la conclusión del mismo, en especial el primero de ellos, relativo a la redacción de unas directrices de interpretación uniforme del Reglamento por un grupo de expertos y con la ayuda de la Agencia Europea de Seguridad Aérea (AESA), así como a la adopción de las medidas necesarias para la elaboración y publicación de una lista unificada y común a todos los Estados miembros de las razones que pueden servir de base para denegar el transporte de una PMR o para imponer la obligación de efectuar el vuelo con un acompañante; y el tercero de ellos, que hace referencia a la supervisión y la eficacia de los regímenes sancionadores por parte de los organismos nacionales;

1. ¿Qué medidas tiene pensado adoptar la Comisión para evitar la discriminación injustificada por parte de algunas aerolíneas que alegan falsos motivos de seguridad a las personas con movilidad reducida que quieren viajar sin tener que depender de una tercera persona o que no pueden permitirse abonar un segundo billete de avión para la misma?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión la creación de una comisión mixta de expertos en materia de discapacidad, médicos y profesionales de la Agencia Europea de Seguridad Aérea (AESA) para realizar y publicar una lista unificada y común a todos los Estados miembros de las razones que puedan servir de base para denegar el transporte de una PMR o para imponer la obligación de efectuar el vuelo con un acompañante?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de julio de 2013)

1. De conformidad con el artículo 4, apartado 2, del Reglamento n° 1107/2006 junto con el apartado 1, letra a), del mismo Reglamento, si una compañía aérea alega motivos de seguridad para exigir que una persona con discapacidad o movilidad reducida vaya acompañada, la persona interesada solamente puede apoyarse en los requisitos establecidos por la normativa internacional, de la UE o nacional, o bien en los establecidos por la autoridad que haya expedido el certificado de operador a esa compañía aérea. Además, a pesar de que el Reglamento no lo imponga, sería aconsejable que las compañías aéreas adoptasen una política generosa de descuentos para los acompañantes ([1]).

Habida cuenta de que los Estados miembros son responsables de la aplicación del Reglamento, las personas con discapacidad o movilidad reducida que consideren no haber visto respetados sus derechos deben presentar la reclamación correspondiente a los organismos nacionales de ejecución.

2. La Comisión mantiene contactos periódicos con la EASA, las autoridades nacionales y las organizaciones de personas discapacitadas para examinar las mejores prácticas y mejorar las condiciones de viaje de los pasajeros aéreos con discapacidad o movilidad reducida. En caso de que se estime conveniente tomar nuevas medidas, la Comisión tomará las iniciativas necesarias.

([1]) Véase asimismo el documento de trabajo de la Comisión relativo al Reglamento n° 1107/2006 (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/prm/2012-06-11-swd-2012-171_en.pdf), artículo 4, Q5, sub b).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006732/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Some airlines unjustifiably discriminate against persons with reduced mobility

Given that, as a general rule, one in six EU citizens has some sort of disability and that the ageing European population will lead to a steady increase in the number of passengers requiring special assistance related to a disability or to reduced mobility;

Given that the Disability Strategy 2010-2020, which forms part of the 2020 strategy, aims to promote employment, education and training for people with disabilities, and that this cross-cutting initiative will be closely linked to other EU-wide efforts to promote professional, educational, tourist and other types of mobility;

Given the report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the functioning and effects of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air and the axes of improvement proposed in its conclusion, in particular the first axis on the drafting of guidelines for a uniform interpretation of the regulation by a group of experts in concertation with the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), and on the adoption of the measures needed to draw up and publish a consolidated list common to all Member States of the reasons that can serve as a basis for refusing to transport PRMs or for requiring the presence of an accompanying person; and the third axis, which refers to the efficacy of the penalties and their supervision by national authorities;

1. What measures will the Commission adopt to prevent some airlines, which cite phony safety concerns, from unjustifiably discriminating against persons with reduced mobility who wish to travel without having to rely on a third party or who cannot afford to purchase a second plane ticket for them?

2. Will it consider creating a joint committee of disability experts, doctors and EASA professionals to draw up and publish a consolidated list common to all Member States of the reasons that can serve as a basis for refusing to transport PRMs or for requiring the presence of an accompanying person?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 2013)

1. According to Article 4(2) of Regulation 1107/2006 ([1]) in combination with paragraph 1(a) of the same Article, if a carrier invokes safety reasons in order to ask for a disabled person or a person with reduced mobility (PRM) to be accompanied, he can only rely on requirements established by international, EU or national law or established by the authority that issued the operator's certificate to that air carrier. Furthermore, although there is no obligation to do so under the regulation, it would appear advisable for air carriers to adopt a generous policy as regards discounts for accompanying persons ([2]).

As Member States are in charge of the enforcement of the regulation, disabled or PRMs' passengers who believe that their rights under the regulation have not been respected should complain to national enforcement bodies.

2. The Commission is in regular contact with EASA, national authorities and disabled persons organisations to discuss best practices and thus to improve the travel experience of disabled and PRM air passengers. In case further steps appear appropriate to it, the Commission will take the necessary initiatives.

([1]) OJ L 204, 26.7.2006.
([2]) Cf. also the Commission Staff Working Document regarding Regulation No 1107/2006 (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/prm/2012-06-11-swd-2012-171_en.pdf), ad Article 4, Q5, sub b).

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006733/13
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(11. kesäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Elintarvikkeita koskevista ravitsemus- ja terveysväitteistä annetun asetuksen 19 artiklan soveltaminen

Elintarvikkeita koskevista ravitsemus- ja terveysväitteistä annetun asetuksen (EC) N:o 1924/2006 14 artiklan 1 kohdan a alakohdan nojalla on tähän mennessä hyväksytty kolme sairauden riskin vähentämistä koskevaa väitettä, jotka liittyvät kolesterolin vähentämiseen ja kasvistanoliestereihin ja/tai kasvisteroleihin (vapaina tai esteröityneinä): (i) väite kasvisteroleista, vapaina tai esteröityneinä, (ii) väite kasvistanoliestereistä ja (iii) väite kasvisteroleista/kasvistanoliesteristä.

Marraskuussa 2011 yksi terveysväitteiden (i) haltijoista esitti asetuksen 19 artiklan nojalla hakemuksen, jossa pyydetään muuttamaan kolmea olemassa olevaa terveysväitettä siten, että kasvistanolit ja -sterolit sekä vapaina että esteröityinä ryhmitetään yhteen.

Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomainen (EFSA) antoi 26. huhtikuuta 2012 hakemuksesta myönteisen lausunnon. Lausunto aiheutti huolestumista teollisuudessa muun muassa siksi, että kasvisterolien (esterit) ja kasvistanolien (esterit) ryhmittämiselle yhteen ei ole esitetty tieteellisiä perusteita. Tämän lisäksi näytti siltä, että hakemusta ei voida ottaa käsiteltäväksi asetuksen (EY) N:o 1924/2006 19 artiklan nojalla, koska kahta kyseisistä terveysväitteistä ei alun perin hakenut tämä hakija, joka ei myöskään ole kasvistanoliesteriä koskevan terveysväitteen käyttäjä.

1. Katsooko komissio, että hakemuksen (Q-2011–01241) esittäjällä on oikeus hakea muutosta kolmeen 14 artiklan mukaisesti hyväksyttyyn terveysväitteeseen vai ainoastaan omaan terveysväitteeseensä? Katsooko komissio erityisesti, että hakijalla on oikeus hakea muutosta hyväksyttyyn kasvistanoliesteriä koskevaan terveysväitteeseen?

2. Katsooko komissio, että kasvistanolien ja -sterolien (vapaina ja esteröityinä) ryhmittäminen yhteen on perusteltua, kun otetaan huomioon, että kasvisterolien ja kasvisteroliesterien ominaisuuksista ei ole tarkkoja tieteellisiä arvioita? Tähän mennessä kasvisteroleita ja kasvisteroliestereitä ei ole arvioitu erikseen, vaan aina yhdessä kasvistanolien ja kasvistanoliesterien kanssa. Kasvistanoliestereitä on arvioitu erikseen hakemuksessa Q-2008–118 ja myöhemmin hakemuksessa Q-2011–00851, joka on vireillä ([1]).

3. Katsooko komissio, että EFSA:n lausunto Q-2011–01241 on asetuksen (EC) N:o 1924/2006 periaatteiden mukainen?

4. Milloin komissio aikoo päättää vahvistaa kannan muutosta koskevaan hakemukseen (Q-2011–01241)?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(25. heinäkuuta 2013)

Komissio on edelleen arvioimassa arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen mainitsemia asiakirjoja. Tämän vuoksi tässä vaiheessa ei voida ennakoida, millainen päätös kasvisteroleita/kasvistanoleja koskevien väitteiden käytön edellytysten muuttamisesta tullaan tekemään.

Joka tapauksessa on kuitenkin syytä tuoda esiin, että arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen mainitsema hakemus (Q-2011-01241) ([2]) toimitettiin Yhdistyneen kuningaskunnan toimivaltaisen viranomaisen välityksellä Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomaiselle EFSAlle marraskuussa 2011 asetuksen (EY) N:o 1924/2006 ([3]) 19 artiklan nojalla. Asetuksen (EY) N:o 353/2008 ([4]) mukaan jäsenvaltioiden vastuulla on todentaa hakemusten paikkansapitävyys ennen niiden toimittamista EFSAlle.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2692.pdf
([2]) EFSA Journal 2012; 10(5):2693.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:FI:PDF
([4]) EUVL L 109, 19.4.2008, s. 11-16.

Mitä tulee EFSAn tekemään arviointiin, EFSA totesi lausunnossaan (Q-2011–01241), että kasvisteroleilla ja kasvistanoliestereillä on sterolien/stanolien päiväsaannin ollessa 1,5-3,0 grammaa asetuksella (EY) N:o 376/2010 hyväksytyissä elintarvikkeissa (rasvalevitteet, maitotuotteet, majoneesi ja salaatinkastikkeet) samanlainen teho veren LDL-kolesterolin vähentämisessä. EFSA on omaksunut samanlaisen lähestymistavan aiemminkin, kuten ilmenee lausunnosta (Q-2009–00530 ja Q-2009–00718), jossa se totesi, että kasvisterolien ja kasvistanolien LDL-kolesterolia vähentävä teho on samanlainen.

Komissio pyrkii kaikin keinoin tekemään lopullisen päätöksen mahdollisimman pian.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006733/13
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Application of Article 19 of the regulation on nutrition and health claims

Under Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods, there are currently three reduction of disease risk claims authorised under Article 14(1)(a) relating to cholesterol reduction and plant stanol esters and/or plant sterols (in free or esterified form): (i) a claim on plant sterols, in free or esterified form; (ii) a claim on plant stanol esters; and (iii) a claim on plant sterols/plant stanol esters.

In November 2011, under Article 19 of the regulation, an application (Q-2011-01241) by one of the claim holders (i) was submitted with a view to modifying the three existing claims, grouping together plant stanols and sterols both in free and/or esterified forms.

On 26 April 2012, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) issued a positive opinion regarding this application. This opinion gave rise to concerns within the industry, because, among other things, the grouping together of plant sterol (esters) and plant stanol (esters) has not been scientifically substantiated. In addition, the application did not seem admissible under Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006, as two of these claims were not initially applied for by the applicant, nor is the applicant a user of the plant stanol ester claim.

1. Does the Commission consider that the applicant (Q-2011-01241) is eligible to seek modification of the three approved Article 14 health claims or only of its own claim? More specifically, does the Commission consider that the applicant is eligible to seek modification of the approved plant stanol ester health claim?

2. Given the lack of precise scientific assessment of the properties of plant sterols and plant sterol esters, does the Commission deem the grouping together of plant stanols and sterols (both free and esterified) justified? To date, plant sterols and plant sterol esters have not been assessed separately, but always with plant stanols and plant stanol esters. Plant stanol esters have been assessed separately in application Q-2008-118 and later in the pending application Q-2011-00851 ([1]).

3. Does the Commission think that EFSA Opinion Q-2011-01241 is in line with the principles of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006?

4. When does the Commission expect to adopt a position on the application (Q-2011-01241) for modification?

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

The Commission is still assessing the file referred to by the Honourable Member and any decision on the modification of the conditions of use of claims on plant sterols/stanols cannot at this stage be anticipated.

In any case, however, it should be stressed that the application mentioned by the Honourable Member (Q-2011-01241) ([2]) was submitted to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in November 2011 pursuant to Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 ([3]) through the Competent Authority of the United Kingdom. According to Regulation (EC) No 353/2008 ([4]) Member States are responsible for verifying the validity of applications before making them available to EFSA.

Moreover, regarding the assessment by EFSA, EFSA concluded in its opinion (Q-2011-01241) that 'Plant sterols and stanol esters at daily intakes ranging from 1.5 to 3.0 g sterols/stanols in matrices approved by Regulation (EC) No 376/2010 (yellow fat spreads, dairy products, mayonnaise and salad dressings) have a similar efficacy on lowering blood LDL-cholesterol'. The same approach had been adopted by EFSA in the past, as can be seen in Opinion (Q-2009-00530 and Q-2009-00718), where it concluded that 'The efficacy for lowering LDL-cholesterol is similar for plant sterols and plant stanols'.

The Commission is making every effort to take a final decision as soon as possible.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2692.pdf
([2]) EFSA Journal 2012; 10(5):2693.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:EN:PDF
([4]) OJ L 109, 19.4.2008, pp. 11-16.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-006735/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Financiación para la incineración de residuos

Vista la Directiva 2008/98/CE sobre los residuos que tipifica un orden jerárquico para el tratamiento de residuos, y teniendo en cuenta que para la Comisión Europea, en su respuesta E-009153/2011, las incineradoras con valoración energética pueden ser una buena opción de gestión medioambiental para tratar los residuos remanentes que resultan de otros procesos de gestión de residuos y los residuos no reciclables:

1. ¿Qué posibilidades existirían dentro del Marco Financiero Plurianual / Fondos Estructurales 2014-2020 para financiar instalaciones de gestión de residuos, en particular incineradoras de residuos, en las regiones más desarrolladas?

2. ¿Qué otras alternativas propone la Comisión para hacer frente a la problemática de los residuos, especialmente en zonas urbanas?

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

Los proyectos de Reglamentos del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) y del Fondo de Cohesión para el período de programación de 2014-2020 prevén la posibilidad de que ambos fondos apoyen la gestión eficiente de los recursos en el sector de los residuos ([1]). Este apoyo puede prestarse en todas las regiones de la UE, siempre y cuando contribuya a la estrategia del programa señalada en el artículo 24, apartado 1, del Reglamento de disposiciones comunes de los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos.

Son los Estados miembros quienes han de decidir qué alternativas de gestión de los residuos pueden proporcionar el mejor resultado medioambiental global, según la jerarquía de residuos establecida en el artículo 4 de la Directiva 2008/98/CE sobre los residuos ([2]). Aunque la incineración con recuperación de energía puede constituir un elemento legítimo de una estrategia global de gestión de los residuos y, en general, es preferible a la descarga en vertederos, la jerarquía de residuos da claramente prioridad al reciclado, la reutilización y la reducción de los residuos, como alternativas preferidas. Cuando los Estados miembros invierten grandes sumas de dinero en la construcción de incineradoras, se encierran en este sistema de tratamiento de los residuos para muchos años, lo que puede hacer que no se orienten hacia alternativas mejor situadas en la jerarquía de residuos.

En consonancia con la Hoja de ruta hacia una Europa eficiente en el uso de los recursos ([3]), la Comisión ha propuesto medidas para frenar la generación de residuos y estimular el reciclado y la reutilización en la EU de aquí a 2020. Esas medidas van desde la plena aplicación del acervo legislativo de la UE en materia de residuos a la revisión de los objetivos de reciclado y desvío de residuos de los vertederos para circunscribir la recuperación de energía a los materiales no reciclables y a la eliminación progresiva de las descargas en vertederos. La Comisión tratará de que los fondos públicos procedentes del presupuesto de la UE den prioridad a las actividades mejor situadas en la jerarquía de residuos fijada en la Directiva marco sobre residuos (Directiva 2008/98/CE).

([1]) Según el objetivo temático n° 6, para «*preservar y proteger el medio ambiente y promover la eficiencia de los recursos*, […] *en el sector de los residuos para cumplir los requisitos del acervo de la Unión en materia de medio ambiente y para abordar las necesidades de inversión determinadas por los Estados miembros más allá de dichos requisitos*» (prioridad de inversión 6.a) del artículo 5 del Reglamento del FEDER y c.i) del artículo 3 del Reglamento del Fondo de Cohesión).

([2]) DO L 312 de 22.11.2008.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency/pdf/com2011_571.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006735/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Funding for waste incinerators

In the light of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, which establishes a hierarchy for the treatment of waste, and in view of the Commission's reply to Written Question E-009153/2011, which states that incinerators with energy recovery can be an environmentally sound option for the treatment of residual waste from other waste management processes and non-recyclable waste:

1. What are the chances of funding being provided under the multiannual financial framework and/or the Structural Funds over the period from 2014 to 2020 for waste management plants, in particular waste incinerators, in the most developed parts of Europe?

2. What other options is the Commission proposing to deal with waste-related problems, in particular in urban areas?

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

The draft regulations of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund for the programming period 2014-2020 provide for the possibility for these Funds to support resource efficiency in the waste sector ([1]).This support may be granted in all EU regions, provided that it contributes to the programme's strategy referred to in Article 24(1) of the draft Common Provisions Regulation on the European Structural and Investment Funds.

It is for Member States to decide on the waste management options that deliver the best overall environmental outcome in line with the waste hierarchy as laid down in Article 4 of Directive 2008/98/EC ([2]) on waste. Although incineration with energy recovery can be a legitimate element of a comprehensive waste management strategy and is generally preferable to landfilling, the waste hierarchy clearly favours recycling, re-use and ultimately waste reduction as preferred approaches where possible. Where Member States have sunk large amounts of capital into incineration plants they are locked into this treatment option for many years, which may inhibit them from moving to options that are higher in the waste hierarchy.

In line with the Roadmap on Resource Efficiency ([3]), the Commission has proposed measures to curb waste generation and boost recycling and re-use in the EU by 2020. These range from the full implementation of the body of EU waste law, through the review of the recycling and the landfill diversion targets to limiting energy recovery to non-recyclable materials and phasing out landfilling of waste. The Commission will seek to ensure that public funding from the EU budget gives priority to activities higher up in the waste hierarchy as defined in the Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC.

([1]) under thematic objective 6 '*preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency*, (…) *the waste sector to meet the requirements of the Union's environmental acquis and to address needs, identified by Member States, for investment going beyond those requirements*' (investment priority 6(a) of Article 5 in the ERDF Regulation and (c)(i) of Article 3 of the Cohesion Fund Regulation).

([2]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency/pdf/com2011_571.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-006736/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: PRISM und Europol

In den vergangenen Tagen wurde von US-Präsident Barack Obama das Programm PRISM bestätigt. Den vorliegenden Informationen zu folge hat der amerikanische Militärgeheimdienst NSA durch das Programm PRISM direkten Zugriff auf die Server global führender Internetfirmen und damit auf die persönlichen Daten der Bürger. Auch europäische Bürger sind betroffen, wenn sie die entsprechenden Dienste nutzen.

Kann die Kommission ausschließen, dass in der Vergangenheit Daten, die im Rahmen von PRISM gesammelt wurden, an Europol übermittelt wurden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(23. Juli 2013)

Entsprechend seinem rechtlichen Rahmen verarbeitet Europol auf der Grundlage eines Kooperationsabkommens von Mitgliedstaaten oder Drittstaaten übermittelte Daten, die von deren zuständigen Behörden rechtmäßig erfasst wurden.

Als europäisches Zentrum für strafrechtliche Informationen darf Europol sowohl nicht personenbezogene als auch personenbezogene Daten verarbeiten. Europol kann Daten über Personen verarbeiten, bei denen es gemäß den nationalen Rechtsvorschriften der Staaten, die die Daten bereitgestellt haben, einen Bezug zu strafrechtlichen Ermittlungen im Zuständigkeitsbereich von Europol gibt, die von den entsprechenden zuständigen Behörden rechtmäßig durchgeführt werden (bekannte Straftäter, Verdächtige, Beteiligte usw.).

Übermittelte Daten werden im Einklang mit den umfassenden, strikten Datenschutzregeln von Europol verarbeitet.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006736/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: PRISM and Europol

Operation of the PRISM programme has recently been acknowledged by US President Barack Obama. According to the information available, the American military secret service (NSA) has direct access via the PRISM programme to the servers of leading worldwide Internet companies and thus also to citizens' personal data. European citizens who use the services concerned are also affected.

Can the Commission guarantee that data gathered with PRISM have never been forwarded to Europol?

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

In accordance with its legal framework, Europol only processes information, provided by Member States or Third States, on the basis of a cooperation agreement, which has been lawfully gathered by their relevant competent authorities.

As the European hub for criminal information, Europol may process, both non-personal and personal data. Regarding the latter, Europol may process information on persons who, according to the national law of the States which provided the data, are linked to criminal investigations lawfully conducted by the relevant competent authorities (known criminals, suspects, associates etc.) in respect of which Europol is competent.

Information received is processed in accordance with Europol's comprehensive and strict data protection regime.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006737/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(11. juni 2013)

Om: »Prism«-programmet

Programmet under navnet »Prism« giver som bekendt sikkerhedsagenturet NSA adgang til servere i amerikanske internetselskaber som Google, Apple, Microsoft, Skype, Yahoo og Facebook. NSA kan altså overvåge e-mails, video-chat, instant messages, gemt data og meget andet for at spore terrorister.

Amerikanske virksomheder, der ønsker adgang til private data om EU-borgere, skal godt nok afgive løfte om at opbevare dem sikkert, men reglerne siger intet om overvågning fra amerikanske myndigheder.

Det står sort på hvidt, at klager fra EU-borgere mod amerikanske organisationer skal høres (og kun i begrænset omfang) i USA.

Ifølge The Guardian, som sammen med Washington Post har stået bag afsløringerne, vil det formentlig betyde, at NSA's politiske licens til at spionere vil trumfe en klage fra EU.

Kan Kommissionen be- eller afkræfte denne tese?

Og i forlængelse heraf bedes Kommissionen vurdere, om det er det nationale retssystem eller udenlandske retsmyndigheder, der afgør, at nogen kan følge med i, hvad man bruger internettet til?

Hvad mener Kommissionen, at EU skal/kan gøre for at komme denne problematik med amerikansk overvågning af EU-borgere til livs? Skal vi have en frivilligt kodeks, mere lovgivning eller en helt tredje mulighed?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(30. august 2013)

Kommissionen er bekymret over oplysningerne i medierne for nylig om, at de amerikanske myndigheder i stor stil har adgang til og behandler oplysninger om europæere, der benytter sig af amerikanske udbydere af onlinetjenester. Programmer såsom Prism og de love, tilladelsen til at anvende sådanne programmer har hjemmel i, kan have negative konsekvenser for de grundlæggende rettigheder. Kommissionen har anmodet de amerikanske myndigheder om nærmere oplysninger om de spørgsmål, oplysningerne i medierne har rejst, navnlig konsekvenserne for europæerne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006737/13
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: The 'Prism' programme

It is now known that the 'Prism' programme gives the US National Security Agency (NSA) access to the servers of American Internet companies such as Google, Apple, Microsoft, Skype, Yahoo and Facebook. The NSA can thus monitor emails, video chats, instant messages, stored data, etc. in order to track terrorists.

American companies that seek access to the private data of EU citizens may well promise to keep them safe, but the rules say nothing regarding surveillance by the US authorities.

It is written in black and white that complaints by EU citizens against US organisations must be heard (and then only to a limited extent) in the USA.

According to *The Guardian* newspaper which, along with the *Washington Post*, has been behind the revelations, this probably means that the NSA's political licence to spy will trump any complaint from the EU.

Can the Commission confirm or refute this hypothesis?

In the same vein, can the Commission state if it is the national legal system or foreign judicial authorities that decide whether someone can monitor what the Internet is being used for?

What does the Commission think the EU should/can do to tackle this issue of US monitoring of EU citizens? Should we have a voluntary code, more legislation or a totally different third option?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The Commission is concerned by recent media reports that United States authorities are accessing and processing, on a large scale, the data of Europeans using major US online service providers. Programmes such as PRISM and the laws on the basis of which such programmes are authorised could have adverse consequences for the fundamental rights. The Commission has requested clarifications from the US counterparts regarding the issues raised by the reports in the media, in particular regarding the impact on Europeans.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006738/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ένταξη της Κύπρου στις φτωχές χώρες

Όταν το 2004 η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία εισερχόταν στην ΕΕ ανήκε στην κατηγορία των πλούσιων χωρών, με βάση τα ισχύοντα κριτήρια εισδοχής. Με δεδομένη τη σημερινή οδυνηρή κατάσταση της οικονομίας της, λόγω της οικονομικής κρίσης και, ειδικά, μετά την καταστροφική απόφαση του Eurogroup για κούρεμα των καταθέσεων, πώς κατατάσσεται σήμερα η χώρα, συγκριτικά με τις άλλες χώρες μέλη της ΕΕ και της Ευρωζώνης; Ζητούμε από την Επιτροπή να τοποθετηθεί ξεκάθαρα με βάση τη σημερινή οικονομική κατάσταση της χώρας: η Κύπρος μπορεί να ενταχθεί στο στόχο 2, αντί στο στόχο 1, της ΕΕ και να έχει ανάλογη αντιμετώπιση όσον αφορά επιπρόσθετους πόρους για την ανάκαμψη της οικονομίας της;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Αυγούστου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με την πολιτική συμφωνία μεταξύ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, της προεδρίας του Συμβουλίου και της Επιτροπής για το πολυετές δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο 2014-20 (ΠΔΠ) η οποία επιτεύχθηκε στις 27 Ιουνίου του 2013, η Κύπρος θα είναι επιλέξιμη ως πιο αναπτυγμένη περιφέρεια στο πλαίσιο των Διαρθρωτικών Ταμείων την περίοδο 2014-20.

Στο πλαίσιο των διαπραγματεύσεων για το πολυετές δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο, η Επιτροπή έλαβε υπόψη τις ιδιαίτερες ανάγκες της Κύπρου. Κατά συνέπεια, η Κύπρος έλαβε πρόσθετη χρηματοδότηση ύψους 150 εκατ. ευρώ στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής συνοχής και 7 εκατ. ευρώ στο πλαίσιο της αγροτικής ανάπτυξης. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή εξασφάλισε ότι οι διατάξεις που εφαρμόζονται κατά την τρέχουσα περίοδο για χώρες του προγράμματος θα ισχύσουν και στο μέλλον για τις χώρες αυτές, μεταξύ των οποίων και η Κύπρος. Επομένως, η Κύπρος θα είναι σε θέση να ζητήσει υψηλότερα ποσοστά προχρηματοδότησης, καθώς και ποσοστό 10% συμπληρωματικής συγχρηματοδότησης για τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία και την αλιεία και αυξημένα ποσοστά συγχρηματοδότησης για την αγροτική ανάπτυξη. Επιπλέον, θα υπάρξει αναθεώρηση το 2016 της χορήγησης βάσει της πολιτικής συνοχής και, ενδεχομένως, της επιλεξιμότητας για το Ταμείο Συνοχής το 2017, ώστε να γίνει προσαρμογή των αποτελεσμάτων σε περιπτώσεις σημαντικών αποκλίσεων μεταξύ των στατιστικών στοιχείων που χρησιμοποιούνται για τον προσδιορισμό των συμφωνηθέντων κονδυλίων και της ανάπτυξης της πραγματικής οικονομίας. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί τα συμπεράσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου του Ιουνίου του 2013 για να εξετάσει τις ευκαιρίες που προσφέρει η ευελιξία στο ΠΔΠ για να αντιμετωπίσει την ιδιαίτερα δυσχερή κατάσταση της Κύπρου στο πλαίσιο της ετήσιας διαδικασίας του προϋπολογισμού.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006738/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Classification of Cyprus among the poor countries

When Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, it belonged to the category of rich countries, based on the accession criteria in force. Given the painful situation of its economy today due to the financial crisis and, in particular, following the catastrophic Eurogroup decision to impose haircuts on savings how is the country ranked nowadays compared to other EU Member States and the euro area? Will the Commission clarify its position on the basis of the country's current financial situation? Can Cyprus be included under the EU Objective 2, rather than Objective 1, and be treated accordingly in relation to additional structural funds?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

According to the political agreement between the European Parliament, the Council Presidency and the Commission on the 2014-20 Multiannual financial framework (MFF) reached on 27 June 2013 Cyprus will be eligible as a more developed region under the Structural Funds in 2014-20.

In the context of MFF negotiations the Commission took account of the particular needs of Cyprus. This resulted in Cyprus receiving an additional allocation of EUR 150 million under cohesion policy and EUR 7 million under rural development. Moreover, the Commission ensured that the provisions which apply in the current period to programme countries will also apply in the future to these countries including Cyprus. Thus, Cyprus will be able to request higher pre-financing rates as well as a 10% 'top up' co-financing rate for Structural Funds and Fisheries and increased co-financing rates for rural development. Moreover, there will be a review in 2016 of the cohesion allocation and possibly of eligibility for the Cohesion Fund in 2017 with a view to adjusting the results in cases of significant divergences between the statistical data used to determine the agreed allocations and development in the real economy. The Commission is following-up on the European Council conclusions of June 2013 to examine the opportunities provided by the flexibilities in the MFF to address the particularly difficult situation of Cyprus in the context of the annual budgetary procedure.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006739/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική μετανάστευση

Έρευνα του Κυπριακού Ινστιτούτου Στατιστικολόγων καταδεικνύει πως ένα ποσοστό 28% του πληθυσμού, ηλικίας 18-28 ετών, εξέφρασαν πρόθεση μετανάστευσης από την Κύπρο μετά την άδικη απόφαση του Eurogroup. Με δεδομένο πως αυτό το ποσοστό εκφράζει τον πιο παραγωγικό πληθυσμό της χώρας με σπουδές σε σχολές ανώτερης και ανώτατης εκπαίδευσης και πως ακόμη 62% από τους νέους που εκφράζουν πρόθεση για μετανάστευση είναι κάτοχοι προπτυχιακού ή μεταπτυχιακού διπλώματος, καλείται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στα ακόλουθα ερωτήματα:

1. Πώς προτίθεται να αντιμετωπίσει το φαινόμενο της διαρροής εγκεφάλων από χώρες όπως η Κύπρος που μαστίζονται από την ανεργία των νέων;

2. Ποια συγκεκριμένα μέτρα για ανάπτυξη και δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας προτείνει για τους Κύπριους νέους;

3. Υπάρχουν συγκριτικά στοιχεία για τα ποσοστά μαζικής μετανάστευσης από χώρες όπως είναι η Ελλάδα, η Ισπανία, η Πορτογαλία, με κύριο σκοπό την επαγγελματική αποκατάσταση;

4. Πώς μπορεί να τερματιστεί έμπρακτα αυτό το φαινόμενο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehnon εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν υποτιμά το βάθος της τρέχουσας κρίσης στην Κύπρο ούτε τις δύσκολες προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει τώρα ο κυπριακός πληθυσμός, και οι νέοι ειδικότερα. Ο καλύτερος τρόπος για να παραμείνουν οι νέοι και τα άτομα με υψηλά προσόντα στην Κύπρο είναι η βελτίωση των προοπτικών απασχόλησης και σταδιοδρομίας, που μπορεί να επιτευχθεί αν διευκολυνθεί η επιστροφή της κυπριακής οικονομίας σε βιώσιμη πορεία ανάπτυξης με νέες ευκαιρίες απασχόλησης. Η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα πρέπει να αποκατασταθεί και τα δημόσια οικονομικά να εξυγιανθούν.

Η Επιτροπή βοηθά την Κύπρο στις προσπάθειές της να αναπτύξει ένα πιο διαφοροποιημένο και βιώσιμο οικονομικό μοντέλο αντιμετωπίζοντας ταυτόχρονα τις ανάγκες του νέου πληθυσμού, αφενός, με τη συγχρηματοδότηση έργων που απευθύνονται σε νέους ανέργους στο πλαίσιο του τρέχοντος Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος 2007-2013 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου, αφετέρου, με την προώθηση της βαθμιαίας εφαρμογής μιας εγγύησης για τη νεολαία στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας για την απασχόληση των νέων ([1]), και τέλος, με την προώθηση της επιχειρηματικότητας των νέων στο πλαίσιο του τρέχοντος Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος 2007-2013 που συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ).

Η Επιτροπή έχει συγκροτήσει ομάδα στήριξης για την Κύπρο, η οποία θα υποστηρίξει την Κύπρο στην προσπάθειά της να περιορίσει τις επιπτώσεις του οικονομικού σοκ μέσω της κινητοποίησης των κονδυλίων της ΕΕ, και θα συμβάλει στις προσπάθειες των κυπριακών αρχών για την αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής, οικονομικής και κοινωνικής σταθερότητας.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1829&furtherNews=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006739/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Economic migration

Research from the Cyprus Institute of Statisticians shows that 28% of the population in the 18-28 age range intend to emigrate from Cyprus, following the unfair Eurogroup decision. Given that this percentage represents the most productive portion of the country's population, educated to the highest levels and that 62% of young people who have expressed their intention to emigrate hold a graduate or postgraduate diploma, will the European Commission answer the following questions?

1. How does it intend to cope with the brain drain from countries such as Cyprus which are afflicted with youth unemployment?

2. What specific development and job creation measures does it propose for young Cypriots?

3. Are there, for countries like Greece, Spain and Portugal, any comparative data on mass emigration aimed mainly at the pursuit of a profession?

4. How can we put an end to this problem in practical terms?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

The Commission does not underestimate the depth of the current crisis in Cyprus nor the difficult challenges now facing the Cypriot population, and the youth in particular. The best way to retain young well qualified people in Cyprus is through improving their employment and career prospects by allowing the Cypriot economy to return to a sustainable growth path with new job opportunities. Financial stability and sound public finances have to be restored.

The Commission assists Cyprus in its efforts to develop a more diversified and sustainable economic model, addressing at the same time the needs of the youth population by co-financing projects directed to young unemployed under the current Operational Programme 2007-2013 of the European Social Fund and by promoting the gradual implementation of a youth guarantee within the framework of the Youth Employment Initiative ([1]), as well as by promoting the youth entrepreneurship under the current Operational Programme 2007-2013 co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The Commission has set up a Support Group for Cyprus, which will support Cyprus in alleviating the effects of the economic shock through the mobilisation of EU funds and will contribute to the efforts of the Cypriot authorities to restore the financial, economic and social stability.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1829&furtherNews=yes.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006740/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κοινωνικό ντάμπινγκ

Η ηγεμονική πολιτική της Γερμανίας απειλεί να κατακρημνίσει ολόκληρο το οικοδόμημα της Ευρωζώνης. Η μνημονιακή πολιτική που στηρίζεται στην εξιδανίκευση της επίτευξης αμιγώς δημοσιονομικών στόχων χρέους, ελλείμματος, μέσα από πολιτικές λιτότητας ανατροφοδοτεί την ύφεση, οδηγεί τις χώρες του Νότου σε εξαθλίωση και επιτρέπει στη Γερμανία, όπως ο ίδιος ο Επίτροπος Κοινωνικών Υποθέσεων Λάζλο Άντορ δήλωσε, να ασκεί ένα εκτεταμένο κοινωνικό ντάμπινγκ εις βάρος των άλλων χωρών της ΕΕ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Γιατί ανέχεται αυτό το κοινωνικό ντάμπινγκ;

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

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι επί του παρόντος οι ελάχιστοι μισθοί δεν αφορούν όλους τους οικονομικούς τομείς της Γερμανίας. Στη δέσμη μέτρων για την απασχόληση που παρουσίασε το 2012 ([1]), η Επιτροπή τόνισε ότι οι ελάχιστοι μισοί, όπως καθορίζονται στο κατάλληλο επίπεδο, μπορούν να συμβάλουν στην πρόληψη της φτώχειας των εργαζομένων και αποτελούν σημαντικό παράγοντα για τη διασφάλιση της αξιοπρεπούς ποιότητας της απασχόλησης. Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει ότι το θέμα αυτό περιλαμβάνεται στις συστάσεις του 2013 ανά χώρα που απευθύνονται στη Γερμανία. Στις εν λόγω συστάσεις η Επιτροπή αναφέρεται στο γεγονός ότι «ενώ οι πραγματικοί μισθοί παραμένουν μεν κάτω από το επίπεδο του 2000 (…), οι μισθολογικές ανισότητες έχουν αυξηθεί» και παροτρύνει τη Γερμανία να «διατηρήσει τις συνθήκες αυτές που θα επιτρέψουν την αύξηση των μισθών ώστε να υποστηριχθεί η εγχώρια ζήτηση». Η αύξηση των μισθών και των ελάχιστων μισθών θα επέτρεπε, προφανώς, πιθανές καταστάσεις που θεωρούνται κοινωνικού ντάμπινγκ.

Η Επιτροπή προτρέπει τη Γερμανία να «διευκολύνει τη μετάβαση από άτυπες σχέσεις εργασίας, όπως οι “μικροδουλειές”, προς περισσότερο βιώσιμες μορφές απασχόληση».

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1270&furtherNews=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006740/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Social dumping

Germany's hegemonic policy is threatening to bring down the entire edifice of the euro area. The memorandum policy, which is based on an idealistic belief of achieving budget debt and deficit targets purely through the use of austerity policies, feeds the recession, reduces the countries of the south to misery and allows Germany to implement extensive social dumping at the expense of other EU countries, as László Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, has stated.

Will the Commission say:

Why is it tolerating this social dumping?

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

The Commission is aware that not all economic sectors in Germany are currently covered by minimum wages. In its 2012 Employment Package ([1]), the Commission highlighted that minimum wages, set at appropriate level, can help prevent growing in-work poverty and are an important factor in ensuring decent job quality. The Commission recalls that the issue is included in the 2013 Country Specific Recommendations to Germany. It refers to the fact that 'while real wages are still below the level in the year 2000 (…), wage disparities have increased' and it urges Germany to 'sustain conditions that enable wage growth to support domestic demand'. Wage growth and minimum wages would obviously prevent possible situations perceived as social dumping.

The Commission also urges Germany to 'facilitate transition from non-standard employment as mini-jobs into more sustainable forms of employment'.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1270&furtherNews=yes

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-006741/13
Komisijai (Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotojai ir vyriausiajai įgaliotinei)
Leonidas Donskis (ALDE)
(2013 m. birželio 11 d.)

Tema: VP/HR – Pomirtinis Rusijos teisininko Sergejaus Magnitskio teismo procesas

Sergejus Magnitskis buvo teisininkas, kuris atskleidė, kad Rusijos vyriausybės pareigūnai atsakingi už didžiausią Rusijos istorijoje mokestinio sukčiavimo atvejį. Jis buvo nužudytas 2009 m. kardomojo kalinimo metu. Parlamentas trimis atskiromis progomis balsavo už tai, kad ES imtųsi konkrečių veiksmų prieš Rusijos pareigūnus, įvykdžiusius finansinius nusikaltimus, kuriuos atskleidė S. Magnitskis, ir veiksmų dėl prieš patį S. Magnitskį įvykdytų nusikaltimų, kai jam buvo taikomas kardomasis kalinimas.

Visai neseniai Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotoja ir vyriausioji įgaliotinė Catherine Ashton oficialiai išreiškė susirūpinimą dėl pomirtinio teismo proceso, vykdomo prieš nužudytą teisininką Sergejų Magnitskį praėjus trejiems metams po jo mirties.

— Koks protestas išreikštas Rusijos valdžios institucijoms šiuo klausimu ir kokiu lygmeniu?

— Kokių atsakymų gauta iš Rusijos valdžios institucijų po to, kai buvo iškelti klausimai dėl pomirtinio teismo proceso prieš S. Magnitskį?

Vyriausiosios įgaliotinės ir Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotojos Catherine Ashton atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. rugsėjo 3 d.)

Sergejaus Magnitskio byla pagrįstai kelia ES susirūpinimą. Rusijos valdžios institucijos turi atlikti patikimą, nepriklausomą jo mirties aplinkybių vidaus tyrimą. Bylos, kuria siekta išsiaiškinti, kaip ir kodėl jis mirė, užbaigimas praėjusį kovą, nežiūrint įtikinamų įrodymų, kelia rimtą susirūpinimą, kaip ir aplinkybė, kad S. Magnitskis neteisingo proceso ir neįtikinamų įrodymų pagrindu po mirties paskelbtas nusikaltėliu.

ES visais lygmenimis kelia S. Magnitskio bylos klausimą Rusijos valdžios institucijoms. Rusijos valdžios institucijos į klausimus dėl pomirtinio S. Magnitskio teismo kol kas neatsakė.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006741/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Leonidas Donskis (ALDE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Posthumous trial of Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky

Sergei Magnitsky was a lawyer who uncovered evidence that Russian government officials were guilty of the worst case of tax fraud in Russian history. He was killed in pre-trial detention in 2009. Parliament has on three separate occasions voted for the EU to take concrete action against the Russian officials who committed the financial crimes Magnitsky uncovered and the crimes committed against Magnitsky himself while he was in custody.

Most recently, the Vice-President/High Representative Catherine Ashton has gone on record to express concern about the posthumous case being brought against the murdered Russian lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky, three years after his death.

— What representations have been made on this subject to the Russian authorities and at what level?

— What responses have been received from the Russian authorities following the questions raised about the posthumous trial against Magnitsky?

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

The case of Sergei Magnitsky is a legitimate matter of concern to the EU. Russian authorities need, internally, to conduct a credible, independent investigation into the circumstances of his death. The closure, last March, of the case which had to clarify how and why he died, in spite of compelling evidence, raises serious concern, as does the fact that Mr Magnitsky has been posthumously declared a criminal on the basis of unfair procedures and unconvincing evidence.

The EU is raising the case of Mr Magnitsky with the Russian authorities at all levels. The Russian authorities have yet to respond on substance regarding the posthumous trial against Mr Magnitsky.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006743/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(11 juni 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Onbeantwoorde prioritaire vraag: „Volledige uitvoering van het mandaat van UNIFIL en EU-steun aan de Libanese strijdkrachten"

Op 7 mei 2013 heb ik bij de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger een vraag ingediend over „Volledige uitvoering van het mandaat van UNIFIL en EU-steun aan de Libanese strijdkrachten" (P-004979/2013).

De termijn waarbinnen deze prioritaire vraag moest worden beantwoord, is verstreken op 3 juni 2013, drie weken na de officiële ontvangstdatum (13 mei 2013).

Waarom heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter zich niet gehouden aan het Reglement?

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

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter betreurt dat de voor de prioritaire vraag gestelde termijn werd overschreden en dat het antwoord enkele dagen na het verstrijken van de termijn werd bezorgd. Gezien de aard van de vraag moesten binnen de EDEO echter uitvoerige raadplegingen plaatsvinden om tot een geconsolideerd antwoord te komen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006743/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Unanswered priority question: 'Fulfilling full Unifil mandate in Lebanon and EU assistance to Lebanese Armed Forces'

On 7 May 2013 I submitted a question to the Vice-President/High Representative on 'Fulfilling full Unifil mandate in Lebanon and EU assistance to Lebanese Armed Forces' (P-004979/2013).

The deadline for a response to this priority question lapsed on 3 June 2013, three weeks after the date of official receipt, 13 May 2013.

Why has the Vice-President/High Representative failed to comply with the Rules of Procedure?

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

The HR/VP regrets that the deadline for the priority question was not met and the answer was delivered several days after the deadline. However, the nature of the question required extensive consultations within the EEAS to deliver a consolidated answer.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006744/13
to the Commission
Mairead McGuinness (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: EU future plans in relation to biofuels

Can the Commission outline its future plans in relation to biofuels for cars, light commercial vehicles and farm machines, notably tractors?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

Biofuels are essential to reach our 2020 targets for the use of renewable energy, fight climate change and to replace fossil fuels in the transport sector. Therefore, the use of biofuels is supported by the EU notably through the provisions of Directive 2009/28/EC ([1]). In order to justify support for biofuels it needs to be ensured that they are sustainable. In this context and in particular in view of the need to address issues related to indirect land use change (ILUC) the Commission has recently proposed ([2]) to focus future efforts on biofuels made from non-food feedstock such as waste, residues and ligno-cellulosic material.

([1]) L 140/16 *Official Journal of the European Union* 5.6.2009.
([2]) COM/2012/0595 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006745/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Crisi del mercato dell'auto in Italia

I dati di maggio 2013 sull'andamento delle immatricolazioni di autovetture in Italia mostrano come tale mercato abbia avuto un ulteriore calo dell'8 % rispetto al maggio 2012. A risentirne soprattutto le immatricolazioni di auto a uso privato che si ferma al 59.6 % di immatricolazioni, perdendo un ulteriore 2 % rispetto il 2012.

Le proiezioni su base annua delle vendite per il 2013 si attesta a 1.268.000 milioni di vetture vendute, il 9.57 % in meno rispetto al 2012 e il 45.9 in meno sul livello medio degli 11 anni che hanno preceduto la crisi di questo settore.

In Italia la filiera legata alla vendita di auto vede impegnati 3.292 concessionari e un totale di 5.029 punti vendita. Secondo le associazioni di categoria la rete di vendita italiana fa sempre più fatica ad acquisire nuovi clienti e far fronte ai costi di gestione in un mercato in continua crisi.

Può la Commissione dire:

— se è a conoscenza della situazione italiana;

— come intende sostenere il mercato dell'auto italiana e la rete di distribuzione che impiega migliaia di lavoratori;

— se può fornire dati comparativi circa l'andamento di questo settore negli altri Stati membri, in particolare in quelli aderenti alla zona euro?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(23 luglio 2013)

La difficile situazione economica dell'industria automobilistica non solo in Italia, ma anche, più in generale, in Europa, rappresenta un'autentica preoccupazione per la Commissione. L'industria automobilistica con l'intera catena di fornitura e di distribuzione è di importanza strategica per la prosperità dell'UE e la creazione di posti di lavoro. La Commissione è perciò attivamente impegnata a sostenere la competitività e la crescita sostenibile di questa industria. Nella comunicazione CARS 2020 ([1]), la Commissione ha presentato una serie di iniziative concrete in quattro ambiti distinti (finanziamento della ricerca, miglioramento delle condizioni di mercato, internazionalizzazione e promozione degli investimenti nelle competenze) considerati d'importanza fondamentale nel processo di rafforzamento della competitività a lungo termine dell'industria automobilistica europea.

La situazione della rete di distribuzione è strettamente connessa alle prestazioni dell'intero settore automobilistico. Il piano d'azione della Commissione mira pertanto a definire misure che consentiranno al settore di superare gli attuali problemi causati dalla difficile situazione economica. La Commissione sta inoltre promuovendo accordi verticali equi e non discriminatori nella catena di fornitura, che agevoleranno la cooperazione tra costruttori e rivenditori di automobili.

([1]) COM(2012)636 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006745/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Italian car market in crisis

Figures for car registrations in Italy for May 2013 show how the market has shrunk by a further 8% compared with May 2012. Particularly affected are registrations of cars for private use, which account for 59.6% of registrations, a further drop of 2% compared with 2012.

According to annual sales forecasts, 1.268 million cars are expected to be sold in 2013, 9.57% fewer than in 2012 and 45.9% fewer than the average for the 11 years preceding the crisis in this sector.

In Italy, the car sales network consists of 3 292 dealerships and a total of 5 029 sales outlets. According to trade associations, the Italian car sales network is finding it increasingly difficult to win new customers and to cover running costs in a market that is in constant crisis.

— Is the Commission aware of the situation in Italy?

— How does it intend to support the Italian car market and the distribution network that employs thousands of people?

— Can it provide any comparative data on the performance of this sector in other Member States, particularly in euro area countries?

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

The difficult economic situation of the automotive industry not only in Italy, but more generally in Europe, is of a sincere concern to the Commission. The automotive industry with its entire supply and distribution chain is of strategic importance for the EU's prosperity and job creation. Therefore, the Commission has been actively engaged in supporting the competitiveness and sustainable growth of this industry. In the CARS 2020 Communication ([1]), the Commission has presented a number of concrete actions under four distinct categories (financing of research, improvement of market conditions, internationalization and promoting investments in skills), which are considered to have a paramount importance in the process of strengthening the long-term competitiveness of the European automotive industry.

The situation of the distribution network is closely related to the performance of the automotive industry as a whole. Therefore, the Commission's action plan focuses on delivering measures which will enable the sector to overcome the current difficulties caused by an adverse economic situation. In addition, the Commission is promoting fair and non-discriminatory vertical agreements in the supply chain, which will facilitate cooperation between vehicle manufacturers and dealers.

([1]) COM(2012) 636 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006746/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: In Belgio un partito di ispirazione islamista dichiara di voler instaurare la «Sharia»

In Spagna, Norvegia, Svezia e Finlandia si stanno facendo sempre più forti i partiti di ispirazione islamista che vedono al centro dei loro manifesti programmatici la volontà ultima di dare spazio alla Sharia negli ordinamenti giuridici europei. In Belgio, nelle ultime elezioni amministrative tenutesi nella capitale Bruxelles, in particolare nei comuni di Molembeek ed Anderlecht, sono stati eletti fra i consiglieri comunali due esponenti di un movimento di ispirazione islamista che hanno pubblicamente dichiarato di voler fare di tutto per imporre la Sharia in Belgio entro i prossimi 20 anni.

In un'intervista, i neoeletti consiglieri comunali, con riferimento all'imposizione della Sharia, affermano che: « *Oggi è troppo presto, la società non è pronta: dovremmo tagliare troppe mani* ». Fanno anche proposte inerenti al divieto di ambienti di lavoro misti uomini-donne o alla reintroduzione della pena di morte.

La Commissione:

— È a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti?

— Può fornire una valutazione del livello di integrazione delle comunità islamiche all'interno dell'UE?

— Ritiene che tali affermazioni siano sintomo di una progressiva destabilizzazione del sistema democratico europeo che si fonda sul rispetto dei diritti umani?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(27 agosto 2013)

La Commissione europea ricorda che la «Sharia» è un concetto generale che comprende vari aspetti giuridici ed è oggetto di interpretazioni differenti ([1]). Secondo le informazioni a disposizione della Commissione, la «Sharia» contiene norme concernenti questioni di competenza della legge secolare, quali la criminalità, il matrimonio, il divorzio, le successioni e i contratti, e l'interpretazione di tali norme varia a seconda delle diverse culture nonché tra differenti scuole di pensiero e dottrine.

Come stabilito dall'articolo 17 del trattato sull'Unione europea, le competenze della Commissione si limitano alla vigilanza sull'applicazione del diritto dell'Unione sotto il controllo della Corte di giustizia europea. Pertanto, la Commissione non può valutare a livello generale la compatibilità della «Sharia» con il sistema europeo di democrazia o con i diritti fondamentali.

In generale, la Commissione ricorda che qualsiasi atto legislativo dell'UE, come pure l'applicazione del diritto dell'Unione da parte degli Stati membri, deve rispettare i diritti sanciti nella Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, ed è compito della Commissione garantire che ciò avvenga. La Commissione si avvale di tutti gli strumenti a sua disposizione, in linea con i poteri conferiti all'Unione dai trattati, per lottare contro tutte le forme di intolleranza.

Infine, la Commissione conferma che l'Unione europea si oppone in maniera risoluta ed inequivocabile alla pena di morte. L'articolo 2 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali stabilisce che nessuno può essere condannato alla pena di morte o giustiziato.

([1]) Si vedano le risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-003916/2013, E-009450/2011 ed E-001463/2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006746/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Intention of an Islamist party to impose sharia law in Belgium

In Spain, Norway, Sweden and Finland, Islamist parties whose manifestoes revolve around the ultimate goal of incorporating sharia law into European legal systems, are growing increasingly stronger. In the most recent local elections held in the Belgian capital Brussels, two members of an Islamist movement who have publicly stated that they want to do all they can to impose sharia in Belgium within the next 20 years, were elected as town councillors in the municipalities of Molenbeek and Anderlecht.

In an interview, the newly elected town councillors said, in reference to imposing sharia, that it was still too soon as society was not ready and that they would have to cut too many people's hands off. They also propose banning mixed-sex working environments and reintroducing the death penalty.

— Is the Commission aware of the above facts?

— Can it give an assessment of the level of integration of Islamic communities in the EU?

— Does it think that such statements are symptomatic of a gradual destabilisation of the European system of democracy, which is based on the respect of human rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

The European Commission recalls that 'Sharia' is a general concept that encompasses several legal aspects and is the subject of varying interpretations ([1]). According to information available to the Commission, 'Sharia' includes rules on many issues addressed by secular law, such as crime, marriage, divorce, inheritance or contracts, and the interpretation of these rules vary between cultures as well as between different schools of thought and scholarship.

As stated in Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union, the powers of the Commission are limited to overseeing the application of Union law under the control of the Court of Justice of the European Union. The Commission cannot therefore assess at a general level the compatibility of 'Sharia' with the European system of democracy or with the fundamental rights.

In general, the Commission recalls that any EU legislation as well as the Member States, when implementing the EC law, must respect the rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the Commission is committed to ensuring the respect for these rights. The Commission uses all the instruments at its disposal, in line with the powers conferred to the Union by the Treaties, to fight against all forms of intolerance.

Finally, the Commission confirms that the European Union has a strong and unequivocal opposition to the death penalty. Article 2 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights provides that no one shall be condemned to the death penalty, or be executed.

([1]) See response to Written Questions E-003916/2013, E-009450/2011 and E-001463/2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006747/13
alla Commissione
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Imputazione degli oneri diretti e indiretti sopportati dai bilanci statali a seguito di eventi sismici, in particolare gli ultimi due violenti terremoti in Italia

Fra tutti gli Stati membri, l'Italia è uno tra i maggiormente esposti alle calamità naturali e alle conseguenze che ne derivano: gran parte del territorio è, infatti, classificato come zona sismica a rischio medio-alto, con le sole eccezioni del Nord Italia e della Sardegna. Sebbene, in linea di principio, tutta l'Europa possa essere soggetta a fenomeni climatici estremi quali forti precipitazioni, alluvioni e inondazioni, come dimostrano anche i recenti eventi nell'Europa centrale tra Germania, Repubblica ceca, Austria e Svizzera, in ambito comunitario i terremoti sono una triste prerogativa quasi esclusivamente dell'Italia. In questi ultimi anni di crisi economica, due sismi particolarmente violenti hanno colpito prima la zona dell'Aquila, il 6 Aprile 2009, e successivamente la pianura padana, il 20 maggio 2012. Le scosse più violente hanno fatto registrare una magnitudo superiore ai 6 gradi della scala Richter e hanno causato danni per decine di miliardi di euro ad abitazioni, capannoni agricoli, stabilimenti industriali, esercizi commerciali ed edifici pubblici, per non parlare delle numerose vittime.

In questo contesto lo Stato italiano non ha potuto esimersi dall'intervenire, entro i limiti del possibile, a supporto delle popolazioni colpite con sgravi fiscali, sussidi e indennità per le famiglie rimaste senza tetto e per chi ha perso il posto di lavoro, finanziamenti agevolati, realizzazione e ricostruzione di infrastrutture e servizi. I due eventi sismici hanno, perciò, avuto un impatto rilevante sul bilancio dello Stato sia direttamente, con i relativi stanziamenti di fondi, che indirettamente, visto l'inevitabile calo del PIL a seguito dei danni subiti dagli apparati produttivi.

Posto che i terremoti di grande intensità causano danni estremi a qualsiasi manufatto e una prevenzione è possibile soltanto implementando un piano su vasta scala di applicazione delle tecnologie antisismiche che richiede molti anni per essere completamente realizzato, non è in alcun modo possibile prevedere l'entità e le conseguenze di un evento sismico.

Si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

— Se la normativa comunitaria in tema di finanza pubblica contempli la possibilità che gli oneri diretti e indiretti sopportati dai bilanci statali in conseguenza di eventi particolarmente rilevanti, come i terremoti, vengano esclusi dal computo degli indicatori, come il saldo primario o il saldo di bilancio;

— Se, in caso contrario, intende valutare la proposta di modificare la normativa in maniera opportuna, considerando anche una retroattività per scontare gli interventi sostenuti dallo Stato italiano negli ultimi anni.

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(19 agosto 2013)

La Commissione applica le norme vigenti nell'ambito del patto di stabilità e crescita, che prevedono l'esclusione delle misure una tantum e temporanee in materia di spesa dalla posizione di bilancio in termini strutturali degli Stati membri. Il «codice di condotta», che specifica l'attuazione del patto ([1]), cita i costi di emergenza a breve termine derivanti dalle calamità naturali tra gli esempi di simili misure una tantum.

La disposizione, che permette ai governi di affrontare le conseguenze immediate di eventi naturali imprevisti senza compromettere la posizione di bilancio in termini strutturali, è già stata utilizzata in seguito ai terremoti che hanno colpito l'Italia nel 2009 e nel 2012. Essa non introduce tuttavia una deroga generale alle norme del PSC valida per tutte le spese connesse alla prevenzione e riparazione dei danni provocati dalle calamità naturali.

In tale contesto, il bilancio dell'UE prevede uno strumento specifico per gli eventi in questione.

Il Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE, istituito per rispondere alle calamità naturali gravi, ha, fino ad oggi, concesso aiuti all'Italia per un importo totale pari a 1,2 miliardi di euro ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/coc/code_of_conduct_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/solidarity/index_eu.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006747/13
to the Commission
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Direct and indirect costs to government budgets as a result of earthquakes, particularly the last two violent earthquakes in Italy

Of all the Member States, Italy is one of the most exposed to natural disasters and their effects: most of Italy is classified as a medium to high-risk earthquake zone, with the only exceptions being northern Italy and Sardinia. Although, theoretically, all of Europe can suffer from extreme weather conditions such as heavy rain and flooding, as demonstrated by recent events in central Europe which affected Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria and Switzerland, in the EU earthquakes are unfortunately an almost exclusively Italian problem. In these recent times of economic crisis, there have been two particularly violent earthquakes: the first in L'Aquila on 6 April 2009, and the second in the Po Valley on 20 May 2012. The strongest tremors measured 6 on the Richter scale and caused tens of billions of euros of damage to housing, farm buildings, factories, shops and public buildings, not to mention the many victims.

In these circumstances, the Italian State has had no option but to do what it can to support those affected, by means of tax relief, subsidies and compensation for families left homeless and those left without a job, financial assistance, building and reconstruction of infrastructure and services. The two earthquakes have therefore had a significant impact on the government budget both directly, as a result of the allocation of funds, and indirectly, owing to the inevitable drop in GDP as a result of damage done to the manufacturing base.

Given that powerful earthquakes are extremely damaging to any building and prevention is possible only by implementing an extremely wide-ranging plan to deploy earthquake-resistant technologies which would take many years to complete, it is absolutely impossible to predict the scale and the consequences of an earthquake.

— Does EC law on government finance provide for the possibility of excluding direct and indirect costs borne by government budgets as a result of particularly significant events, like earthquakes, when calculating indicators, such as the primary balance or the budget balance?

— If not, does the Commission plan to consider the proposal to amend legislation accordingly, and to consider applying it retroactively so that aid paid out by the Italian State in recent years can be written off?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 August 2013)

The Commission applies the existing rules under the Stability and Growth Pact, which allow for the exclusion from the budgetary position in structural terms of Member States of one-off and temporary expenditure measures. The 'code of conduct', specifying the implementation of the Pact ([1]), mentions the short-term emergency costs emerging from natural disasters among the examples of such one-off measures.

This provision, which allows governments to face the immediate consequences of unforeseen natural events without affecting their budgetary position in structural terms, has already been used in the wake of the earthquakes that struck Italy in 2009 and 2012. It does not, however, introduce a general derogation from the rules of the SGP for all expenditure linked to the prevention or repair of the damages caused by natural disasters.

In this context, the EU Budget has an instrument dedicated for such events.

The EU Solidarity Fund, which was set up to respond to major natural disasters, has granted aid to Italy of EUR 1.2 billion to date ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/coc/code_of_conduct_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/solidarity/index_eu.cfm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006748/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Infanzia: dati allarmanti in Europa per rischio povertà ed esclusione sociale

Lo scorso mese di maggio l'associazione a sostegno dell'infanzia, Save the Children, ha presentato un dossier ricco di dati statistici sulla situazione dei bambini e dei giovani in Europa.

Secondo i dati pubblicati in questo dossier l'Italia è al ventunesimo posto in Europa per rischio povertà ed esclusione sociale fra i minori di età compresa tra 0 e 6 anni. In particolare, Save the Children ha utilizzato 12 indicatori Eurostat che permettono di comparare la situazione dei bambini italiani con quella dei loro coetanei europei ed il risultato, riassunto in 5 mappe e classifiche dei 27 Stati membri dell'Unione europea, è desolante: l'Italia si posiziona per 7 volte oltre il ventesimo posto in classifica. Una situazione peggiore per l'infanzia si riscontra solo in Grecia e Bulgaria.

Un posizionamento molto negativo che, secondo Save the Children, si traduce in una perdita di futuro per i bambini e gli adolescenti.

Il generale impoverimento delle giovani generazioni si traduce in una gravissima privazione di prospettive e opportunità. Cancellare il futuro di bambini e giovani significa compromettere il futuro di un intero Paese.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se è a conoscenza di questi dati allarmanti sull'infanzia;

— quali sono le azioni che ha intrapreso e/o intende intraprendere per fronteggiare con maggiore vigore la problematica della povertà e dell'esclusione sociale infantile;

— se ritiene opportuno un nuovo piano per l'utilizzo dei Fondi europei che concentri le risorse sullo sviluppo e sul potenziamento dei servizi alla prima infanzia?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(1º agosto 2013)

1. La Commissione è al corrente del posizionamento negativo dell'Italia nella graduatoria relativa alla povertà e al benessere dei bambini.

2. Nell'ambito di un più ampio pacchetto Investimenti sociali, nel febbraio di quest'anno la Commissione ha adottato una raccomandazione specifica dal titolo «Investire nell'infanzia per spezzare il circolo vizioso dello svantaggio sociale» ([1]). Nel contesto di tale raccomandazione la Commissione esorta gli Stati membri a intensificare la lotta contro la povertà infantile e a servirsi degli strumenti finanziari a loro disposizione, finanziamenti dell'Unione compresi, in modo più efficiente ed efficace, per conseguire risultati positivi e duraturi nelle questioni sociali attinenti a famiglie e bambini. Inoltre, secondo quanto previsto da detta raccomandazione, il sito web della piattaforma europea per investire nell'infanzia raccoglie e illustra le buone pratiche seguite dalle organizzazioni interessate, in grado di apportare un valore aggiunto in termini di prassi politica e di evidenze empiriche ([2]).

Nell'ambito del semestre europeo 2013, l'Italia ha ricevuto una raccomandazione specifica che invita ad assicurare l'efficacia dei trasferimenti sociali, in particolare mirando meglio le prestazioni, specie per le famiglie a basso reddito con figli.

3. La Commissione raccomanda vivamente agli Stati membri di utilizzare la capacità di cofinanziamento del programma dei fondi strutturali e di investimento europei 2014-2020 al fine di ampliare l'offerta in tema di istruzione e servizi di assistenza di qualità per la prima infanzia. La Commissione sta riservando particolare attenzione a questo argomento cruciale nei negoziati attualmente in corso, che riguardano i nuovi accordi di partenariato e i nuovi programmi operativi. Inoltre, la Commissione ha presentato una proposta relativa al fondo di aiuti europei agli indigenti per affrontare la privazione materiale dei bambini mediante la distribuzione di prodotti alimentari e di base adatti alle loro necessità.

([1]) Cfr: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([2]) Cfr: http://europa.eu/epic/about/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006748/13
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Childhood: alarming figures on the risk of poverty and social exclusion in Europe

In May 2013, the children's charity Save the Children published a report packed with statistics on the situation of children and young people in Europe.

According to the figures published in the report, Italy ranks 21st in Europe when it comes to the risk of poverty and social exclusion faced by children aged between 0 and 6 years. In particular, Save the Children used 12 Eurostat indicators to compare the situation of Italian children with that of their European peers and the result, summarised in five maps and classifications of the 27 Member States, is distressing: Italy ranks lower than 20th place for seven of the indicators. Children are worse off only in Greece and Bulgaria.

This is a very poor ranking which, according to Save the Children, means a lost future for children and adolescents.

The widespread impoverishment of younger generations is resulting in a very severe lack of prospects and opportunities. Depriving children and young people of a future puts the future of a whole country in jeopardy.

— Is the Commission aware of these alarming figures on childhood?

— What steps has it taken and/or will it take provide a more robust response to the problem of childhood poverty and social exclusion?

— Does it think it should draw up a new plan for using EU funds, focusing resources on the development and enhancement of services in early childhood?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the poor ranking of Italy when it comes to child poverty and well-being.

2. In February of this year the Commission adopted as part of a wider Social Investment Package a specific Recommendation on 'Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage' ([1]). In this recommendation the Commission urges the Member States to step up their fight against child poverty, and to use their budgets including EU funds, more efficiently and effectively to achieve lasting positive social outcomes for families and children. Furthermore, as part of the implementation of the recommendation, the web-based European Platform for Investing in Children gathers and highlights good practices involving relevant organisations which can bring value added in terms of policy practice and evidence ([2]).

As part of the European Semester 2013, Italy received a country-specific recommendation calling for the ensuring of effectiveness of social transfers, notably through better targeting of benefits, especially for low-income households with children.

3. The Commission strongly recommends that the Member States use the co-financing capacity of the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds programme to expand the provision of high quality early childhood education and care. The Commission will focus on this strategic point during the current negotiations of the new Partnership Agreements and Operational Programmes. Moreover, the Commission proposed the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived to address children's material deprivation, through the provision of food and basic goods adapted to their needs.

([1]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([2]) See: http://europa.eu/epic/about/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-006749/13
alla Commissione
Pino Arlacchi (S&D)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Trivellazioni marittime — prevenzione delle conseguenze di catastrofi naturali

ENI, Shell e altre otto compagnie hanno avviato le procedure per iniziare trivellazioni marittime che interessano in particolare le coste dei comuni dell'alto Cosentino e del Mar Jonio, tra il Golfo di Taranto e quello di Sibari. Tali procedure stanno suscitando la ferma opposizione delle popolazioni locali, in quanto queste aree hanno una spiccata vocazione turistica e sono incompatibili con qualsivoglia tipo di attività estrattiva in mare.

Premesso che l'elevato grado di sismicità del Golfo di Taranto, potenziale causa di tsunami innescati da eventi sismici lungo le faglie sismogeniche attive tra Albania e Grecia rappresenta un rischio notevole di inquinamento da dispersione di idrocarburi in mare a seguito dei conseguenti incidenti in eventuali impianti di estrazione off-shore;

Si chiede al Commissione:

— Se le normative in materia di prevenzione delle conseguenze di catastrofi naturali e di protezione civile siano state rispettate;

— Se e in qual modo le autorità europee possono intervenire per sospendere tutte le attività relative all' avvio di ricerche petrolifere nei territori in oggetto;

— Se i rischi di eventi sismici e catastrofi naturali con le ricadute anche finanziarie sull'economia siano stati adeguatamente valutati nel momento in cui si è deciso di accettare le richieste di autorizzazione.

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2013)

Spetta allo Stato membro competente garantire la piena conformità con la pertinente legislazione unionale relativa a piani o progetti specifici. Il pubblico ha il diritto di ottenere informazioni dallo Stato membro in merito al potenziale impatto dell'attività industriale sull'ambiente. Secondo la vigente legislazione unionale, la Commissione non ha la facoltà di intervenire di propria sponte per impedire l'esplorazione offshore. Le direttive UE in questione prescrivono che lo Stato membro interessato effettui le valutazioni di rischio in materia di sicurezza prima di autorizzare l'esplorazione. Nella legislazione dell'UE potenzialmente rilevante si annoverano direttive sullo stato ambientale delle acque marine, sulla protezione delle acque, delle specie e degli habitat costieri nonché sulle valutazioni di impatto ambientale. La nuova direttiva sulla sicurezza delle operazioni in mare nel settore degli idrocarburi (direttiva 2013/30/UE, GU L del 28.6.2013), che gli Stati membri sono tenuti a recepire nei prossimi due anni, ridurrà ulteriormente i rischi collegati alle perforazioni offshore.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006749/13
to the Commission
Pino Arlacchi (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Offshore drilling: natural disaster prevention

ENI, Shell and other companies have embarked on the procedure to begin offshore drilling in the Ionian Sea off the coast of the municipalities comprised in the Alto Ionio Cosentino, between the Gulf of Taranto and the Gulf of Sibari. These proceedings are strongly opposed by local residents, as the areas in question have a strong tourism sector which is incompatible with any form of offshore oil drilling.

The high level of seismic activity in the Gulf of Taranto is a potential cause of tsunamis produced by earthquakes occurring along the active fault zones between Albania and Greece. There would be a serious risk of pollution from hydrocarbons released at sea if drilling facilities sited offshore were affected by any such incidents.

In view of the foregoing,

Would the Commission state whether compliance with the legislation on the prevention of natural disaster and civil protection has been ensured?

Would the Commission state whether and, if so, how the European authorities can intervene to suspend the process of launching oil exploration activities in the areas concerned?

Would the Commission state whether the risk of seismic events and natural disasters, and their financial and other impact on the economy, were fully take into account when the decision was taken to grant the request for permission to proceed?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

It is for the relevant Member States to ensure that they are in full compliance with relevant EU legislation concerning specific plans or projects. The public is entitled to receive information from the Member State concerning the potential impact of industrial activity on the environment. According to EU legislation in force, the Commission cannot intervene to prevent offshore exploration per se. The relevant EU Directives require safety risk assessments to be carried out before exploration is authorised by the Member State in question. Potentially relevant EU environmental legislation include Directives related to the environmental status of marine waters, protection of coastal waters, habitats and species, and to Environmental Impact Assessments. The new Directive on Offshore Safety (Directive 2013/30/EU, OJ 28.6.2013) which Member States are requested to transpose in the coming two years will further reduce risks linked to offshore drilling.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006750/13
a la Comisión
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D) y Alejandro Cercas (S&D)
(11 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Riesgo de un nuevo rescate para los bancos españoles por la posible quiebra de miles de pequeños inversores fotovoltaicos (FV)

La serie de medidas establecidas de manera retroactiva por parte del Gobierno español y algunos gobiernos regionales durante los últimos años contra las energías renovables —la reducción de entre un 30 y un 50 % de los años con tarifa regulada para la tecnología fotovoltaica, la limitación drástica del máximo de horas anuales con tarifa regulada para la tecnología fotovoltaica, la moratoria a las renovables, el impuesto del 7 % sobre las tarifas reguladas o la fin de la actualización de las tarifas reguladas a las renovables con el IPC real— afectan a miles de pequeños inversores privados que invirtieron sus ahorros en instalaciones fotovoltaicas confiando en el marco regulatorio creado por los anteriores Gobiernos.

Pero además suponen un riesgo real para el sistema bancario español, ya que muchos de estos inversores privados avalaron sus inversiones con sus propias viviendas a través de créditos hipotecarios que ahora no pueden asumir debido a los recortes retroactivos arriba mencionados.

Estamos hablando de préstamos emitidos por un volumen total de alrededor de 30 mil millones de euros (20 mil millones de euros para inversiones PV, 10 mil millones de euros para plantas CSP) financiados 2/3 por bancos españoles y 1/3 por bancos extranjeros.

— ¿Está informada la Comisión del impacto financiero de esta batería de medidas retroactivas tanto para los pequeños inversores en FV como para los bancos que financiaron los créditos para dichas inversiones?

— ¿Tiene pensado la Comisión emprender alguna medida para impedir la quiebra de esos pequeños inversores en FV en España y, por ende, para prevenir un segundo rescate bancario español?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de la relación entre los cambios en el régimen español de ayudas a la energía fotovoltaica, los ingresos para los productores de energía fotovoltaica y la exposición de los bancos españoles a este sector.

En las recomendaciones específicas por país de 2012 y 2013 dirigidas a España, el Consejo señala los complejos desafíos para España en el sector de la energía, incluida la necesidad de abordar el alto déficit tarifario del sector eléctrico. El déficit supone un considerable pasivo contingente para el presupuesto, los hogares y las empresas, además de entrañar un riesgo macroeconómico nada desdeñable. En los últimos años, el crecimiento muy elevado de las ayudas a las fuentes de energía renovables (casi el 1 % del PIB en 2013, según los datos disponibles), ha contribuido a aumentar ese déficit, que debe ahora solucionarse de forma estructural y global, de modo que las ayudas a la producción de energías renovables sean rentables y aporten a las instalaciones de energía renovable una tasa de rentabilidad razonable.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006750/13
to the Commission
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D) and Alejandro Cercas (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Risk of a new Spanish bank bailout due to the possible bankruptcy of thousands of small photovoltaic (PV) investors

The series of anti-renewable energy measures established retroactively by the Spanish Government and some regional governments in recent years — the 30-50% reduction in the number of years to which regulated tariffs apply for photovoltaic technology, strict limitation of the maximum annual number of hours to which regulated tariffs apply for photovoltaic technology, the renewable energy moratorium, the 7% tax on regulated tariffs and an end to using the actual CPI to update regulated tariffs for renewables — are affecting thousands of small private investors who invested their savings in photovoltaic installations, relying on the regulatory framework established by previous governments.

However, they also pose a real risk to the Spanish banking system, since many of these private investors secured their investments with their own homes by taking out mortgage loans which they can no longer afford due to these retroactive cuts.

These loans amount to around EUR 30 billion (EUR 20 billion for PV investments, EUR 10 billion for CSP plants) two-thirds of which were financed by Spanish banks and one third by foreign banks.

— Is the Commission aware of the financial impact this set of retroactive measures is having on both small PV investors and the banks that financed the loans for these investments?

— Will it take any action to prevent the bankruptcy of these small PV investors in Spain and thus to prevent a second Spanish bank bailout?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the relationship between changes to the Spanish PV support scheme, revenues to PV power producers and the exposure of Spanish banks to the PV sector.

In the 2012 and 2013 Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) to Spain, the Council points to the complex challenges that Spain faces in the energy sector, including dealing with a large electricity tariff deficit. The deficit implies a considerable contingent liability for the budget, households, and firms, and a non-negligible macroeconomic risk. In recent years the very high growth in support to renewable energy sources (approaching 1% of GDP in 2013 according to available information) has contributed to the deficit. The deficit should now be tackled in a structural and comprehensive way, so that support to renewable energy production is cost-effective and gives renewable energy installations a reasonable rate of return.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006752/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η κατάσταση του τομέα υγείας στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με την έγκυρη βρετανική ιατρική επιθεώρηση «Λάνσετ» (27.3.2013), έρευνα που βασίζεται σε στοιχεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Στατιστικής Υπηρεσίας καταδεικνύει ότι, από το 2007, η κατάσταση της υγείας στην Ελλάδα και ιδιαίτερα των ευπαθών κοινωνικών ομάδων, έχει επιδεινωθεί κατά 40%. Καταγράφονται αυξήσεις του αριθμού των ασθενειών, των αυτοκτονιών, των χρηστών ναρκωτικών και των κρουσμάτων του ιού HIV.

Σε πρόσφατη ακρόαση στην Επιτροπή Περιβάλλοντος, ο Επίτροπος για τη δημόσια υγεία παραδέχθηκε ότι υπάρχει σύνδεση μεταξύ των περικοπών και της αύξησης των ασθενειών. Ανέφερε επίσης ότι ο τομέας της υγείας παραμένει εθνική αρμοδιότητα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. αφού ο τομέας της υγείας είναι θέμα εθνικής αρμοδιότητας, γιατί η τρόικα ζητεί ο προϋπολογισμός για την υγεία να μην υπερβαίνει το 6% του ΑΕΠ, δημιουργώντας προηγούμενο στην ΕΕ για την απόκτηση του ελέγχου επί των εθνικών συστημάτων υγείας στα κράτη μέλη;

2. γιατί η Γενική Διεύθυνση Υγείας της Επιτροπής (ΓΔ SANCO); στελέχη της οποίας συνοδεύουν την τρόικα στην Ελλάδα, παρά τη νομική της υποχρέωση να αξιολογεί τις επιπτώσεις των πολιτικών της ΕΕ στον τομέα της υγείας, δεν έχει προβεί στην αξιολόγηση των μέτρων αυστηρής λιτότητας που επέβαλε η τρόικα και έχει περιορίσει τον σχολιασμό της στην παροχή συμβουλών σχετικά με το πώς οι υπουργοί υγείας μπορούν να μειώσουν τους προϋπολογισμούς τους;

3. προτίθεται να δημοσιεύσει — και πότε — έκθεση σχετικά με την αξιολόγηση των περικοπών στον τομέα της υγείας;

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

Δεδομένων των δημοσιονομικών ανισορροπιών που δημιουργήθηκαν πριν και κατά τη διάρκεια της κρίσης, οι ελληνικές αρχές λαμβάνουν μέτρα για τον εξορθολογισμό των δαπανών για την υγεία. Ο συμφωνηθείς στόχος για τη σταθεροποίηση των δημόσιων δαπανών για την υγεία σε ποσοστό 6% ή χαμηλότερο του ΑΕΠ αντιστοιχούσε περίπου στην αναλογία των δημοσίων δαπανών στον τομέα της υγείας ως προς το ΑΕΠ, που ίσχυε κατά τα έτη πριν από την έναρξη του προγράμματος μεταρρυθμίσεων. Ο στόχος ήταν να διατηρηθεί μια παρόμοια αναλογία δαπανών ως προς το ΑΕΠ ενώ θα επιτυγχάνεται σημαντική εξοικονόμηση από τη βελτίωση της λειτουργίας των δημόσιων νοσοκομείων, τις περικοπές στη σπατάλη, στην υπερβολική συνταγογράφηση και στην απάτη, καθώς και την καταπολέμηση των υπερβολικών δαπανών σε φάρμακα, προκειμένου να εξασφαλιστεί ότι τα χρήματα αυτά θα χρησιμοποιούνται αποδοτικότερα και αποτελεσματικότερα για την περίθαλψη των ασθενών, παρέχοντας έτσι περιθώριο για βελτίωση της πρόσβασης σε καλύτερης ποιότητας περίθαλψη.

Ο αξιότιμος βουλευτής μπορεί να είναι βέβαιος ότι, στο πλαίσιο του εν εξελίξει διαλόγου με τις ελληνικές αρχές, η Επιτροπή αναφέρθηκε και θα συνεχίσει να αναφέρεται στις ανησυχίες της σχετικά με τη δημόσια υγεία καθώς και με άλλα ζητήματα που συνδέονται με την ποιότητα και την πρόσβαση, πάντα εντός των ορίων των αρμοδιοτήτων της Επιτροπής, και υποστηρίζοντας τις προσπάθειες μεταρρύθμισης που έχουν αναληφθεί από την Ελλάδα.

Δεν έχει ζητηθεί ειδική έκθεση σχετικά με την αξιολόγηση των περικοπών στον τομέα της υγείας, ωστόσο, βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη η κατάρτιση έκθεσης σχετικά με την ανασκόπηση της βιβλιογραφίας όσον αφορά τον αντίκτυπο της χρηματοπιστωτικής κρίσης στην υγεία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006752/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: The health sector in Greece

According to a survey based on data from the Statistical Office of the European Union and published in the reputable British medical journal *The Lancet* on 27 March 2013, the health sector in Greece has deteriorated by 40% since 2007, especially among vulnerable social groups. It reports increases in the number of illnesses and in the number of cases of suicide, drug use and HIV.

At a recent hearing of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy admitted that there is a link between cuts and increases in illnesses. He also said that the health sector is a national responsibility.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. As the health sector is a matter of national responsibility, why is the Troika calling for the health budget not to exceed 6% of GDP, thereby creating a precedent for the EU to gain control of national health systems in the Member States?

2. Why has the Commission DG for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO), officials from which have accompanied the Troika to Greece, not evaluated the strict austerity measures imposed by the Troika, despite its legal obligation to evaluate the impact of EU policies on the health sector, and why has it confined its comments to advice as to how health ministers can reduce their budgets?

3. Does it intend to publish a report on the assessment of health cuts and, if so, when?

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

Given the budgetary imbalances built ahead and during the crisis, the Greek authorities are taking steps to rationalise health expenditure. The agreed target to stabilise public expenditure on health at, or below, 6% of GDP was about the ratio of public expenditure on health to GDP observed in the years prior to the start of the reform programme. The goal was to keep a similar spending ratio while realising substantial savings from improving functioning of public hospitals, cutting waste, over-prescription and fraud, and tackling overpaying for drugs, with a view to ensuring that money is used more efficiently and effectively for patient care, thus providing room for enhanced access to better quality care.

The Honourable Member can be assured that as part of the ongoing dialogue with Greek authorities, the Commission raised and will continue to raise any relevant public health concerns and others related to quality and access, in respect of the boundaries of the Commission's mandate and in support of reform efforts undertaken by Greece.

A specific report on the assessment of health cuts has not been commissioned, however a compilation of a report on reviewing the literature on the health impact of the financial crisis is in progress.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006753/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Guerre commerciale entre l'Europe et la Chine

La Chine a annoncé ce mercredi lancer une enquête antidumping sur les vins importés de l'Union européenne, au lendemain de la décision de Bruxelles d'instaurer des taxes provisoires sur le solaire chinois.

Difficile d'imaginer que cette décision ne fait pas suite à l'excellente décision d'imposer des droits de douane sur les panneaux solaires importés de Chine, qui sont à la base d'un dumping indéniable. Quelques heures après les positions prises par l'Europe, les autorités chinoises déclaraient déjà que les taxes «punitives» annoncées par l'Union européenne n'étaient «pas susceptibles d'inciter à une réponse amicale de la Chine».

1. Qu'en est-il de cette plainte chinoise sur les vins importés?

2. Selon la Commission, est-ce le début d'une guerre commerciale entre la Chine et l'Union européenne?

3. Pékin a déjà par le passé pris des mesures visant des produits européens en réplique à des décisions européennes d'enquêtes ou de taxes visant des sociétés ou des produits chinois. Le montant annuel des exportations de vins et spiritueux européens vers la Chine dépasse 1 milliard d'euros. Le premier exportateur européen vers la Chine est la France, avec 140 millions de litres de vin vendus en 2012, pour un montant de 788 millions de dollars, selon les douanes chinoises. Qu'est-il prévu par la Commission en cas de telles mesures par les autorités chinoises?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(7 août 2013)

Le 1er juillet 2013, la Chine a lancé une enquête conjointe antidumping et antisubventions sur les vins importés de l'Union européenne, suite à une plainte déposée par l'industrie vinicole chinoise alléguant que ce secteur souffre d'importations effectuées à des conditions déloyales.

Pour la Commission, il ne s'agit pas du commencement d'une guerre commerciale. La Chine, comme tout autre membre de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC), a en effet le droit de lancer une enquête de défense commerciale conformément aux règles de l'OMC si elle a reçu une plainte dûment justifiée de la part de son industrie. La Chine est cependant tenue de respecter strictement les règles correspondantes de l'OMC.

La Commission est consciente de l'importance de ce problème pour l'industrie vinicole européenne. Elle suivra l'enquête de près et interviendra dûment, le cas échéant, pour garantir que ces règles sont respectées. Si elle parvient à la conclusion que la Chine n'a pas respecté strictement les règles applicables, elle n'hésitera pas à prendre toute mesure utile pour défendre les intérêts de l'Union européenne.

Dans l'intervalle, la Commission assiste et conseille l'industrie vinicole européenne dans la défense de ses intérêts soumis à l'enquête.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006753/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Commercial war between Europe and China

On Wednesday, the day after Brussels decided to impose a provisional tariff on Chinese solar panels, China announced that it would open an anti-dumping investigation into EU wine imports.

It is hard to ignore the likelihood that this move comes in response to the well-advised decision to impose customs duties on imports of solar panels from China, which are unquestionably subject to dumping practices. Only a few hours after Europe made its announcement, the Chinese authorities indicated that the 'punitive' duties announced by the European Union were 'unlikely to encourage an amicable response from China'.

1. What is the situation regarding China's complaint about wine imports?

2. In the Commission's opinion, is this the start of a commercial war between China and the European Union?

3. European products have already been the target of past measures by Beijing in response to EU decisions to open investigations or impose duties affecting Chinese companies or products. European exports of wine and spirits to China top EUR 1 billion and France leads the field, taking USD 788 million for 140 million litres of wine in 2012 according to the Chinese customs authorities. How does the Commission plan to respond to such measures by the Chinese authorities?

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

On 1st July 2013, China initiated a joint anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigation against imports of wine from the European Union as a result of a complaint lodged by the Chinese wine industry alleging that the sector suffers from unfairly traded imports.

The Commission does not consider that this means the beginning of a trade war. China, as any other member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), has indeed the right to launch a trade defence investigation under the WTO rules if it has received a duly justified complaint from its industry. China is however obliged to strictly follow the relevant WTO rules.

The Commission is aware of the importance of this issue for the EU wine industry. The Commission will closely monitor the investigation and duly intervene where necessary in order to ensure that these rules are respected. If the Commission reached a conclusion that China did not strictly comply with the applicable rules, it would not hesitate to take action to defend the interests of the European Union.

In the meantime, the Commission assists and advises the EU wine industry in the defence of its interests subject to the investigation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006754/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Biélorussie: poste avancé chinois à la fiscalité avantageuse

La Chine vient d'annoncer qu'elle allait créer une ville, de toutes pièces, dans une forêt. Pour ce projet pharaonique, Pékin a choisi la Biélorussie. Cette ville qui prendra la forme d'un immense parc industriel, plus grand que Manhattan, devrait accueillir 155 000 personnes, à proximité de Minsk, la capitale biélorusse. La Chine investit 5 milliards de dollars dans cette opération, qui doit être finalisée en 2030 et dont une première partie devrait être terminée d'ici 2020.

Plusieurs bénéfices pour la Chine: d'abord, une proximité avec l'Espace économique européen — les exportations chinoises ne seront plus qu'à 275 kilomètres de la Pologne et de la Lituanie, deux pays membres de l'Union européenne. Ensuite, des avantages douaniers: les accords entre la Biélorussie, la Russie et le Kazakhstan permettront aux produits fabriqués dans cette ville-atelier de passer les frontières russes et kazakhes sans barrière douanière. Enfin, ce parc industriel prévoit des avantages fiscaux très intéressants pour les entreprises qui s'y installeront: exonérations d'impôts et de taxes foncières.

1. Comment réagit la Commission à cette nouvelle?

2. Va-t-elle observer avec une attention toute particulière les entreprises européennes ou à capitaux européens qui voudraient s'installer sur le territoire biélorusse?

3. Quels sont les rapports entre l'Union européenne et la Biélorussie?

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

1. D'une manière générale, la Commission est favorable à la poursuite de la libéralisation et de la privatisation de l'économie biélorusse ainsi que des investissements dans cette économie. Elle collabore avec les parties prenantes biélorusses dans le cadre de la plateforme n° 2 du partenariat oriental (intégration économique et convergence avec les politiques de l'UE) pour améliorer le climat des affaires en Biélorussie. Dans ce contexte, la Commission continuera à procéder à une évaluation des politiques en faveur des PME et des progrès accomplis à cet égard par le pays. Un environnement propice aux affaires ne dépend pas seulement d'une fiscalité avantageuse. Selon le rapport «Doing Business» de la Banque mondiale, la Biélorussie n'occupe actuellement que le 58^e^ rang en ce qui concerne la «facilité à y faire des affaires». Il reste à voir dans quelle mesure le parc industriel permettra d'accroître la libéralisation de l'économie biélorusse et sera profitable aux affaires (y compris aux entreprises européennes).

2. D'une manière générale, la Commission promeut et met en œuvre des politiques et des mesures visant à maintenir les investissements dans l'UE et à y attirer les investissements étrangers directs, afin de générer la croissance et l'emploi et de contrebalancer l'érosion de la base industrielle de l'Europe. Néanmoins, la Commission est pleinement consciente que, à l'ère de la mondialisation, les entreprises européennes doivent être actives au niveau international pour être performantes.

3. L'UE mène une politique de dialogue critique envers la Biélorussie. Cette politique comprend des mesures restrictives à l'encontre d'un certain nombre d'individus et d'entités, une coopération au titre du volet multilatéral du partenariat oriental, des dialogues techniques sur des questions d'intérêt commun ainsi qu'un soutien à la société civile. La libération et la réhabilitation des prisonniers politiques sont une condition essentielle à la normalisation des relations UE-Biélorussie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006754/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Belarus: Chinese outpost with tax breaks

China has just announced that it intends to build a city from scratch in a forest. Beijing has chosen Belarus for this mammoth project. The city, which will be built in the form of a vast industrial estate larger than Manhattan, will accommodate 155 000 people and be located close to Minsk, the Belarusian capital. China will invest USD 5 billion in the project, which should be completed by 2030, with the first stage ready by 2020.

The project offers several advantages to China. The first of these is proximity to the European Economic Area, since Chinese exports will now only be 275 km away from Poland and Lithuania, two Member States of the European Union. There will also be advantages in terms of customs duties, since the agreements in place between Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan will allow products manufactured in this workshop-city to cross the borders into Russia and Kazakhstan without tariff barriers. Finally, the industrial estate will offer extremely attractive tax breaks to companies which launch operations there, in the form of a waiver on profit and property taxes.

1. What is the Commission's response to this news?

2. Does it intend to keep a particularly close eye on the relocation of European companies or capital to Belarusian territory?

3. What is the state of relations between the European Union and Belarus?

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

1. The Commission generally supports further liberalisation and privatisation of and investment in the Belarusian economy. The Commission works with Belarusian stakeholders under Platform 2 (economic integration and convergence with EU policies) of the Eastern Partnership in order to improve the business environment in Belarus. Within this context, the Commission will continue to undertake an assessment of SME policies and any progress in this regard in Belarus. A fruitful business environment is not only based on tax breaks. According to the World Bank 'Doing Business Report', Belarus is currently only ranked 58th as regards the 'ease of doing business'. It remains to be seen to what extent the Industrial Park will further the liberalisation of the economy in Belarus and be beneficial to business (including European businesses).

2. The Commission generally promotes and implements policies and measures to maintain investment in and to attract FDI to the EU in order to generate growth and employment and to counteract the hollowing out of Europe's industrial base. At the same time, the Commission is fully aware that in times of globalisation European companies must be active at international level in order to be successful.

3. The EU pursues a policy of critical engagement towards Belarus. This includes restrictive measures against a number of individuals and entities, as well as cooperation through the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership, technical dialogues on topics of common interest, and support to civil society. The release and rehabilitation of political prisoners is a key condition for the normalisation of EU-Belarus relations.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006755/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Accords anticoncurrentiels entre groupes pharmaceutiques

La presse faisait état, il y a peu, du fait que la mise en vente d'antidépresseurs génériques aurait été retardée par le groupe Lundbeck d'au moins deux ans. Ce retard aurait entraîné un surcoût de 20 % pour les consommateurs.

Les autres sociétés visées sont Generics UK, Arrow, Resolution Chemicals, Xellia Pharmaceuticals, Alpharma, A.L. Industrier et Ranbaxy, le numéro un indien du secteur.

1. Si les faits sont avérés, il s'agirait des premières sanctions financières infligées à des laboratoires pharmaceutiques par l'Union européenne. Quelle somme la Commission compte-t-elle demander à titre de sanction?

2. Quel pourcentage de cette somme serait réaffecté à la lutte antifraude?

3. Par quel biais la Commission a-t-elle eu vent de cette supercherie?

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

Contrairement à ce que la première question laisse entendre, ce n'est pas la première fois que la Commission sanctionne des entreprises pharmaceutiques. En 2005, par exemple, elle a frappé AstraZeneca d'une amende de 60 millions d'euros pour abus de position dominante. En ce qui concerne les sanctions imposées dans l'affaire 39 226 (Lundbeck), elle a infligé, le 19 juin 2013, une amende de 93,8 millions d'euros à la société pharmaceutique danoise Lundbeck et des amendes d'un montant total de 52,2 millions d'euros aux fabricants de médicaments génériques Alpharma (qui fait désormais partie de Zoetis), Merck KgaA/Generics UK (Generics UK fait désormais partie de Mylan), Arrow (qui fait désormais partie d'Actavis) et Ranbaxy. La Commission a condamné ces entreprises au paiement d'une amende pour infraction à l'article 101 du traité. Il a en effet été établi que le groupe Lundbeck s'était entendu, en 2002, avec chacun de ces fabricants de médicaments génériques pour retarder l'entrée sur le marché en Europe de versions génériques moins chères de l'antidépresseur vedette des laboratoires Lundbeck, à savoir le citalopram.

Les amendes seront versées au budget de l'UE. Aucune partie de la somme n'est expressément réaffectée à la lutte contre la fraude ou les infractions aux règles de concurrence.

Il s'agissait, dans l'affaire concernée, d'une procédure d'office, c'est-à-dire une procédure engagée par la Commission de sa propre initiative, en l'occurrence pour sanctionner financièrement des entreprises ayant enfreint l'article 101 du traité.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006755/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Anti-competitive agreements between pharmaceutical groups

The press recently reported that the launch of generic antidepressants was delayed for at least two years by the Lundbeck Group, costing consumers an extra 20%.

The other companies implicated are Generics UK, Arrow, Resolution Chemicals, Xellia Pharmaceuticals, Alpharma, A.L. Industrier and Ranbaxy, India's leading pharmaceutical company.

1. If this proves to be true, it will be the first time that the European Union has imposed financial sanctions on pharmaceutical laboratories. What sanction does the Commission intend to impose?

2. What percentage of this money will be redirected to the fight against fraud?

3. How did the Commission learn of this fraud?

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

Unlike the first question suggests, it is not the first time that the Commission sanctions pharmaceutical companies. In 2005, for instance, the Commission imposed a fine of EUR 60 million on AstraZeneca for abuse of its dominant position. Regarding the sanctions in Case 39.226 Lundbeck, on 19 June 2013 the Commission imposed a fine of EUR 93,8 million on the Danish pharmaceutical company Lundbeck and fines totalling EUR 52,2 million on generic producers Alpharma (now part of Zoetis), Merck KGaA/Generics UK (Generics UK is now part of Mylan), Arrow (now part of Actavis), and Ranbaxy. The Commission imposed these fines for a violation of Article 101 of the Treaty, as Lundbeck was found to have agreed in 2002 with each of these generic companies to delay the market entry in Europe of cheaper generic versions of Lundbeck's blockbuster antidepressant medicine, citalopram.

The fines will form part of the EU budget. None of the money is specifically redirected to fight against fraud or competition infringements.

This case was an *ex-officio* case; that is, a case initiated by the Commission, charging the companies violating Article 101 of the Treaty.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006756/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Performance des ports européens

1. La Commission compte-t-elle jouer un rôle dans la diminution des écarts de performance actuellement très importants entre les ports européens? En effet, trois d'entre eux manipulent 20 % de l'ensemble des marchandises qui arrivent en Europe par voie maritime, à savoir Anvers, Hambourg et Rotterdam.

2. La Commission estime-t-elle également que les performances inégales des ports européens entravent fortement l'efficience du secteur: distances plus longues, grands détours de trafic, trajets maritimes et terrestres allongés, envolée des émissions dues au transport, congestion au détriment de l'économie de l'UE?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(18 juillet 2013)

Le 23 mai 2013, la Commission a adopté une communication ([1]) qui fait le point sur les objectifs de la politique portuaire de l'Union européenne. Cette dernière propose huit mesures et est accompagnée d'une proposition de règlement ([2]) du Parlement et du Conseil visant, notamment, à améliorer la performance des ports dans toutes les régions maritimes de l'UE.

La Commission reconnaît que les mauvaises performances des ports, notamment de ceux qui font partie du réseau transeuropéen de transport, constituent un frein au développement durable du système de transport de l'UE dans son ensemble et ont des répercussions négatives sur les perspectives de croissance économique. Les propositions de la Commission ont pour objectif de remédier à ces défaillances.

([1]) COM(2013)295 final.
([2]) COM(2013)296 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006756/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Performance of EU ports

1. Does the Commission intend to play any role in closing the huge gap which currently exists between EU ports in terms of performance? Three of these ports — Anvers, Hamburg and Rotterdam — handle 20% of all freight arriving in Europe by sea.

2. Does the Commission agree that the uneven performance of EU ports has a profound impact on the efficiency of this sector as a result of increased distances, considerable detours, longer sea and land routes, a hike in transport-related emissions and congestion, to the detriment of the EU economy?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2013)

On 23 May 2013, the Commission adopted a communication ([1]) reviewing the objectives of the EU Ports Policy objectives. The communication proposes eight measures and is accompanied by a proposal for a regulation ([2]) by the Parliament and Council for the purpose of, *inter alia*, improving the performance of ports in all EU maritime regions.

The Commission agrees that poorly performing ports, in particular ports which are part of the Trans-European Transport Netwrok, handicap the sustainable development of the EU Transport system as a whole and impact negatively on economic growth prospects. The Commission proposals are addressing these shortcomings.

([1]) COM(2013) 295 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 296 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006757/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: «Un meilleur internet pour les enfants» semble être largement en péril

L'avenir du programme proposé par l'Union européenne «Un meilleur internet pour les enfants» semble être largement en péril.

1. La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas comme une priorité d'étoffer ce budget?

2. La Commission confirme-t-elle que le programme sera financé seulement à partir d'octobre 2014, entraînant une suspension de ce soutien financier pendant plusieurs mois?

3. La Commission confirme-t-elle, oui ou non, que les contrats signés par les 27 États membres pendant la période allant de 2013 au début de 2014 ne peuvent pas être entièrement honorés par l'Union parce que le budget a été en partie épuisé?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Kroes au nom de la Commission
(30 juillet 2013)

Dans sa communication sur une stratégie européenne pour un internet mieux adapté aux enfants ([1]), la Commission souligne l'importance de protéger et de responsabiliser les enfants dans l'univers numérique. L'accord politique sur le cadre financier pluriannuel (CFP), en particulier en ce qui concerne le Mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe, a conduit la Commission à présenter une proposition modifiée de règlement concernant des orientations pour les réseaux transeuropéens de télécommunications ([2]), y compris pour les infrastructures de services numériques. Le renforcement de la sécurité sur internet y figure toujours parmi les infrastructures de services numériques admissibles, mais, comme la proposition modifiée l'indique clairement, le budget disponible ne permettra pas à la Commission de soutenir les plates-formes de base et les services génériques au niveau proposé initialement, du point de vue de l'aide financière et de la prestation de services.

Les projets faisant l'objet de contrats au titre de l'actuel programme pour un internet plus sûr seront financés jusqu'à la date de fin indiquée dans ces contrats, soit le plus souvent juin ou octobre 2014. Le budget disponible pour les projets sélectionnés et négociés à la suite de l'appel à propositions de 2013 reste identique à celui mentionné dans cet appel, à savoir 2,275 millions d'euros au total. La Commission estime que ces projets devraient pouvoir bénéficier d'un financement au moins jusqu'à la fin 2014.

([1]) COM(2012)033 final.
([2]) COM(2013)0329 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006757/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: 'A better Internet for children' at grave risk

The future of the 'Making a better Internet for children' programme proposed by the European Union would appear to be at grave risk.

1. Does the Commission not consider that it is a priority to increase this budget?

2. Can the Commission confirm that the programme will not be financed until October 2014 onwards, thereby causing several months' delay in this financial support?

3. Can the Commission confirm, yes or no, that it will not be possible to honour all contracts signed by the 27 Member States between 2013 and early 2014 because part of the budget has been used up?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The communication of the Commission on European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children ([1]) recognised the importance the Commission gives to empowering and protecting children in the online world. The political agreement on Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), particularly with respect to the Connecting Europe Facility, has led to an amended proposal from the Commission for a regulation on guidelines for trans-European telecommunications networks ([2]), including for the digital services infrastructures. The safer Internet is still identified therein as an eligible digital service infrastructure but, as the amended proposal makes it clear, the available budget will not allow the Commission to support the core platforms or generic services at the level of financial support and service provision, as it was originally proposed.

Projects with contracts under the current Safer Internet programme will be funded to the end date stated in those contracts, which in most cases is either June or October 2014. The budget available for projects selected and negotiated as a result of the 2013 Call for proposals remains as set out in the call, namely 2.275 Million euro in total. The Commission anticipates that these projects could receive funding until at least the end of 2014.

([1]) COM(2012)033 final.
([2]) COM(2013)0329 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006758/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Conséquences de la disparition de l'itinérance

Le Parlement européen et de nombreux collègues se sont réjouis que la commissaire européenne chargée des nouvelles technologies fasse écho de leurs demandes d'abolir les tarifs de l'itinérance en Europe dès 2014.

1. La Commission peut-elle confirmer que le paquet législatif sera bien proposé en juillet comme annoncé?

2. La Commission envisage-t-elle d'empêcher les opérateurs de rattraper le futur manque à gagner en matière d'itinérance via l'augmentation d'autres tarifs?

3. La Commission pourrait-elle nous dire à combien, en moyenne, se monte, annuellement, le total des frais d'itinérance perçus dans le portefeuille des citoyens?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(23 juillet 2013)

Le Conseil européen du printemps 2013 a souligné l'importance du marché unique numérique pour la croissance, et dans ses conclusions, a demandé que la Commission présente des mesures concrètes en vue de la création d'un marché unique des technologies de l'information et des communications avant le Conseil européen d'octobre. Par conséquent, la Commission envisage de présenter au début du mois de septembre 2013 une proposition législative en vue de la création d'un véritable marché unique des télécommunications. La Commission estime qu'il s'agit là d'une démarche essentielle pour stimuler la croissance et l'emploi dans l'UE.

Les frais d'itinérance appliqués actuellement illustrent clairement l'absence d'un tel marché unique. La Commission prévoit d'aborder ce problème dans la prochaine initiative législative sur la base des mesures du règlement de 2012 sur l'itinérance qui encouragent la concurrence.

Même si les niveaux des prix des services domestiques ne sont pas régis par la législation de l'UE, le cadre réglementaire actuel dote les autorités nationales de régulation d'outils leur permettant d'agir en cas de problèmes liés à la concurrence sur leurs marchés nationaux, et de prendre des mesures correctives le cas échéant.

Les dépenses moyennes consacrées aux services d'itinérance dépendent largement des modes de consommation individuels et des services utilisés. Le marché intracommunautaire de l'itinérance représente environ 5 milliards d'euros par an, soit environ 10 euros par personne. Les personnes qui voyagent fréquemment ou effectuent régulièrement des déplacements professionnels sont évidemment les plus touchées par les frais d'itinérance. De plus, les modes de consommation évoluent rapidement dès lors que les données mobiles sont en pleine croissance compte tenu des nouveaux appareils et services de connexion.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006758/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Consequences of a ban on roaming charges

The European Parliament and many of my fellow Members have welcomed the news that the EU Commissioner in charge of new technologies has echoed their calls to abolish roaming charges in Europe from 2014.

1. Can the Commission confirm the announcement that the legislative package will be tabled in July?

2. Is the Commission planning to stop operators from compensating for the future loss of revenue from roaming by charging more for other services?

3. Can the Commission indicate what the average citizen spends in total each year on roaming charges?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2013)

The 2013 Spring European Council stressed the importance of the digital single market for growth and, in its conclusions, called for concrete measures to establish a Single Market for Information and Communications Technology as early as possible to be presented by the Commission in advance of the October European Council. To this effect, the Commission intends presenting in early September 2013 a legislative initiative to create a true Telecoms Single Market. The Commission considers this essential to boost growth and jobs in the EU.

Clearly roaming charges are an example of the absence of such a single market today. Building on the pro-competitive measures of the 2012 Roaming Regulation, the Commission is considering as part of the forthcoming legislative initiative to address roaming.

Although the price levels of domestic services are not regulated as such under EC law, the current regulatory framework already provides National Regulatory Authorities with tools to act in relation to any competition problems that may exist within their national markets and, when appropriate, to impose remedies.

The average spending on roaming services depends very much on individuals' consumption patterns and services used. The size of intra-EU roaming market is about EUR 5 billion a year, representing around 10 EUR per capita. Frequent travellers and business travellers are clearly most affected by roaming charges. Furthermore, consumption patterns are changing fast as mobile data is growing quickly with the advent of new connected services and devices.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006759/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Montant total des coûts perçus pour l'itinérance

Le Parlement européen et de nombreux collègues se sont réjouis que la commissaire chargée des nouvelles technologies se fasse l'écho de leurs demandes d'abolir dès 2014 les tarifs appliqués pour l'itinérance dans l'Union européenne.

La Commission pourrait-elle nous dire à combien, en moyenne, annuellement, se monte le total des frais d'itinérance pris dans le portefeuille des citoyens?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(30 juillet 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable parlementaire à sa réponse à la question E-006758/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006759/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Total charged for roaming services

The European Parliament and many of my fellow Members have welcomed the news that the Commissioner in charge of new technologies has echoed their calls to abolish roaming charges within the European Union from 2014.

Can the Commission indicate what the average citizen spends in total each year on roaming charges?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the answer given in reply to Question E-006758/2013 ([1]).

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006760/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Salvador: torture de Beatriz

Aucune femme ne doit se voir refuser des soins médicaux vitaux — notamment un avortement si cela est nécessaire. La vie de «Beatriz» n'est plus en danger, le gouvernement salvadorien l'ayant finalement autorisée lundi 4 juin à subir une césarienne anticipée afin qu'elle ne succombe pas aux complications causées par une grossesse non viable et une grave maladie.

Beatriz — dont le cas a galvanisé des militants du monde entier — a ainsi souffert pendant de longues semaines tandis que les tribunaux et responsables salvadoriens débattaient de la possibilité de lui offrir un traitement.

Dans le même temps, nous tenons à affirmer avec force qu'aucune femme ou jeune fille ne doit subir le genre de discrimination, assimilable à de la torture, infligé à Beatriz, qui a dû lutter pour rester en vie tandis qu'on lui refusait un avortement susceptible de la sauver et de préserver sa santé.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission face à cette histoire tragique?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle entamer des démarches diplomatiques afin que le gouvernement salvadorien agisse immédiatement pour en finir avec l'interdiction totale de l'avortement et mettre la législation du pays en conformité avec les normes internationales en matière de droits humains?

Pour rappel, comme les médecins l'avaient prédit, le bébé, à qui il manquait une grande partie de la tête et du cerveau, n'a survécu que quelques heures après sa naissance.

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

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a suivi ce dossier avec attention.

L'Union européenne est restée en contact avec le ministère de la santé tout au long de cette affaire, l'encourageant à y apporter une solution acceptable.

L'UE est disposée à accompagner la société salvadorienne dans sa réflexion sur de possibles changements futurs, en s'inspirant des récentes conclusions du Conseil relatives au programme pour l'après-2015. En adoptant ces conclusions, l'UE a réitéré son engagement en faveur aussi bien de la mise en œuvre pleine et entière du programme d'action de Pékin et du programme d'action de la Conférence internationale sur la population et le développement que du respect, à cet égard, de la santé et des droits en matière de sexualité et de procréation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006760/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: El Salvador: torture of Beatriz

No woman should be refused essential medical care, including an abortion in cases where this proves necessary. The life of 'Beatriz' is no longer at risk, since on Monday 4 June the government in El Salvador finally allowed her to undergo an early caesarean section to save her from dying from the complications of a non-viable pregnancy and a life-threatening illness.

Beatriz suffered for weeks on end while the courts and those in charge in El Salvador debated whether she could be allowed treatment, and her case has been a call to arms for militants from all around the words.

We would like to take this opportunity to underline our conviction that no woman or girl should experience the type of discrimination suffered by Beatriz, which is equivalent to torture. After being refused the abortion she needed to save her life and preserve her health, she was forced to fight for her life.

1. What is the Commission's position on this tragic case?

2. Does the Commission plan to undertake diplomatic efforts to encourage the government of El Salvador to act immediately to end the total ban on abortion and to bring the country's legislation into line with international human rights standards?

As the doctors had predicted, the baby was born with large parts of her head and brain missing and only survived a few hours.

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

The HR/VP has closely followed this case.

During the whole process, the EU maintained contacts with the Ministry of Health, encouraging it to find an acceptable solution to the case.

The EU stands ready to accompany Salvadorian society discussing possible changes in the future, in line with the recently adopted Council Conclusions on the Post-2015 Agenda. By adopting these conclusions, the EU has reaffirmed its commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme for Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and in this context sexual and reproductive health and rights.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006761/13
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Alta disoccupazione giovanile e mancanza di lavoratori qualificati in Europa

Al momento la disoccupazione giovanile in Europa ha raggiunto livelli insostenibili, con picchi che superano il 50 % in Spagna e Grecia.

Contemporaneamente, in alcuni settori del mercato del lavoro europeo si registra una grande mancanza di lavoratori, ad esempio si stima che in Europa mancheranno circa 700 000 lavoratori qualificati nel settore delle tecnologie dell'informazione entro il 2015.

Queste cifre sarebbero una dimostrazione del fatto che il mercato del lavoro europeo non sta funzionando.

Le procedure per l'ottenimento di un permesso di soggiorno da parte di lavoratori altamente qualificati provenienti da paesi terzi sono lunghe e complicate. Ma è sopratutto la mobilità di questi lavoratori all'interno del mercato unico che viene ostacolata da regole e procedure inutili.

Avviene così che compagnie richiedenti personale altamente qualificato scelgono sempre più di non investire in Europa, o di delocalizzare fuori dall'UE, con conseguenze negative per l'economia europea e per lo stesso mercato del lavoro europeo.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se esiste al momento allo studio della Commissione un piano di intervento per facilitare l'accesso di imprese di paesi terzi nell'UE; e

— quali misure intende proporre per cercare di superare questo paradosso proprio del mercato del lavoro europeo?

Risposta data da Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(5 agosto 2013)

La Commissione ritiene che l'investimento nel capitale umano, compresa la promozione della mobilità intra-UE dei lavoratori, potrebbe contribuire a ridurre gli effetti della carenza di determinate competenze.

Per quanto riguarda i cittadini di paesi terzi, ciascuno Stato membro decide il numero di persone da ammettere nel proprio territorio a fini lavorativi. La mancata corrispondenza tra le competenze disponibili e le esigenze dei mercati del lavoro interessa tutti gli Stati membri, seppure in misura diversa. La mobilità dei cittadini dell'UE all'interno dell'Unione europea potrebbe contribuire a ridurre specifiche carenze di personale e/o mancate corrispondenze tra competenze e esigenze del mercato. L'apprendimento permanente — che comprende l'aumento delle competenze e la riqualificazione professionale — potrebbe rendere più flessibile l'offerta di qualifiche e migliorare le prospettive di incontro tra domanda e offerta. L'UE sta sviluppando una vasta gamma di strumenti per monitorare, prevedere e anticipare le esigenze in materia di competenze.

Il piano d'azione della Commissione «Imprenditorialità 2020» ([1]), adottato nel gennaio 2013, ha come obiettivo specifico gli imprenditori migranti e la capacità degli investitori di creare attività e posti di lavoro in Europa. Anche la proposta di direttiva sui trasferimenti intrasocietari ha particolare pertinenza per l'economia dell'UE. La possibilità per questi lavoratori di trasferirsi temporaneamente in un altro Stato membro se e quando il loro lavoro lo richiede è il principale valore aggiunto della proposta. La Commissione auspica che i colegislatori trovino presto un accordo su un sistema fattibile e flessibile. L'ingresso di lavoratori altamente qualificati che non sono cittadini dell'Unione può già essere autorizzato in forza della direttiva sulla Carta blu. La mobilità all'interno dell'UE dei cittadini di paesi terzi è ulteriormente facilitata dall'attuale legislazione dell'UE su soggiornanti di lungo periodo ([2]), ricercatori ([3]), studenti ([4]) e lavoratori distaccati ([5]).

La rete europea sulle migrazioni ([6]) sta svolgendo uno studio sulla mobilità all'interno dell'UE dei cittadini di paesi terzi per comprendere meglio le problematiche e le sfide principali in questo campo. Lo studio sarà disponibile a breve.

([1]) COM(2012)795 def.
([2]) Direttiva 2003/109/CE.
([3]) Direttiva 2005/71/CE.
([4]) Direttiva 2004/114/CE.
([5]) Direttiva 96/71/CE.
([6]) http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/html/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006761/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: High youth unemployment and shortage of qualified workers in Europe

The current youth unemployment rate in Europe has reached unsustainable levels, surpassing 50% in Spain and Greece.

Meanwhile, some European labour market sectors are experiencing a severe shortage of workers. For example, an estimated shortage of 700 000 qualified workers is expected by 2015 in the European information technology sector.

These figures show that the European labour market is not working.

Residence permit procedures for highly qualified workers from third countries are lengthy and complicated. Most importantly, however, useless rules and procedures block these workers' mobility within the single market.

As a result, companies in need of highly qualified staff are increasingly deciding not to invest in Europe or choosing to relocate outside the EU, with negative consequences for the European economy and labour market.

— Is the Commission currently considering an action plan to facilitate access to the EU for businesses from third countries?

— What measures will it propose to overcome this paradox in the European labour market?

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

The Commission believes that investing in human capital, including encouraging intra-EU labour mobility, could help attenuate the impact of skills shortages.

As to third-country nationals, each Member State decides the number that it admits to its territory for the purposes of work. The mismatches between skills available and the needs of labour markets concern all Member States, but affect them to varying degrees. Mobility of EU nationals within the EU could help alleviate specific labour shortages and/or mismatches. Lifelong learning, including up-skilling and re-skilling could make the supply of skills more flexible and improve matching prospects. The EU is developing a wide range of instruments to monitor, forecast and anticipate skills needs.

The Commission's Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan ([1]), adopted in January 2013, specifically targets migrant entrepreneurs' and investors' ability to create businesses and jobs in Europe. The proposed Directive on Intra-Corporate Transferees is also of particular relevance to the EU economy. Allowing transferees to move temporarily to another Member State if and when their job requires it, is the main added value of the proposal. The Commission hopes that the co-legislators will soon agree on a workable, flexible scheme. Highly-qualified non-EU nationals can already be admitted as workers under the Blue Card Directive. Intra-EU mobility of third-country nationals is further facilitated by existing EU legislation on long-term residents ([2]), researchers ([3]), students ([4]) and posted workers ([5]).

The European Migration Network ([6]) is conducting a study on intra-EU mobility of third-country nationals, to better understand the key issues and challenges in this field. The study will be available shortly.

([1]) COM(2012) 795 final.
([2]) Directive 2003/109/EC.
([3]) Directive 2005/71/EC.
([4]) Directive 2004/114/EC.
([5]) Directive 96/71/EC.
([6]) http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/html/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006762/13
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Misure europee per combattere l'eccessivo consumo di alcol nell'UE

Secondo il rapporto «Alcohol in the European Union — Consumption, harm and policy approaches», pubblicato dall'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità nel 2012, un adulto medio europeo consuma circa 12,5 litri di alcol puro all'anno.

L'eccessivo consumo di bevande alcoliche è il terzo fattore di rischio per la salute e causa il 12 % delle morti premature negli uomini. Oltre a essere nocivo per la salute, il consumo smodato di bevande alcoliche grava anche sul sistema sanitario, sulle forze dell'ordine, ed è dannoso per la produttività sul posto di lavoro.

Secondo il rapporto, questo rappresenta una spesa per l'Unione europea pari a 125 miliardi di euro.

La strategia europea volta a ridurre i pericoli derivanti dal consumo di alcol stabilisce delle linee guida ma non impone un'apposita legislazione agli Stati membri.

È doveroso notare che alcuni Stati membri ancora non hanno una legislazione che vieti il consumo e la vendita di bevande alcoliche ai minori di 18 anni o che stabilisca rigidi limiti del tasso alcolemico per i conducenti di veicoli motorizzati.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se ritiene che sia necessario imporre una legislazione comune, che regoli il consumo e la vendita di bevande alcoliche in tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione; e

— se vi siano al momento misure concrete all'esame, che vadano in tale direzione?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(26 luglio 2013)

L'alcol è uno dei principali problemi in ambito sanitario nell'Unione europea poiché rappresenta uno dei più importanti fattori di rischio all'origine di malattie croniche. In risposta alle tendenze negative, menzionate dall'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione ha adottato nel 2006 la strategia comunitaria volta ad affiancare gli Stati membri nei loro sforzi per ridurre i danni derivanti dal consumo di alcol ([1]). Una delle strutture di attuazione della strategia è costituito dal Comitato sulla politica e l'azione a livello nazionale in materia di alcol (CNAPA), un comitato di Stati membri che funge anche da piattaforma per la condivisione e lo scambio di buone pratiche.

Come l'onorevole parlamentare forse saprà, spetta agli Stati membri elaborare la pertinente normativa per disciplinare il consumo e la vendita di bevande alcoliche.

La Commissione intende continuare a sostenere gli Stati membri fornendo dati comprovati e promuovendo lo scambio di buone pratiche sulla prevenzione dei danni provocati da consumo di alcol. Nel gennaio 2014 sarà avviata, assieme agli Stati membri, un'azione congiunta sull'alcol. La Commissione sostiene inoltre la creazione di una rete di autorità competenti degli Stati membri responsabili di far rispettare i limiti di età per la vendita e la somministrazione di bevande alcoliche.

([1]) Comunicazione del 24 ottobre 2006, Strategia comunitaria volta ad affiancare gli Stati membri nei loro sforzi per ridurre i danni derivanti dal consumo di alcol, COM(2006)625.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006762/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: European measures to combat excessive alcohol consumption in the EU

According to the 2012 World Health Organisation report 'Alcohol in the European Union. Consumption, harm and policy approaches', the average European adult consumes about 12.5 litres of pure alcohol each year.

Excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages is the third most common risk factor for health, causing 12% of premature deaths in men. In addition to being harmful to health, excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages is also a burden on the healthcare system and law enforcement, and impairs productivity at work.

According to the report, this costs the European Union EUR 125 billion.

The EU strategy to reduce alcohol-related harm sets out guidelines but imposes no specific legislation on Member States.

In fact, some Member States still have no legislation prohibiting the consumption and sale of alcoholic beverages for those under 18 years of age or establishing strict limits on blood alcohol levels for motor vehicle drivers.

— Does the Commission think it should impose common legislation regulating the consumption and sale of alcoholic beverages in all Member States?

— Are any concrete measures along these lines currently under consideration?

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

Alcohol is a key public health concern in the European Union as one of the major risk factors leading to chronic diseases. In response to the negative trends, such as these mentioned by the Honourable Member, in 2006 the Commission adopted the EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm ([1]). One of the structures for implementing the strategy is the Committee on National Alcohol Policies and Action (CNAPA), which is a Member States committee and serves also as platform for sharing and exchange of good practices.

As the Honourable Member may be aware, it is Member States' responsibility to produce relevant legislation to regulate consumption and sale of alcoholic beverages.

The Commission intends to further support Member States providing evidence and exchange of good practices on prevention of alcohol related harm. A joint action on alcohol with Member States will start in January 2014. The Commission is also supporting the creation of a network of competent authorities in Member States responsible for enforcement of age limits on selling and serving alcoholic beverages.

([1]) Communication of 24 October 2006, An EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm COM(2006) 625.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-006763/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποχώρηση της Gazprom από το διαγωνισμό για την ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΔΕΠΑ

Σε συνέχεια της αιφνιδιαστικής απόσυρσης της ρωσικής εταιρείας Gazprom από το διαγωνισμό για την ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΔΕΠΑ και των δημοσιευμάτων ότι γι' αυτό ευθύνεται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, η οποία παρενέβη φοβούμενη την περαιτέρω ισχυροποίηση της Ρωσίας στην εσωτερική αγορά ενέργειας της ΕΕ, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπή:

1. Υπήρξε παρέμβαση (επίσημη ή παρασκηνιακή) από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή κατά της προσφοράς της Gazprom για την ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΔΕΠΑ; Συνάδει τέτοιου είδους παρέμβαση με την εύρυθμη λειτουργία της εσωτερικής αγοράς και τις αρμοδιότητες της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής;

2. συσχετίζει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή την έκβαση του διαγωνισμού ιδιωτικοποίησης της ΔΕΠΑ/ΔΕΣΦΑ με την έρευνα που διεξάγει για την άσκηση μονοπωλιακών πρακτικών στην ευρωπαϊκή αγορά φυσικού αερίου;

3. ποια ήταν η θέση που κράτησε η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στο πλαίσιο της τρόικα έναντι της εν λόγω ιδιωτικοποίησης; Εντοπίζει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή κάποια αντίφαση μεταξύ της απαίτησης που έχει τεθεί στην Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση για άμεσα έσοδα από την ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΔΕΠΑ και των ασαφών προθέσεων και προϋποθέσεων που διατυπώνει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή για τον διαγωνισμό;

4. Πώς εκτιμά ότι μπορεί να καλυφθεί το κενό εσόδων που δημιουργείται στο ελληνικό πρόγραμμα αποκρατικοποιήσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Ιουλίου 2013)

1. Ουδεμία επιρροή ασκήθηκε από μέρους της Επιτροπής στον διαγωνισμό για τη ΔΕΠΑ. Ο διαγωνισμός διενεργήθηκε και διενεργείται από τις ελληνικές αρχές σύμφωνα με το ελληνικό και το ενωσιακό δίκαιο. Ο ρόλος της Επιτροπής έγκειται στην αξιολόγηση της ενδεχόμενης έκβασης των ιδιωτικοποιήσεων στον τομέα της ενέργειας βάσει του ενωσιακού δικαίου ενέργειας και ανταγωνισμού.

2. Οι εξαγορές που απορρέουν από την ελληνική διαδικασία ιδιωτικοποιήσεων, όπως και όλες οι άλλες εξαγορές, εφόσον ενέχουν σχετική με την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση διάσταση, υπόκεινται στον έλεγχο της ΕΕ για τις συγκεντρώσεις. Οι έρευνες για τον έλεγχο των συγκεντρώσεων διέπονται από τον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 139/2004 του Συμβουλίου. Αντίθετα, οι έρευνες για τις πιθανές παραβάσεις του άρθρου 101 ή/και του άρθρου 102 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (ΣΛΕΕ) διέπονται από τον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2003 του Συμβουλίου. Οι έρευνες βάσει του κανονισμού περί συγκεντρώσεων της ΕΕ και βάσει των ενδεχόμενων παραβάσεων του άρθρου 101 ή/και του άρθρου 102 της ΣΛΕΕ διενεργούνται χωριστά.

3. Η Επιτροπή δεν υιοθετεί συγκεκριμένη στάση για οποιαδήποτε ιδιωτικοποίηση πραγματοποιείται στην Ελλάδα ή σε οποιοδήποτε άλλο κράτος μέλος. Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να συνεργάζεται με τις αρμόδιες αρχές για την προώθηση της πλήρους διαφάνειας και της συμμόρφωσης με τους εφαρμοστέους κανόνες.

4. Οι ελληνικές αρχές εξέφρασαν ήδη την πρόθεσή τους να προκηρύξουν το συντομότερο δυνατόν εκ νέου διαγωνισμό για την ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΔΕΠΑ. Η Επιτροπή χαιρετίζει αυτή την πρόθεση και αναμένει τη θετική έκβαση της διαδικασίας ώστε να ελαχιστοποιηθούν οι πιθανές συνέπειες τόσο στο χρονοδιάγραμμα όσο και στα έσοδα του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποιήσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006763/13
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Gazprom withdrawal from DEPA privatisation

Following the sudden withdrawal by the Russian Gazprom company from the DEPA privatisation and reports that responsibility for this lay with the European Commission, which feared a further strengthening of Russia's position on the EU internal energy market:

1. Did the Commission in fact intervene (officially or behind the scenes) in the DEPA privatisation procedure so as to discourage the Gazprom bid? Is intervention of this kind in line with the proper functioning of the internal market and the Commission's terms of reference?

2. Does the Commission see a link between the outcome of the DEPA and DESFA privatisations and its investigations into monopolistic practices on the European natural gas market?

3. What stance was adopted by the Commission within the Troika regarding the privatisation? Does the Commission see any contradiction between the conditions imposed on the Greek Government requiring it to generate immediate income from the DEPA privatisation and its unclear requirements regarding the tendering deadlines and conditions?

4. How does the Commission consider that it will be possible to offset the resulting shortfall in revenue from the Greek privatisation programme?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

1. The Commission had no influence on the bidding process for DEPA. The process was and is carried out by the Greek authorities according to Greek and EC law. The role of the Commission is to assess any possible outcome of privatisations in the energy sector under the EU energy and competition laws.

2. Like all other acquisitions, those resulting from the Greek privatisation process are, if the resulting operation has a European Union dimension, subject to EU merger control. Merger control investigations are governed by Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004. In contrast, investigations into possible infringments of Article 101 and/or 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) are governed by Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003. Investigations under the EU merger regulation and possible infringments of Article 101 and/or 102 TFEU are conducted seperately.

3. The Commission has no particular stance on any privatisation happening in Greece or in any other Member State. The Commission will continue to work with the competent authorities to promote full transparency and compliance with applicable rules.

4. The Greek authorities have already expressed their intention to relaunch the privatisation of DEPA as soon as possible. The Commission welcomes this intention and looks forward to a positive conclusion of the process in order to minimise the possible effects on the timetable and proceeds of the privatisation programme.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006764/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: NSA-Abruf von Nutzerdaten des Unternehmens Skype

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen Whistleblower ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gespeicherten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Laut einer internen Grafik der NSA, die durch die Washington Post veröffentlicht wurde , konnte die NSA seit Juni 2011 auf die Daten des ehemals estnischen Unternehmens Skype zugreifen. Somit wurde dieser Zugang nur einen Monat nach der im Mai 2011 erfolgten Übernahme von Skype durch das US-Unternehmen Microsoft möglich. Zum Zeitpunkt der Übernahme spekulierten Beobachter, dass ein US-Geheimdienst die Übernahme von Skype finanzierte oder förderte, um Zugang zu Skype-Telefonaten und Nutzerdaten zu erhalten.

1. In welcher Form sind bei EU-Unternehmen gelagerte Daten nach einer Übernahme eines solchen Unternehmens durch ein Nicht-EU-Unternehmen geschützt?

2. Sind EU-Unternehmen vor der Übernahme durch ein Nicht-EU-Unternehmen dazu verpflichtet, Nutzerdaten und Protokolle zu vernichten, falls diese durch die Übernahme der Kontrolle von EU-Datenschützern entzogen werden?

3. Müssen Nutzer vor Übernahmen durch Nicht-EU-Unternehmen vor möglichen Konsequenzen für ihre Privatsphäre gewarnt werden?

4. Wird die Kommission Skype auffordern, aufzuklären, ob Nutzerdaten, die vor Mai 2011 gesammelt wurden, durch PRISM von US-Behörden abgerufen werden konnten?

Antwort von Viviane Reding im Namen der Kommission
(30. August 2013)

Die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten (zu der auch die Speicherung zählt) im Rahmen der Tätigkeit einer Niederlassung in der EU oder mit Mitteln, die sich in der EU befinden, unterliegt nach Artikel 4 der Richtlinie 95/46/EG auch nach der Übernahme eines EU-Unternehmens durch ein Nicht-EU-Unternehmen weiterhin dem Schutz des Datenschutzrechts der Mitgliedstaaten. Es gibt keine besondere Pflicht zur Vernichtung von Nutzerdaten und Protokollen oder zur Warnung von Nutzern vor einer solchen Übernahme.

Die Kommission hat die Regierung der USA um Aufklärung ersucht bezüglich der Programme, über die in den Medien berichtet wurde, und über die möglichen Folgen für die Grundrechte von Europäern. Außerdem hat die Kommission zusammen mit dem EU-Ratsvorsitz eine Ad-hoc-Arbeitsgruppe EU-USA zur näheren Prüfung dieser Sache eingesetzt. Auf der Grundlage der Ergebnisse dieser Arbeitsgruppe wird die Kommission über weitere geeignete Schritte beraten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006764/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: NSA retrieval of Skype user data

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

According to an internal NSA graphic published by the Washington Post, the NSA has been able to access data owned by the formerly Estonian company Skype since June 2011. This means that the NSA gained access to the said data only one month after Skype was bought up by the US company Microsoft in May 2011. At the time of the takeover observers speculated that one of the US intelligence services was funding or sponsoring the takeover to obtain access to Skype calls and user data.

1. How is data stored by EU companies protected after the takeover of such companies by non-EU companies?

2. Are EU companies required to destroy user data and records before acquisition by non-EU companies, if the takeover means that the EU company in question no longer comes under EU data protection law?

3. Do users need to be warned about possible consequences for their privacy prior to takeovers by non-EU companies?

4. Is the Commission going to ask Skype to clarify whether it was possible for the US authorities to retrieve user data collected prior to May 2011 using PRISM?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

Pursuant to Art. 4 of Directive 95/46/EC, processing of personal data, which may include storage, carried out in the context of the activities of an establishment in the EU or through equipment situated in the EU continues to be protected by Member States data protection laws following a takeover of an EU company by a non-EU company. There is no specific obligation to destroy user data and records or warn users prior to such an acquisition.

The Commission has asked the US Government for clarifications in relation to the programmes reported in the media and the potential impact on the fundamental rights of Europeans. In addition, the Commission has set up, together with the Presidency of the EU, an ad-hoc EU-US working group to examine these issues further. On the basis of the results of this working group, the Commission will assess the appropriate next steps.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006765/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Nutzung von Internetdiensten, die von NSA-Spionage betroffen sind

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

1. Wird die Kommission ihre Mitarbeiter auffordern, bis der Umfang der Spionage geklärt ist, auf die Nutzung der betroffenen Dienste zu verzichten?

2. Wird die Nutzung einzelner Dienste dieser Unternehmen wie beispielsweise der Suchmaschinen Bing und Google oder der E-Mail-Dienste Gmail, Hotmail und iCloud Mail untersagt oder technisch verhindert?

Antwort von Viviane Reding im Namen der Kommission
(30. August 2013)

Die Kommission hat von der Regierung der Vereinigten Staaten um Aufklärung ersucht bezüglich der Programme, über die in den Medien berichtet wurde, und über die möglichen Folgen für die Grundrechte von Europäern. Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission in Zusammenarbeit mit dem litauischen EU-Ratsvorsitz eine Ad-hoc-Arbeitsgruppe EU-USA ins Leben gerufen, die diese Fragen eingehender prüfen soll. Auf der Grundlage der Ergebnisse dieser Arbeitsgruppe wird die Kommission über weitere geeignete Schritte beraten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006765/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Use of Internet services affected by NSA spying

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme conducted by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

1. Will the Commission be asking its employees not to use the services affected until the extent of the spying is clarified?

2. Will the use of the various services provided by the companies in question, e.g. the search engines Bing and Google or Gmail, Hotmail and iCloud Mail e-mail services, be prohibited or technically barred?

Answer given by Ms Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The Commission has asked the US Government for clarifications in relation to the programmes reported in the media and the potential impact on the fundamental rights of Europeans. In addition, the Commission has set up, together with the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU, an ad hoc EU-US working group to examine these issues further. Based on the results of this working group, the Commission will make an assessment of the appropriate next steps.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006766/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Mögliche Finanzierung der Übernahme des Unternehmens Skype durch US-Geheimdienste

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gespeicherten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Laut einer internen Grafik der NSA, die durch die Washington Post veröffentlicht wurde, konnte die NSA seit Juni 2011 auf die Daten des ehemals estnischen Unternehmens Skype zugreifen. Somit wurde dieser Zugang nur einen Monat nach der im Mai 2011 erfolgten Übernahme von Skype durch das US-Unternehmen Microsoft möglich. Zum Zeitpunkt der Übernahme spekulierten Beobachter, dass ein US-Geheimdienst die Übernahme von Skype finanzierte oder förderte, um Zugang zu Skype-Telefonaten und Nutzerdaten zu erhalten.

1. Verfügt die Kommission über Informationen darüber, ob die Übernahme von Skype tatsächlich durch die NSA finanziert oder mitfinanziert wurde?

2. Verstößt eine Übernahme mit Fördergeldern einer Drittregierung gegen EU-Wettbewerbsvorschriften?

3. Verstößt eine Übernahme mit Fördergeldern einer Drittregierung gegen sonstiges EU-Recht?

Antwort von Viviane Reding im Namen der Kommission
(2. September 2013)

Die Kommission hat die Regierung der Vereinigten Staaten um Aufklärung gebeten in Bezug auf die Programme, über die in den Medien berichtet wurde, und die möglichen Konsequenzen für die Grundrechte von Europäern. Außerdem hat die Kommission zusammen mit dem EU-Ratsvorsitz eine Ad-hoc-Datenschutzarbeitsgruppe EU-USA zur näheren Prüfung dieser Sache eingesetzt.

Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen vor, wonach die Übernahme von Skype durch Microsoft von der US National Security Agency (NSA) finanziert oder mitfinanziert wurde.

Die Kommission besitzt parallele Zuständigkeit für staatliche Beihilfen und Fusionskontrolle in der Europäischen Union und muss dafür sorgen, dass beide Verfahren kohärent angewandt werden. Mögliche Beihilfen eines Drittstaates, wie beispielsweise der Vereinigten Staaten, unterliegen jedoch nicht den EU-Vorschriften über staatliche Beihilfen, sie können allerdings unter die geltenden Bestimmungen des internationalen Rechts fallen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006766/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Possible financing of the acquisition of Skype by the US intelligence services

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

According to an internal NSA graphic published by the Washington Post, the NSA has had access to data owned by the formerly Estonian company Skype since June 2011. This means that the NSA gained access to the said data only one month after Skype was bought up by the US company Microsoft in May 2011. At the time of the takeover observers speculated that one of the US intelligence services was funding or sponsoring the takeover to obtain access to Skype calls and user data.

1. Does the Commission have any information as to whether or not the acquisition of Skype was actually financed or jointly financed by the NSA?

2. Does a takeover subsidised by a third-country government constitute a breach of EU competition rules?

3. Does a takeover subsidised by a third-country government constitute a breach of other EU legislation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commission has asked the US Government for clarifications in relation to the programmes reported in the media and the potential impact on the fundamental rights of Europeans. In addition, the Commission has set up, together with the Presidency of the EU, an ad-hoc EU-US working group on data protection to examine these issues further.

The Commission has no information that the acquisition of Skype by Microsoft was financed or jointly financed by the US National Security Agency (NSA).

While the Commission has parallel competence for state aid and merger control in the European Union, and must ensure the consistent application of both procedures, potential subsidies granted by a third country, such as the United States, do not fall under the European Union state aid rules but may be subject to the applicable rules of international law.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006767/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Kommunikationstransfers durch die USA

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gespeicherten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Eine durch die Washington Post veröffentlichte NSA-interne Präsentation des Programms erläutert, dass ein Großteil der weltweiten Telefon-, Email- und Chat-Kommunikationen durch U.S.-Territorium transferiert werden, selbst wenn dies nicht der direkteste Weg vom Sender zum Empfänger ist. Der Datenstrom zwischen Europa und Nordamerika wird dabei mit 4.972 Gbps angegeben.

1. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass ein Großteil der globalen und möglicherweise auch der EU-internen Kommunikation durch US-Territorium fließt oder durch amerikanische Server verarbeitet wird?

2. Sieht die Kommission Möglichkeiten, diesen Missstand zu beheben?

3. Wann wird die Kommission angesichts der aktuellen Enthüllungen einen Vorschlag zur Behebung dieser Missstände vorlegen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(2. September 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-007934/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006767/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Communication transfer via the USA

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

An internal NSA presentation of the programme, published by the Washington Post, explains that the majority of worldwide telephone, email and chat communications passes through US territory, even if this is not the most direct path from the transmitter to the receiver. The data flow between Europe and North America is given as 4,972 Gbps.

1. Can the Commission confirm that the majority of global and possibly also internal EU communication flows through US territory or is processed using US servers?

2. Can the Commission see any potential ways to redress this situation?

3. In light of the current revelations, when will the Commission submit a proposal to redress these abuses?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commision would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007934/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006768/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Kenntnisse der Kommission über PRISM

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

War die Kommission oder eine ihrer Agenturen vor dem 6. Juni 2013 über PRISM informiert? Wenn ja, in welcher Form?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(31. Juli 2013)

Im Anschluss an die Medienberichte vom 6. Juni 2013, wonach die Behörden der Vereinigten Staaten in großem Maßstab auf Daten europäischer Bürger, die amerikanische Online-Dienstanbieter nutzen, zugreifen und diese verarbeiten, hat die Kommission ihre Besorgnis zum Ausdruck gebracht und die amerikanische Seite um Klarstellungen zu den in den Berichten aufgeworfenen Fragen gebeten.

Die getroffenen Maßnahmen sowie ihre nächsten Schritte hat die Kommission am 5. Juli 2013 in einer Aussprache im Plenum des Europäischen Parlaments erläutert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006768/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: The Commission's knowledge with regard to PRISM

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

Was the Commission or one of its agencies aware of PRISM before 6 June 2013? If so, in what form?

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

Following the media reports of 6 June 2013 that United States authorities are accessing and processing, on a large scale, the data of Europeans using major US online service providers, the Commission has expressed concerns and requested clarifications from the US counterparts regarding the issues raised by the reports in the media.

The actions taken by the Commission as well as next steps were set out by the Commission in a debate in the plenary of the European Parliament on 5 July 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006769/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Kenntnisse des Rates über PRISM

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

War der Rat vor dem 6. Juni 2013 über PRISM informiert? Wenn ja, in welcher Form?

Antwort
(16. September 2013)

Der Rat hatte vor dem 6. Juni 2013 keine Kenntnis von dem PRISM-Programm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006769/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: The Council's knowledge of PRISM

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

Was the Council aware of the PRISM programme before 6 June 2013? If so, in what form?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

The Council would like to inform the Honourable Member that it was not informed of the PRISM programme prior to 6 June 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-006770/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — US-Zugang zu EAD-internen Informationen durch PRISM

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen Whistleblower ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gespeicherten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

1. Nutzt der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst (EAD) im Rahmen seiner Arbeit Online-Dienste der genannten Unternehmen oder anderer US-Unternehmen, die möglicherweise an dem Programm beteiligt waren?

2. Sieht der EAD eine Gefahr, dass im Rahmen von Software-Updates oder anderen Online-Interaktionen mit Servern dieser Unternehmen politisch, sicherheitstechnisch oder anderweitig brisante interne Informationen über Tätigkeiten oder Infrastruktur des EAD durch die NSA oder andere beteiligte Unternehmen gesammelt werden könnten?

Antwort von der Hohen Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin Ashton im Namen der Kommission
(10. Juli 2013)

Aus Sicherheitsgründen nutzt der EAD keine der auf dem Markt verfügbaren Online-Dienste (Cloud) zur Speicherung von Daten. Alle EAD-Daten werden von der Europäischen Kommission oder dem Generalsekretariat des Rates intern für den EAD gespeichert und verwaltet.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006770/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — US access to internal EEAS information via PRISM

On 6 June 2013, an extensive US National Security Agency (NSA) espionage programme was revealed to the public by a whistleblower. Through this programme codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services had access, without legal or other controls, to data stored at least by Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or to information processed by these companies' servers.

1. In the course of its work, does the European External Action Service (EEAS) use the online services provided by these companies or other US companies that may be involved in the programme?

2. Does the EEAS consider there to be a risk that during software updates or other online interactions with these companies' servers, the NSA or other parties involved could collect political, security or other vital internal information on the activities or infrastructure of the EEAS?

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

For security reasons, the EEAS does not use any of the online (cloud) services available on the market to store data. All EEAS data are stored and managed internally to the EEAS, by the European Commission or by the General Secretariat of the Council.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006771/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Aufbau einer europäischen Internetindustrie

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Sicherheitsexperten sind der Meinung, dass der Aufbau einer europäischen Internetindustrie die einzige Möglichkeit ist, solche Eingriffe langfristig zu verhindern.

1. Welche EU-Programme zielen derzeit auf den Aufbau oder die Stärkung einer europäischen Internetindustrie ab?

2. Werden bei diesen Programmen ausschließlich rein EU-basierte Unternehmen gefördert oder auch Tochterfirmen amerikanischer Internetunternehmen?

3. Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission derzeit zur Förderung einer europäischen Internetindustrie?

4. Wird die Kommission angesichts der aktuellen Enthüllungen die Zeitpläne verkürzen, Fördersummen erhöhen oder neue Programme vorschlagen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(3. September 2013)

Die Kommission ist besorgt und hat die US-Behörden in Anbetracht der jüngsten Medienberichte über Programme wie PRISM um Klarstellung gebeten. Diese ermöglichen offenbar, in großem Maßstab auf die Daten von Europäern, die wichtige amerikanische Online-Dienstanbieter nutzen, zuzugreifen und diese zu verarbeiten.

Die Kommission unterstützt den Ausbau der europäischen Internetindustrie, einschließlich Telekommunikations- und Cloud-Computing-Unternehmen, mit verschiedenen politischen Initiativen im Rahmen der Digitalen Agenda und von Finanzierungsprogrammen für Forschung und Innovation, wie dem Siebten Forschungsrahmenprogramm (FP7) und dem Rahmenprogramm für Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Innovation (CIP). US-Unternehmen konnten insbesondere deshalb den Internet-Dienstleistungsmarkt dominieren, weil sie dort direkten Zugang zu einem ausgereiften und integrierten Markt von mehr als 300 Millionen Verbrauchern haben. Daher ist der Ausbau des digitalen Binnenmarktes in Europa weiterhin ein entscheidendes politisches Ziel. Das Innovationspotential dieser Programme wird durch die neuen Instrumente des künftigen Programms Horizont 2020 noch gestärkt werden.

Die Finanzierungsprogramme für Forschung und Innovation richten sich an Unternehmen mit Sitz in Europa (einschließlich nichteuropäischer Unternehmen, die Forschungs- und Innovationskapazitäten in Europa haben).

Die Kommission erwägt in Anbetracht der jüngsten Enthüllungen keine Änderungen an den Forschungs- und Innovationsprogrammen. Im Rahmen von Horizont 2020 werden bereits neue flexiblere Instrumente eingeführt werden, wie die direkte Förderung von einzelnen kleinen und mittleren Hochtechnologieunternehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006771/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Establishment of a European Internet industry

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

Security experts believe that the only way to prevent such interference in the long term is to establish a European Internet industry.

1. Which EU programmes are currently intended to establish or strengthen a European Internet industry?

2. Do these programmes promote only purely EU-based companies or also the subsidiaries of US Internet companies?

3. What steps is the Commission currently planning in order to promote a European Internet industry?

4. In view of the current revelations, does the Commission intend to shorten schedules, increase funding or propose new programmes?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Commission is concerned and has requested clarification to the US authorities regarding recent media reports about programmes such as PRISM which appear to enable, on a large scale, access to and processing of the data of Europeans using major US online service providers.

The Commission supports the development of the Internet industry including telecommunication and cloud computing companies in Europe with various policy initiatives under the Digital Agenda and research and innovation funding programmes such as the Seventh Research Framework programme (FP7) and the Comptetitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP). In particular a major reason why US firms have been able to dominate Internet services is because firms operating there have immediate access to a sophisticated and integerated market of more than 300 million consumers. This is why completing the digital single market in Europe remains a crucial policy objective. The innovation potential of these programmes will be reinforced by the new instruments in the upcoming Horizon 2020 programme.

These research and innovation funding programmes are directed at European-based firms (including those of non-European origin that have research and innovation capacity in Europe).

The Commission does not plan changes in the research and innovation programmes in view of the current revelations. Horizon 2020 will already introduce new instruments that will be more flexible such as direct support for individual high tech SMEs.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006772/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Sammlung personenbezogener Daten von EU-Bürgern durch PRISM

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

1. Hat die Kommission die US-Regierung bereits um Auskunft ersucht, in welchen EU-Ländern auf Daten von Bürgern zugegriffen wurde?

2. Bei welchen Mitgliedstaaten kann die Kommission schon jetzt bestätigen, dass Bürger dieser Länder vom PRISM-Zugriff auf ihre Daten betroffen waren?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(2. September 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-007934/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006772/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: The gathering of personal information on EU citizens through PRISM

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

1. Has the Commission already requested information from the US Government to ascertain in which EU countries citizens' data was accessed?

2. In which Member States can the Commission already confirm that citizens have been affected by data gathering under the PRISM programme?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commision would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007934/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006773/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Sammlung personenbezogener Daten in der EU

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gespeicherten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

1. Ist die Kommission selbst bei PRISM beteiligt?

2. Verfügt die Kommission oder eine ihrer Agenturen selbst über PRISM-ähnliche Programme?

3. Kann die Kommission ausschließen, dass EU-Mitgliedstaaten selbst PRISM-ähnliche Programme betreibt?

4. Hat die Kommission die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten um Erklärung ersucht, ob sie an PRISM beteiligt sind oder ähnliche Programme betreiben?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(7. August 2013)

Die Europäische Kommission war weder bei PRISM beteiligt, noch hatte sie Zugang zu PRISM oder PRISM-ähnlichen Programmen. Die Europäische Kommission sieht sich nicht in der Lage, eine Aussage dazu zu treffen, ob EU-Mitgliedstaaten PRISM-ähnliche Programme betreiben.

Die Kommission wird dem Plenum des Europäischen Parlaments im Oktober über die Ergebnisse der Arbeitsgruppe EU-USA über den Schutz personenenbezogener Daten, die ad hoc eingerichtet wurde, um die Auswirkungen der US-amerikanischen Spionageprogramme auf den Schutz personenenbezogener Daten von EU-Bürgern zu erörtern, Bericht erstatten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006773/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Gathering of personal data in the EU

On 6 June 2013, a whistle-blower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

1. Is the Commission involved in PRISM itself?

2. Does the Commission or one of its agencies itself have access to PRISM-like programmes?

3. Can the Commission confirm that no EU Member States use PRISM-like programmes themselves?

4. Has the Commission asked the individual Member States to state whether they are involved in PRISM or operate similar programmes?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The European Commission was neither involved in nor had access to PRISM or other similar programmes. The European Commission is not in a position to confirm whether EU Member States use PRISM-like programmes.

The Commission will report on the findings of the EU-US Ad Hoc Working group on data protection established to discuss the impact of the US surveillance programmes on the protection of personal data of EU citizens to the Plenary of the European Parliament in October.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006774/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Britische Nutzung von PRISM-Informationen

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gespeicherten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Laut einem Bericht der britischen Zeitung „The Guardian" ([1]) hatte die britische Sicherheitsbehörde „Government Communications Headquarters" (GCHQ) mindestens seit Juni 2010 Zugang zum PRISM-System und nutzte im Jahr 2012 PRISM-Informationen für mindestens 197 Berichte.

1. Verfügt die Kommission über Informationen, die eine Beteiligung britischer Behörden an PRISM belegen?

2. Hat die Kommission die britische Regierung um Informationen darüber ersucht, seit wann die Regierung oder einzelne Minister über das PRISM-Programm informiert waren?

3. Welchen britischen Behörden war PRISM bekannt, und welche Behörden nutzten Informationen des Programms?

4. Waren britische oder andere europäische Datenschutzinstanzen oder Gerichte über die britische Nutzung des Spionageprogramms informiert?

5. Wurden Informationen, die britische Behörden durch PRISM erhielten, mit Behörden oder Geheimdiensten anderer EU-Staaten geteilt?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(2. September 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-006783/2013.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2013/jun/07/uk-gathering-secret-intelligence-nsa-prism

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006774/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Use of PRISM information by the UK

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

According to a report published by the *The Guardian* newspaper in the UK ([1]), the UK intelligence agency GCHQ has had access to the PRISM system since at least June 2010 and used PRISM information for at least 197 reports in 2012.

1. Does the Commission have access to information proving the involvement of the UK authorities in PRISM?

2. Has the Commission asked the UK Government for information as to how long the UK Government or individual ministers have known about the PRISM programme?

3. Which UK authorities were aware of PRISM and which authorities used information from the programme?

4. Were the UK data protection authorities or courts or other European data protection authorities or courts notified about the UK's use of the spying programme?

5. Was information obtained by the UK authorities through PRISM shared with the authorities or intelligence services of other EU Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commision would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006783/2013.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2013/jun/07/uk-gathering-secret-intelligence-nsa-prism

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006775/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Einbeziehung des Gemeinsamen Lagezentrums in PRISM

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

War das Gemeinsame Lagezentrum über das Programm informiert, nutzte es daraus gewonnene Erkenntnisse oder war es direkt an dem Programm beteiligt?

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

Weder das Zentrum für Informationsgewinnung und -analyse (EU Intelligence and Analysis Centre — EU INTCEN) noch sein Vorgänger, das EU-Lagezentrum (EU SitCen), waren jemals an einem technischen oder sonstigen von Mitgliedstaaten oder Drittstaaten eingerichteten Überwachungsprogramm beteiligt. Zudem greifen weder EU INTCEN noch EU SitCen auf von Drittstaaten gesammelte Daten zurück. Somit lautet die Antwort auf die drei Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten Nein.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006775/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Inclusion of the Joint Situation Centre in PRISM surveillance

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US 'National Security Agency' (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies, without judicial or other control.

Was the Joint Situation Centre aware of the programme, did it make use of information gathered under it, or was it directly involved in the programme?

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

The EU Intelligence and Analysis Centre, nor its predecessor the EU Situation Centre, were ever involved in any technical or other surveillance programme set up by Member States or third states. EU INTCEN, as well as EU SITCEN, also do not use information gathered by third states. Consequently, the answer to the three questions of the Honourable Member is no.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006776/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten der Kabinette von Kommissionsmitgliedern

Zur Unterstützung der Kommissionsmitglieder bei ihrer Arbeit steht ihnen jeweils ein Kabinett zur Verfügung.

1. Wie hoch ist die gesamte finanzielle Ausstattung der jeweiligen Kabinette für Personal, Reisen, sonstige Ausgaben? Nach welchen Kriterien erfolgt die Zuteilung der Ressourcen?

2. Aus wie vielen Mitarbeitern bestehen die jeweiligen Kabinette (ReferentInnen, nationale ExpertInnen, BeraterInnen, persönliche ReferentInnen, SekretärInnen etc.)? Welchen Besoldungsgruppen sind sie jeweils zugeordnet?

3. „Der Präsident der Kommission legt die Vorschriften betreffend die Zusammensetzung der Kabinette der Kommissionsmitglieder fest" (Verhaltenskodex für Kommissionsmitglieder, Ziffer 1.12.). Könnte die Kommission dem Fragesteller diese Vorschriften zukommen lassen?

4. Soll im Zuge der EU-Erweiterung und der damit verbundenen Schaffung des 28. EU-Kommissionsmitglieds eine zusätzliche Generaldirektion, Dienststelle oder Agentur geschaffen werden?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juli 2013)

Das Personal der Kabinette wird aus der für die Gehälter der Kommissionsbediensteten vorgesehenen zentralen Haushaltslinie finanziert. Die Kosten im Zusammenhang mit ihren Gehältern sind Teil der Personalaufwendungen im Politikbereich „Koordinierung der Politiken und rechtliche Beratung der Kommission".

Das Personal wird den Kabinetten entsprechend den Regeln für die Zusammensetzung der Kabinette (K(2009)9403), als Anlage beigefügt) zugewiesen. Die Mittel für sonstige Verwaltungsausgaben werden wie bei allen anderen Kommissionsdienststellen auf der Grundlage des geschätzten Bedarfs zugewiesen und während des jährlichen Haushaltsverfahrens sorgfältig überprüft, wobei alle Haushaltszwänge berücksichtigt werden.

Die Mittel für Dienstreisen der Kabinettsmitglieder, Repräsentationsaufwand, interne Sitzungen und Sachverständige werden gemäß Haushaltslinie 25.01.02 zugewiesen. Sie werden zwischen den verschiedenen Kabinetten verteilt und in bestimmten Zeitabständen unter der Verantwortung des Kabinetts des Präsidenten überprüft.

In den Regeln für die Zusammensetzung der Kabinette ist angegeben, wie groß die Zahl der Kabinettsmitglieder sein darf, einschließlich der Funktionsgruppe und Art der Bediensteten. Zu den Kabinetten abgeordnete Beamte behalten in der Regel ihre Besoldungsgruppe. Die Einstufung ordentlicher Kabinettsmitglieder mit einem Zeitvertrag wird in einer Kommissionsvorschrift geregelt (Beschluss K(2009)9403).

Es ist nicht beabsichtigt, für Kommissar Mimica, das 28. Mitglied der EU-Kommission, eine zusätzliche Generaldirektion, Dienststelle oder Agentur zu schaffen. Kommissar Borg und Kommissionsmitglied Mimica sind für ihre jeweiligen Aufgabenbereiche der GD SANCO und die entsprechenden Organisationen zuständig. Die Ressortverteilung wird der Frau Abgeordneten unmittelbar zugeleitet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006776/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: The costs associated with Commission Members' cabinets

Each Commission Member has a cabinet to support the work they do.

1. What is the total financial cost of each cabinet in terms of personnel, travel and other expenses? What criteria are applied in allocating resources?

2. How many members does each cabinet have (advisors, national experts, consultants, personal advisors, secretaries, etc.)? To which grades do the cabinet members belong?

3. 'The President of the Commission sets the rules concerning the composition of the cabinets of the Members of the Commission' (Code of conduct for Commissioners, Section 1.12.). Could the Commission please arrange for the questioner to receive a copy of these rules?

4. Is it planned to create an additional Directorate-General, department or agency as part of the enlargement of the EU and the associated creation of a 28th EU Commission Member?

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

Personnel working in cabinets are paid out of the central budget line for salaries of Commission staff. The cost relating to their salaries is part of the staff cost under the policy area 'Commission's policy coordination and legal advice'.

Human resources are allocated to the Cabinets according to the rules for the composition of Cabinets (C(2009 9403) herewith attached). The budget for other administrative expenditure is allocated, like for all other Commission services, on the basis of the estimated needs, duly scrutinised during the annual budget procedure and account taken of all applicable budgetary constraints.

The budget allocation for Cabinet Members' missions, representation expenses, internal meetings and experts is covered under Budget Article 25.01.02. It is distributed between the different Cabinets and is periodically reviewed under the responsibility of the President's Cabinet.

The rules governing the composition of the Members' Cabinets detail how many members each Cabinet can have, including the functions and type of personnel. Officials who are seconded to the Cabinets normally keep the same grade. The grading of regular Cabinet Members who have a contract as temporary agent depends on the rules in the Commission (decision C(2009) 9403).

For the 28th EU Commission Member, Commissioner Mimica, there is no intention to create an additional Directorate-General, department or agency. Commissioner Borg and Commissioner Mimica will be responsible for their respective parts of DG SANCO and the related organisations. The portfolio responsibilities will be sent directly to the Honourable Member.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006777/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: US-Zugang zu ratsinternen Informationen durch PRISM

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

1. Nutzt der Rat im Rahmen seiner Arbeit Online-Dienste der genannten Unternehmen oder anderer US-Unternehmen, die möglicherweise an dem Programm beteiligt waren?

2. Sieht der Rat eine Gefahr, dass im Rahmen von Software-Updates oder anderen Online-Interaktionen mit Servern dieser Unternehmen politisch, sicherheitstechnisch oder anderweitig brisante interne Informationen über Tätigkeiten oder Infrastruktur des Rates durch die NSA oder andere beteiligte Organisationen gesammelt werden konnten?

Antwort
(7. Oktober 2013)

Der Rat nutzt keine Online-Dienste von US-Unternehmen für die Zwecke des Austauschs und der Speicherung von Ratsdaten; eine Ausnahme hiervon bilden seine Konten bei Facebook, Twitter, YouTube und Flickr, die er für die Kommunikation mit der Öffentlichkeit und für die Öffentlichkeitsarbeit nutzt.

Dem Generalsekretariat des Rates ist sehr wohl bewusst, dass von Software-Updates oder Online-Interaktionen mit Servern, die es nicht vollständig kontrollieren kann, Gefahren ausgehen. Es werden geeignete Schritte unternommen, um die diesbezüglichen Risiken so weit wie möglich zu begrenzen und sicherzustellen, dass die IT-Infrastruktur des Rates ordnungsgemäß geschützt ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006777/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: US access to internal Council information through PRISM

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies, without judicial or other control.

1. During the course of its work, does the Council use online services provided by the named companies or other US companies that may have been part of the programme?

2. Does the Council recognise a danger that software updates or other online interactions with servers belonging to these companies could have allowed the NSA or other affiliated organisations to gather political, security or otherwise sensitive internal information about the activities or infrastructure of the Council?

Reply
(7 October 2013)

The Council does not use any online service provided by US companies as a working method for exchanging or storing Council information, except regarding accounts with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr which are used for public communication and public relations purposes.

The General Secretariat of the Council is fully aware of threats related to software updates and online interactions with servers which are not fully under its control. Appropriate steps are taken to minimise the risks related to such threats and to ensure that the Council's IT infrastructure is properly protected.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006778/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: US-Zugang zu kommissionsinternen Informationen durch PRISM

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

1. Nutzt die Kommission im Rahmen ihrer Arbeit Online-Dienste der genannten Unternehmen oder anderer US-Unternehmen, die möglicherweise an dem Programm beteiligt waren?

2. Sieht die Kommission eine Gefahr, dass im Rahmen von Software-Updates oder anderen Online-Interaktionen mit Servern dieser Unternehmen politisch, sicherheitstechnisch oder anderweitig brisante interne Informationen über die Tätigkeiten oder die Infrastruktur der Kommission durch die NSA oder andere beteiligte Organisationen gesammelt werden konnten?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juli 2013)

1. Für ihre normale interne Tätigkeit nutzt die Kommission diese Online-Dienste nicht. Allerdings wird für die europaweite Kommunikation mit den Bürgern eine Reihe sozialer Medien eingesetzt. Die Kommissionsdienststellen befinden sich außerdem in einer Testphase hinsichtlich der Online-Verwendung der Dienste sozialer Medien für die interne Zusammenarbeit, die sich aber auf den Austausch nicht sensibler Informationen beschränkt.

2. Die Kommission hat die Gefahr von Software-Updates und anderen Online-Interaktionen schon lange erkannt. Aus diesem Grund werden Software-Updates ohne direkte elektronische Datenverbindung zu einem der genannten Unternehmen intern durchgeführt. Die interne Politik der Kommission macht es erforderlich, dass sensible Informationen auf ihrer eigenen internen Infrastruktur gespeichertt werden. Alle externen Interaktionen werden kontrolliert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006778/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: US access to internal Commission information through PRISM

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies, without judicial or other control.

1. During the course of its work, does the Commission use online services provided by the named companies or other US companies that may have been part of the programme?

2. Does the Commission recognise a danger that software updates or other online interactions with servers belonging to these companies could have allowed the NSA or other affiliated organisations to gather political, security or otherwise sensitive internal information about the activities or infrastructure of the Commission?

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

1. For its day-to-day internal work, the Commission does not use these online services. Nevertheless, a number of social media tools are used for communication with citizens throughout Europe. Commission services are also in a trial phase using online social media services for internal collaboration, but only for exchanging non-sensitive information.

2. The Commission has recognised for a long time the danger of software updates and other online interactions. The software updates are therefore organised internally, without using a direct electronic data connection to any of the mentioned companies. The Commissions' internal policy requires sensitive information to be stored on its own internal infrastructure, and all external interactions are controlled.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006779/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Rechtliche Schritte in Folge des Bekanntwerdens des PRISM-Programms

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle zumindest Zugang zu den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

1. Welche rechtlichen oder anderweitigen Schritte wird die Kommission gegen die beteiligten Unternehmen einleiten?

2. Welche rechtlichen Schritte wird die Kommission gegen die NSA, andere US-Geheimdienste oder die US-Regierung einleiten?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(5. September 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-007934/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006779/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Legal steps as a result of the exposure of the PRISM programme

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies, without judicial or other control.

1. What legal or other measures will the Commission take against the participating companies?

2. What legal measures will the Commission take against the NSA, other US intelligence services or the US Government?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007934/13.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006780/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Nutzung der Soft- und Hardware von Unternehmen, die bei NSA-Spionage beteiligt sind

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle zumindest Zugang zu den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Die Institutionen der EU arbeiten mit Microsoft Windows-Betriebssystemen und Email-Dienstleistungen. Viele Mitarbeiter verfügen über Mobiltelefone, deren Soft- oder Hardware durch Microsoft, Google oder Apple produziert oder vertrieben werden.

1. Wird die Kommission bestehende Systeme auf Hintertüren oder mögliche Ansatzpunkte für Spionage überprüfen?

2. Wird die Kommission aufgrund der Enthüllungen über weitreichende Spionage den Wechsel zu rein europäischen Software- und Hardwarelösungen oder zu Open Source-Softwarelösungen überprüfen oder einleiten?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(18. September 2013)

Nach Ansicht der Kommission geben die aktuellen Medienberichte, wonach die Behörden der Vereinigten Staaten mithilfegroßer amerikanischer Online-Dienstleister in großem Umfang auf die Daten europäischer Bürgerinnen und Bürger zugreifen und diese auswerten können, Anlass zur Sorge. Sie hat die Behörden der USA daher gebeten, die durch diese Berichte aufgeworfenen Fragen insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Folgen für die Bürgerinnen und Bürger in Europa zu klären.

Nach dem im Rahmen der Welthandelsorganisation geschlossenen multilateralen Übereinkommen über das öffentliche Beschaffungswesen (GPA), dem auch die EU angehört, müssen Aufträge der Kommission für bestimmte Lieferungen und Dienstleistungen (darunter auch Computerdienstleistungen und verwandte Dienste) mit einem Wert von über 130 000 EUR auch Anbietern aus Drittländern, die Vertragsparteien des Übereinkommens sind und es ratifiziert haben, offen stehen. Gemäß dem GPA und weiteren anwendbaren Bestimmungen, die insbesondere in Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und anderen Drittstaaten festgelegt wurden, ist es daher nicht möglich, bestimmte Produkte oder Anbieter allein aufgrund ihrer Herkunft auszuschließen. Vielmehr müssen dafür andere in den Abkommen vorgesehene Gründe vorliegen. In diesem Zusammenhang sieht Artikel XXIII des GPA Ausnahmen insbesondere in Bezug auf Aufträge vor, die für die nationale Sicherheit von wesentlicher Bedeutung sind. Diese Ausnahmeregelungen sind restriktiv auszulegen. Hinsichtlich der Anwendung von Softwarelösungen mit offenem Quellcode für ihre internen Systeme verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die Anfrage E-000726/2013 ([1]), die eine Zusammenfassung mehrerer früherer Antworten auf ähnliche Fragen enthält.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006780/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Use of software and hardware produced by companies involved in NSA surveillance

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, US security services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies, without judicial or other control.

The institutions of the EU use Microsoft Windows operating systems and e-mail services. Many employees have mobile telephones, the software or hardware for which are produced or sold by Microsoft, Google or Apple.

1. Does the Commission intend to examine existing systems for back doors or possible susceptibility to espionage?

2. Will the revelations of widespread espionage prompt the Commission to examine or initiate a changeover to purely European software and hardware solutions or Open Source software solutions?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

The European Commission is concerned regarding the recent media reports that United States authorities are accessing and processing, on a large scale, the data of Europeans using major US online service providers. The Commission has requested clarifications from the US counterparts regarding the issues raised by the reports in the media, in particular regarding the impact on Europeans.

The Plurilateral Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) concluded within the World Trade Organisation, to which the EU is a Party, provides that contracts for certain supplies and services, including computer and related services, awarded by the Commission for a value above EUR 130 000 must be open to providers from third countries which are Parties to the Agreement and have ratified it. Therefore, according to the GPA and other applicable rules, in particular laid down in Free Trade Agreements between the EU and other third counries, exclusion of specific solutions or providers is not possible on grounds of origin alone but must be substantiated on other grounds foreseen in the Agreements. In this context, Article XXIII of the GPA provides for exemptions, in particular related to procurement indispensible for national security. Exceptions are to be interpreted restrictively. Concerning the adoption of Open Source Software solutions for its internal systems, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-000726/2013 ([1]), which contains a summary of many previous answers to similar questions.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006781/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Schutz von EU-Bürgern vor widerrechtlichem Zugriff auf private Daten durch britische Behörden

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle zumindest Zugang zu den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Laut einem Bericht der britischen Zeitung „The Guardian" ([1]) hatte die britische Sicherheitsbehörde „Government Communications Headquarters" (GCHQ) mindestens seit Juni 2010 Zugang zum PRISM-System und nutzte im Jahr 2012 PRISM-Informationen für mindestens 197 Berichte.

1. Welche EU-Gesetzgebung schützt Bürger anderer EU-Staaten vor dem widerrechtlichen Zugriff auf private Daten durch britische Behörden?

2. Wird die Kommission Großbritannien auffordern klarzustellen, ob britische Behörden direkt oder indirekt mithilfedes PRISM-Systems auf Daten von Bürgern anderer EU-Staaten zugriffen?

3. Welche Mechanismen kann die Kommission in Gang setzen, falls ein Mitgliedstaat widerrechtlich auf Daten von Bürgern anderer EU-Staaten zugreift?

4. Gewährt die Kommission Rechtshilfe, oder unterstützt sie betroffene Bürger anderweitig?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(2. September 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-006783/2013.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2013/jun/07/uk-gathering-secret-intelligence-nsa-prism

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006781/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Protection of EU citizens against illegal access to private data by the British authorities

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies, without judicial or other control.

According to a report in *The Guardian* ([1]) newspaper in the UK, the British security service at 'Government Communications Headquarters' (GCHQ) has had access to the PRISM system since at least June 2010 and used PRISM information for at least 197 reports in 2012.

1. What EU legislation protects citizens of other EU Member States against illegal access to private data by the British authorities?

2. Will the Commission call upon the United Kingdom to clarify whether the British authorities have used the PRISM system directly or indirectly to access the data of citizens of other EU Member States?

3. What mechanisms can the Commission set in train if a Member State illegally accesses the data of citizens of other EU Member States?

4. Can the Commission guarantee legal assistance or will it support the affected citizens in other ways?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006783/2013.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2013/jun/07/uk-gathering-secret-intelligence-nsa-prism

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006782/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Nutzung der PRISM-Informationen durch Großbritannien

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle zumindest Zugang zu den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Laut einem Bericht der britischen Zeitung „The Guardian" hatte die britische Sicherheitsbehörde „Government Communications Headquarters" (GCHQ) mindestens seit Juni 2010 Zugang zum PRISM-System und nutzte im Jahr 2012 PRISM-Informationen für mindestens 197 Berichte.

1. Wurde der Rat von Großbritannien über das PRISM-Programm und die Nutzung von durch PRISM gewonnene Informationen informiert?

2. Hat der Rat Großbritannien aufgefordert, zur Nutzung des PRISM-Programms Stellung zu nehmen oder wird der Rat Großbritannien dazu auffordern?

3. Sieht der Rat die Nutzung von PRISM als Verstoß gegen geltendes EU-Recht und geltende Konventionen?

4. Welche Maßnahmen wird der Rat aufgrund der Nutzung von PRISM oder verwandter Systeme gegenüber Großbritannien ergreifen?

Antwort
(11. September 2013)

Der Rat ist vom Vereinigten Königreich nicht über die Existenz der Programme informiert worden, auf die der Herr Abgeordnete Bezug nimmt; auch hat er das Vereinigte Königreich nicht aufgefordert, eine Stellungnahme in dieser Sache abzugeben.

Was die Vereinbarkeit dieser Programme mit EU-Recht betrifft, so möchte der Rat betonen, dass die Kommission die Hüterin der Verträge ist. Grundsätzlich ist es daher in erster Linie die Aufgabe der Kommission zu beurteilen, ob Gesetze oder Politiken der Mitgliedstaaten gegen EU-Recht verstoßen. Dabei hat sie selbstverständlich die Zuständigkeiten der Mitgliedstaaten zu achten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006782/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Use of PRISM information by the United Kingdom

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

According to a report published by *The Guardian* newspaper in the UK, the British security service at 'Government Communications Headquarters' (GCHQ) has had access to the PRISM system since at least June 2010 and used PRISM information for at least 197 reports in 2012.

1. Was the Council informed by the United Kingdom of the PRISM programme and the use of the information gathered through PRISM?

2. Has the Council called on the United Kingdom to make a statement on its use of the PRISM programme or does the Council intend to do so?

3. Does the Council regard the use of PRISM as a violation of EC law and the relevant conventions?

4. Which measures will the Council take against the United Kingdom as a result of the use of PRISM or associated systems?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

The Council has not been informed by the United Kingdom of the existence of the programmes that the Honourable Member refers to, neither has it called upon the United Kingdom to make a statement in this regard.

As for the compatibility of these programmes with EC law, the Council would like to point out that the Commission is the guardian of the treaties. As a matter of principle, it is therefore in the first place for the Commission to assess whether Member States' laws or policies contravene EC law. In doing so the Commission will of course have to respect the competences of Member States.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006783/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Rechtliche Bewertung der britischen Nutzung von PRISM-Informationen

Am 6. Juni 2013 wurde durch einen „Whistleblower" ein weitreichendes Spionageprogramm der US-amerikanischen „National Security Agency" (NSA) öffentlich bekannt. Durch das Programm mit dem Codenamen PRISM hatten US-Geheimdienste ohne gerichtliche oder anderweitige Kontrolle Zugang zu mindestens den bei den Unternehmen Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube und Apple gelagerten oder durch die Server dieser Unternehmen verarbeiteten Daten.

Laut einem Bericht der britischen Zeitung „The Guardian" ([1]) hatte die britische Sicherheitsbehörde „Government Communications Headquarters" (GCHQ) mindestens seit Juni 2010 Zugang zum PRISM-System und nutzte im Jahr 2012 PRISM-Informationen für mindestens 197 Berichte.

1. Ist die Nutzung von Informationen eines solchen Programms nach Ansicht der Kommission mit den geltenden europäischen Rechtsrahmen und Konventionen vereinbar?

2. Wenn nein, wird die Kommission Strafen gegen Großbritannien verhängen oder ein Vertragsbruchverfahren gegen Großbritannien einleiten?

Antwort von Viviane Reding im Namen der Kommission
(2. September 2013)

Zwar ist es Aufgabe der Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten, unter anderem der Datenschutzbehörden, gegenüber öffentlichen und privaten Stellen in der Europäischen Union für die korrekte Anwendung und Durchsetzung der EU-Datenschutzvorschriften zu sorgen, aber die Kommission ist die Hüterin der Verträge. In dieser Funktion ist sie über die Berichte in den Medien über die angeblichen Praktiken im Vereinigten Königreich informiert und ergreift geeignete Maßnahmen. Konkret hat die Europäische Kommission die Behörden des Vereinigten Königreichs um Aufklärung gebeten über den Umfang des sogenannten „Tempora-Programms", über seine Verhältnismäßigkeit und darüber, inwieweit es gerichtlicher Aufsicht unterliegt.

Die Kommission hat überdies die Vereinigten Staaten um Aufklärung in Bezug auf Medienberichte ersucht, nach denen die US-Behörden massiv über große amerikanische Onlinedienst-Anbieter auf Daten von Europäern zugreifen und sie verarbeiten. Dieses Auskunftsersuchen enthält auch Fragen zum Zugang zu Daten, die mit Überwachungsprogrammen wie PRISM erhoben werden.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2013/jun/07/uk-gathering-secret-intelligence-nsa-prism

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006783/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Legal assessment of British use of PRISM information

On 6 June 2013, a whistleblower exposed an extensive surveillance programme operated by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Under the programme, codenamed PRISM, the US intelligence services gained access to the data stored by (at least) Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple or processed by the servers of these companies without judicial or other control.

According to a report published by *The Guardian* ([1]) newspaper in the UK the British security service at 'Government Communications Headquarters' (GCHQ) has had access to the PRISM system since at least June 2010 and used PRISM information for at least 197 reports in 2012.

1. In the Commission's view, is the use of information from such a programme compatible with the current European legal framework and conventions?

2. If not, will the Commission impose sanctions on the United Kingdom or take action against the United Kingdom for breach of contract?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

While it is for national authorities, including data protection supervisory authorities, to ensure the correct implementation and enforcement of EU data protection legislation vis-à-vis public and private bodies in the European Union, the Commission is guardian of the Treaties. In view of this role, the Commission is aware of the media reports in relation to the alleged practices in the UK and is taking the appropriate steps. In particular, the European Commission has asked the UK authorities to clarify the scope of the so-called 'Tempora programme', its proportionality and the extent of judicial oversight that applies.

The Commission has also requested clarifications from the United States regarding media reports according to which the US authorities are accessing and processing, on a large scale, the data of Europeans using major US online service providers. This request includes questions about the issue of access to data collected by surveillance programmes such as PRISM.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2013/jun/07/uk-gathering-secret-intelligence-nsa-prism.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006784/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η παραβίαση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων των χρηστών του διαδικτύου

Σύμφωνα με δημοσίευμα της εφημερίδας «The Guardian», η βρετανική κυβέρνηση συνέλεξε κρυφά δεδομένα, επικοινωνίας από τις εταιρείες Facebook, Google, Apple, Yahoo, Microsoft, και Skype, μέσω της Υπηρεσίας Εθνικής Ασφάλειας των ΗΠΑ (NSA) και του FBI.

Η εφημερίδα «Guardian» υποστηρίζει ότι, βάσει απόρρητων εγγράφων που έχει στην κατοχή της, η βρετανική υπηρεσία υποκλοπών «GCHQ» έχει πρόσβαση σε ευαίσθητα προσωπικά δεδομένα, τουλάχιστον από τον Ιούνιο του 2010, ενώ έχει δημιουργήσει τουλάχιστον 197 εκθέσεις μυστικών εγγράφων κατά το 2012. Όπως αναφέρεται, το πρόγραμμα που χρησιμοποιούν οι Αμερικανοί για πρόσβαση σε ευαίσθητα προσωπικά δεδομένα ονομάζεται Prism, και φέρεται να επιτρέπει στη βρετανική GCHQ να παρακάμπτει την επίσημη νομική διαδικασία που απαιτείται για να αναζητήσει προσωπικό υλικό, όπως μηνύματα ηλεκτρονικού ταχυδρομείου, καθώς και βίντεο από μια επιχείρηση του Διαδικτύου που βασίζεται εκτός του Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου.

Οι εν λόγω αποκαλύψεις εγείρουν ηθικά και νομικά ζητήματα σχετικά με την παραβίαση των προσωπικών δεδομένων των χρηστών του διαδικτύου τόσο στην Βρετανία όσο και στις υπόλοιπες χώρες της ΕΕ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Σε ποιες ενέργειες έχετε προβεί προκειμένου να προστατεύεστε τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα και την ιδιωτική ζωή των χρηστών του διαδικτύου στην ΕΕ;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-006783/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006784/13
to the Commission
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Infringement of human rights of Internet users

According to an article published in *The Guardian*, the British Government has secretly collected communication data from Facebook, Google, Apple, Yahoo, Microsoft and Skype via the US National Security Agency (NSA) and the FBI.

The Guardian reports that, according to confidential documents in its possession, the British interception service (GCHQ) has had access to sensitive personal data since at least June 2010 and has compiled at least 197 reports on secret documents since 2012. Apparently, the programme used by the Americans to access sensitive personal data is called Prism and it enables GCHQ to circumvent the official legal procedure for requesting personal material, such as e-mail messages and videos, from an Internet firm based outside the United Kingdom.

These revelations raise moral and legal issues in terms of the invasion of Internet users' privacy both in Britain and in other EU Member States.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What action has it taken in order to protect the human rights and privacy of Internet users in the EU?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006783/13.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006785/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), Edite Estrela (S&D), María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D), Enrique Guerrero Salom (S&D), Richard Falbr (S&D), Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D), Joanna Senyszyn (S&D), Adam Gierek (S&D), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D), Liem Hoang Ngoc (S&D), Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D), Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D), Mitro Repo (S&D), Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D), Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D), Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D), Udo Bullmann (S&D), António Fernando Correia de Campos (S&D), Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Bernadette Vergnaud (S&D), Véronique De Keyser (S&D), Anni Podimata (S&D), Eric Andrieu (S&D), Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D), Gilles Pargneaux (S&D), Raimon Obiols (S&D), Boris Zala (S&D), Isabelle Thomas (S&D), George Sabin Cutaş (S&D), Catherine Trautmann (S&D), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Patrice Tirolien (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Olga Sehnalová (S&D), Katarína Neveďalová (S&D), Sylvana Rapti (S&D), Frédéric Daerden (S&D), Barbara Weiler (S&D), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D), Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D), Francesco De Angelis (S&D) et Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Appel à un nouveau «six-pack» (paquet de six mesures législatives)!

L'Europe semble, à de nombreux égards, se trouver dans une impasse, prisonnière de sa stratégie d'austérité et insensible aux appels des économistes et aux souffrances de la population. Voici un certain nombre de propositions justes, simples et efficaces allant dans le sens de l'adoption d'un nouveau «six-pack», qui considèrerait le citoyen non plus comme un distributeur de billets, mais comme l'élément central d'une nouvelle Europe plus humaine et plus sociale: l'Europe du progrès. Nous voulons:

1. une Europe du commerce équitable qui lutte contre le dumping social, fiscal et environnemental de nos pratiques en matière d'importation! La Commission a-t-elle véritablement pour ambition de faire bouger les choses, de dépasser le modèle actuel et de présenter de nouvelles propositions?

2. une Europe qui rapproche les travailleurs et qui lutte contre la concurrence qui les oppose en établissant un salaire minimal ou un revenu minimum garanti! La Commission a-t-elle véritablement pour ambition de faire bouger les choses, de dépasser le modèle actuel et de présenter de nouvelles propositions?

3. une Europe qui finance une partie de la dette souveraine afin d'économiser des milliards d'euros d'intérêts payés aux banques, sans imposer de contribution financière aux citoyens! La Commission a-t-elle véritablement pour ambition de faire bouger les choses, de dépasser le modèle actuel et de présenter de nouvelles propositions?

4. une Europe qui sépare banques d'investissements et banques commerciales, et qui supprime les paradis fiscaux, afin que l'argent puisse à nouveau servir l'économie et pas l'inverse. La Commission a-t-elle véritablement pour ambition de faire bouger les choses, de dépasser le modèle actuel et de présenter de nouvelles propositions?

5. une Europe qui mène une politique industrielle capable de préserver nos emplois et de relancer les grands secteurs d'activité, plutôt que de permettre à la main invisible de la concurrence et aux multinationales de détruire nos outils et notre expertise. La Commission a-t-elle véritablement pour ambition de faire bouger les choses, de dépasser le modèle actuel et de présenter de nouvelles propositions?

6. une Europe qui impose une taxe sur les transactions financières en vue de lutter contre la spéculation et qui applique l'harmonisation fiscale, notamment par l'introduction d'un impôt minimum sur les sociétés. La Commission a-t-elle véritablement pour ambition de faire bouger les choses, de dépasser le modèle actuel et de présenter de nouvelles propositions?

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(5 septembre 2013)

Dans son discours sur l'état de l'Union de 2012, le président Barroso a insisté sur la nécessité, pour l'Europe, de s'appuyer sur l'équité et la justice sociale. En novembre dernier, la Commission a adopté une communication intitulée «Projet détaillé pour une union économique et monétaire véritable et approfondie: lancer un débat européen»; elle présentera prochainement une communication sur la dimension sociale de l'union économique et monétaire. La Commission a également été à l'avant-garde des efforts visant à introduire une taxe sur les transactions financières, à combattre l'évasion fiscale et à stimuler une renaissance industrielle en Europe, et elle examine attentivement l'incidence qu'ont sur l'emploi, la société et l'environnement les accords commerciaux qu'elle négocie.

En 2010, le Conseil européen a adopté la stratégie Europe 2020 pour l'emploi et une croissance intelligente, durable et inclusive, qui est en cours de mise en œuvre dans le cadre du semestre européen. Les recommandations par pays ont pour but d'aider les États membres à faire face aux difficultés qu'ils rencontrent et à mettre en œuvre un ambitieux programme de politique économique. L'amélioration de la qualité des dépenses publiques demeure un point essentiel, notamment afin de mobiliser des ressources pour mener à bien les objectifs de la stratégie Europe 2020. Cette stratégie vise, par les cinq grands objectifs qu'elle s'est fixés, à établir un juste équilibre entre les besoins sociaux, environnementaux et économiques pour garantir la prospérité à long terme et rééquilibrer les économies de l'UE, tout en tenant compte de la pression exercée par le processus de mondialisation. De nombreuses propositions législatives et recommandations au sujet des réformes structurelles n'ont pas encore été mises en place, notamment dans le secteur financier, en ce qui concerne l'emploi, la fiscalité et la coordination fiscale, ainsi que le «Pacte pour la croissance et l'emploi». Il est nécessaire de mettre en œuvre ce qui a été convenu afin de surmonter la crise économique et financière et de gérer son impact social.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-006785/13
Komisii
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), Edite Estrela (S&D), María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D), Enrique Guerrero Salom (S&D), Richard Falbr (S&D), Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D), Joanna Senyszyn (S&D), Adam Gierek (S&D), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D), Liem Hoang Ngoc (S&D), Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D), Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D), Mitro Repo (S&D), Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D), Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D), Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D), Udo Bullmann (S&D), António Fernando Correia de Campos (S&D), Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Bernadette Vergnaud (S&D), Véronique De Keyser (S&D), Anni Podimata (S&D), Eric Andrieu (S&D), Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D), Gilles Pargneaux (S&D), Raimon Obiols (S&D), Boris Zala (S&D), Isabelle Thomas (S&D), George Sabin Cutaş (S&D), Catherine Trautmann (S&D), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Patrice Tirolien (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Olga Sehnalová (S&D), Katarína Neveďalová (S&D), Sylvana Rapti (S&D), Frédéric Daerden (S&D), Barbara Weiler (S&D), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D), Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D), Francesco De Angelis (S&D) a Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(11. júna 2013)

Vec: Požiadavka nového balíka šiestich legislatívnych aktov o správe ekonomických záležitostí

Zdá sa, že Európa sa v mnohých ohľadoch dostala do slepej uličky, ocitla sa v zajatí vlastných úsporných opatrení, neodpovedá na výzvy ekonómov a je nevšímavá k utrpeniu ľudí. Preto predstavujeme niekoľko spravodlivých, jednoduchých a efektívnych návrhov s cieľom vytvoriť nový balík šiestich legislatívnych aktov o správe ekonomických záležitostí, ktorý nebude považovať občanov za bankomat, ale za kľúčovú súčasť novej, ľudskejšej a sociálnejšej Európy – pokrokovej Európy. Požadujeme:

1. Európu so spravodlivým obchodom, ktorá bojuje proti sociálnemu, daňovému a environmentálnemu dumpingu našich dovozných praktík. Má Komisia naozaj v úmysle zmeniť stav vecí, prekročiť hranice súčasného modelu a predstaviť nové návrhy?

2. Európu, ktorá podporuje zbližovanie pracovníkov a bojuje proti súťaženiu medzi nimi prostredníctvom zavedenia minimálnej výšky mzdy či minimálneho zaručeného príjmu. Má Komisia naozaj v úmysle zmeniť stav vecí, prekročiť hranice súčasného modelu a predstaviť nové návrhy?

3. Európu, ktorá uhradí časť štátneho dlhu s cieľom ušetriť miliardy eur, ktoré by predstavovali úroky zaplatené bankám, a to bez potreby finančnej účasti zo strany občanov. Má Komisia naozaj v úmysle zmeniť stav vecí, prekročiť hranice súčasného modelu a predstaviť nové návrhy?

4. Európu, ktorá rozlišuje investičné banky od obchodných bánk a odstraňuje daňové raje, tak aby peniaze mohli opätovne slúžiť hospodárstvu, a nie naopak. Má Komisia naozaj v úmysle zmeniť stav vecí, prekročiť hranice súčasného modelu a predstaviť nové návrhy?

5. Európu, ktorá je hnacou silou priemyselnej politiky a ktorá dokáže zachrániť naše pracovné miesta a oživiť hlavné hospodárske odvetvia namiesto toho, aby umožňovala neviditeľnej ruke hospodárskej súťaže a nadnárodným spoločnostiam ničiť naše nástroje a odborné znalosti. Má Komisia naozaj v úmysle zmeniť stav vecí, prekročiť hranice súčasného modelu a predstaviť nové návrhy?

6. Európu, ktorá zdaňuje finančné transakcie tak, aby sa bojovalo proti špekuláciám, a ktorá zavádza harmonizáciu daní, predovšetkým prostredníctvom minimálnej dane pre podniky. Má Komisia naozaj v úmysle zmeniť stav vecí, prekročiť hranice súčasného modelu a predstaviť nové návrhy?

Odpoveď pána Šefčoviča v mene Komisie
(5. septembra 2013)

Predseda Barroso vo svojom prejave o stave Únie v roku 2012 kládol dôraz na potrebu budovania Európy založenej na rovnosti a sociálnej spravodlivosti. V novembri minulého roku Komisia prijala oznámenie s názvom „Koncepcia pre rozsiahlu a skutočnú HMÚ: začatie európskej diskusie“ a čoskoro predloží oznámenie o sociálnom rozmere HMÚ. Komisia ďalej stála v čele snáh o zavedenie dane z finančných transakcií, boj proti vyhýbaniu sa daňovým povinnostiam a podporu renesancie priemyslu v Európe a venuje aj náležitú pozornosť hodnoteniu obchodných dohôd, o ktorých rokuje, z hľadiska ich vplyvu na zamestnanosť, ako aj sociálnych a environmentálnych vplyvov.

Európska rada prijala v roku 2010 stratégiu Európa 2020 v oblasti inteligentného, udržateľného a inkluzívneho rastu a zamestnanosti, ktorá sa uskutočňuje v rámci európskeho semestra. Odporúčania pre jednotlivé krajiny majú členským štátom pomôcť riešiť ich problémy a napredovať v ambicióznom hospodársko-politickom programe. Zlepšovanie kvality verejných výdavkov je aj naďalej dôležité aj na mobilizáciu zdrojov na ciele stratégie Európa 2020. Stratégia Európa 2020 sa prostredníctvom piatich hlavných cieľov snaží vhodne vyvážiť sociálne, environmentálne a hospodárske potreby a zabezpečiť tak dlhodobú prosperitu a obnovenie rovnováhy hospodárstiev EÚ pri zohľadnení tlaku globalizačného procesu. Mnoho legislatívnych návrhov a odporúčaní týkajúcich sa štrukturálnych reforiem sa doteraz neimplementovalo, najmä vo finančnom sektore, pokiaľ ide o zamestnanosť, dane a daňovú koordináciu a Pakt pre rast a zamestnanosť. Je potrebné zaviesť do praxe opatrenia, na ktorých sme sa dohodli s cieľom prekonať hospodársku a finančnú krízu a riešiť jej sociálne dosahy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006785/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), Edite Estrela (S&D), María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D), Enrique Guerrero Salom (S&D), Richard Falbr (S&D), Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D), Joanna Senyszyn (S&D), Adam Gierek (S&D), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D), Liem Hoang Ngoc (S&D), Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D), Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D), Mitro Repo (S&D), Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D), Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D), Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D), Udo Bullmann (S&D), António Fernando Correia de Campos (S&D), Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Bernadette Vergnaud (S&D), Véronique De Keyser (S&D), Anni Podimata (S&D), Eric Andrieu (S&D), Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D), Gilles Pargneaux (S&D), Raimon Obiols (S&D), Boris Zala (S&D), Isabelle Thomas (S&D), George Sabin Cutaş (S&D), Catherine Trautmann (S&D), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Patrice Tirolien (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Olga Sehnalová (S&D), Katarína Neveďalová (S&D), Sylvana Rapti (S&D), Frédéric Daerden (S&D), Barbara Weiler (S&D), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D), Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D), Francesco De Angelis (S&D) and Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Call for a new six-pack!

Europe appears to be at an impasse in many respects, a prisoner of its austerity strategy, deaf to the calls of economists and blind to people's suffering. Here are a number of fair, simple, and efficient proposals to establish a new six-pack, one that would consider the citizen not as a cash machine but as a central component of a new, more humane and more social Europe: a Europe of Progress. We want:

1. A Europe of fair trade that fights against the social, fiscal and environmental dumping of our import practices! Is the Commission really aiming to change things, to go beyond the current model and to present new proposals?

2. A Europe that brings workers closer together and that fights competition amongst workers by establishing a minimum wage or a minimum guaranteed income! Is the Commission really aiming to change things, to go beyond the current model and to present new proposals?

3. A Europe that finances a part of the sovereign debt in order to save billions of euros in interest paid to banks, without involving a financial contribution from citizens! Is the Commission really aiming to change things, to go beyond the current model and to present new proposals?

4. A Europe that separates investment banks from commercial banks, and eliminates tax havens, so that money may once again serve the economy and not vice versa. Is the Commission really aiming to change things, to go beyond the current model and to present new proposals?

5. A Europe that spearheads an industrial policy capable of saving our jobs and reviving major sectors of activity, rather than allowing the invisible hand of competition and multinational companies to destroy our tools and expertise. Is the Commission really aiming to change things, to go beyond the current model and to present new proposals?

6. A Europe that taxes financial transactions to fight against speculation and implements tax harmonisation, particularly through the introduction of a minimum tax for businesses. Is the Commission really aiming to change things, to go beyond the current model and to present new proposals?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

In his 2012 State of the Union address, President Barroso insisted on the need for Europe to build on fairness and social justice. Last November, the Commission adopted a communication 'A blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU: Launching a European debate', and it will shortly come forth with a communication on the social dimension of the EMU. The Commission has also been at the forefront of efforts to introduce a financial transaction tax, combat tax avoidance and spur industrial renaissance in Europe, and it duly examines the employment, social and environmental impacts of trade agreements it negotiates.

In 2010, the European Council adopted the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs which is being implemented within the European Semester. The country specific recommendations aim at helping Member States to address their challenges and pursue an ambitious economic policy agenda. Improving the quality of public expenditure remains crucial, also for mobilising resources for the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy. The Europe 2020 strategy, together with its five headlines targets, seeks to strike an appropriate balance between social, environmental and economic needs to ensure long-term prosperity and rebalancing of the EU economies while taking into account the pressure of the globalisation process. Many of the legislative proposals and recommendations for structural reforms have not yet been implemented, notably in the financial sector, regarding employment, taxation and tax coordination and the Compact for Growth and Jobs. It is necessary to put in practice what has been agreed to overcome the economic and financial crisis and to address its social impacts.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006786/13
an die Kommission
Doris Pack (PPE), Petra Kammerevert (S&D) und Ivo Belet (PPE)
(11. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Lernmobilität für Schulabbrecher im Rahmen des neuen EU-Bildungsprogramms

In der Strategie Europa 2020 wird die Bekämpfung des Schulabbruchs als EU-Priorität anerkannt. Trotz aller (vorbeugender) Maßnahmen im formalen Bildungssystem, bei denen der Schwerpunkt auf eine berufliche Erstausbildung gelegt wird, wird es immer junge Menschen geben, die die Schule ohne abgeschlossene Sekundarausbildung verlassen.

Um dieser Gruppe den Einstieg in den Arbeitsmarkt zu erleichtern, organisieren die Mitgliedstaaten die berufliche Erstausbildung in Ausbildungsstätten, Berufsschulen oder Unternehmen, um Schulabbrechern die Möglichkeit zu geben, bestimmte Kompetenzen zu erwerben und Arbeit zu finden. In diesem Rahmen kann die Möglichkeit, von Lernmobilitätsangeboten zu profitieren, bei der Integration in den Arbeitsmarkt und für die berufliche Laufbahn einen zusätzlichen Nutzen bringen. Junge arbeitslose Arbeitssuchende können solche Lernmobilitätsangebote im Rahmen des Programms Leonardo da Vinci nutzen. Arbeitsmarktuntersuchungen haben gezeigt, dass Arbeitgeber ein Praktikum im Ausland begrüßen und sich bereitwillig dazu entscheiden, Arbeitssuchende mit einer solchen Erfahrung einzustellen.

Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass sie bei der Veröffentlichung von Aufrufen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen im Rahmen des neuen EU-Bildungsprogramms Schulabbrecher als Priorität betrachtet?

Erkennt die Kommission an, dass eine Ausbildung für junge arbeitslose Arbeitssuchende ohne Sekundarabschluss als berufliche Erstausbildung betrachtet werden kann und somit im Rahmen des neuen Programms förderfähig ist?

Stimmt die Kommission zu, dass Initiativen von Mitgliedstaaten, die jungen arbeitslosen Arbeitssuchenden ohne Schulabschluss die Nutzung von Lernmobilitätsangeboten ermöglichen, im Rahmen des neuen EU-Bildungsprogramms gefördert werden sollten?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(8. August 2013)

Die Bekämpfung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit hat in der EU zweifelsohne oberste Priorität. Bildung spielt bei der Verbesserung des Übergangs von der Ausbildung ins Erwerbsleben eine entscheidende Rolle. Das vorzeitige Abgehen von der Schule ist ein großes Problem, das angegangen werden muss.

Es ist ein Hauptziel der Strategie Europa 2020, die Zahl der Jugendlichen zu verringern, die vorzeitig von der Schule abgehen. Dies wird auch zu den politischen Zielen des Programms Erasmus+ gehören. Die Kommission kann daher bestätigen, dass sich dieses Ziel in der Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen im Rahmen des Programms Erasmus+ widerspiegeln wird.

Die Kommission definiert die berufliche Erstausbildung als Ausbildung, die zu einer Berufsqualifikation führt, die von den zuständigen Behörden des Mitgliedstaats, in dem diese erworben wurde, anerkannt wird. Es ist daher die Aufgabe der Mitgliedstaaten, die Art der Ausbildung zu bestimmen, die dieses Kriterium erfüllt.

Die Lernmobilität (Leitaktion 1) ist eine sehr wichtige Maßnahme des Programms Erasmus+. Erasmus+ wird Mobilitätsmöglichkeiten in verschiedenen Bereichen fördern, auch in solchen, in denen kein Befähigungsnachweis erforderlich ist. Außerdem wird das Programm insbesondere die Teilhabe von jungen Menschen mit geringeren Möglichkeiten, wie Jugendlichen mit Bildungsproblemen, unterstützen.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006786/13
aan de Commissie
Doris Pack (PPE), Petra Kammerevert (S&D) en Ivo Belet (PPE)
(11 juni 2013)

Betreft: De leermobiliteit voor voortijdige schoolverlaters in het kader van het nieuwe onderwijsprogramma van de EU

In de EU 2020-strategie wordt de aanpak van schooluitval erkend als een prioriteit van de EU. Ondanks alle (preventieve) maatregelen binnen het formele onderwijsstelsel die gericht zijn op de initiële beroepsopleiding, zullen er nog steeds jongeren zijn die de school verlaten zonder middelbareschooldiploma.

Om jongeren uit deze groep te helpen hun weg te vinden naar de arbeidsmarkt, organiseren de lidstaten initiële beroepsopleidingen in opleidingscentra, op scholen voor beroepsonderwijs of in bedrijven, waardoor ze in staat gesteld worden bepaalde vaardigheden te verwerven en een baan te vinden. Binnen dit kader kan de mogelijkheid om te profiteren van leermobiliteitskansen een meerwaarde zijn bij hun integratie op de arbeidsmarkt en voor hun toekomstige loopbaan. Jeugdwerklozen die een baan zoeken, kunnen in het kader van het „Leonardo da Vinci"-programma hun voordeel doen met een dergelijke leermobiliteit. Arbeidsmarktonderzoeken tonen aan dat werkgevers waardering hebben voor een stage in het buitenland en werkzoekenden met een dergelijke ervaring graag aanwerven.

Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat zij voortijdige schoolverlaters als prioriteit beschouwt bij de publicatie van oproepen tot het indienen van blijken van belangstelling in het kader van het nieuwe onderwijsprogramma van de EU?

Erkent de Commissie dat opleidingen die gericht zijn op jeugdwerklozen zonder middelbareschooldiploma die een baan zoeken, beschouwd kunnen worden als initiële beroepsopleidingen en derhalve subsidiabel zullen zijn uit hoofde van het nieuwe programma?

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat initiatieven van de lidstaten die het mogelijk maken dat jeugdwerklozen die zonder diploma de school verlaten hebben en een baan zoeken hun voordeel kunnen doen met leermobiliteit, ondersteund zouden moeten worden uit hoofde van het nieuwe onderwijsprogramma van de EU?

Antwoord van mevrouw Vassiliou namens de Commissie
(8 augustus 2013)

Jeugdwerkloosheid is zeker een topprioriteit voor de EU. Bij de verbetering van de overgang van onderwijs naar werk is een belangrijke rol weggelegd voor onderwijs. Met name voortijdig schoolverlaten moet worden aangepakt.

Het terugdringen van het aantal voortijdige schoolverlaters is een hoofddoel van de EU 2020-strategie en zal een van de politieke doelstellingen van het programma Erasmus + zijn. Derhalve kan de Commissie bevestigen dat deze doelstelling tot uitdrukking zal komen in de oproep tot het indienen van blijken van belangstelling in het kader van het programma Erasmus +.

De Commissie definieert initiële beroepsopleiding als opleiding die leidt tot een beroepskwalificatie die wordt erkend door de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaat waar die kwalificatie wordt verkregen. Het is dan ook aan de lidstaten om te bepalen welk soort opleiding aan dit criterium beantwoordt.

Leermobiliteit (kernactie 1) vormt een zeer belangrijke actie in het kader van het programma Erasmus +. Dit programma ondersteunt de mobiliteitskansen in een reeks verschillende contexten, onder meer wanneer er geen formele kwalificatie wordt vereist. Voorts zullen met name kansarme jongeren, onder meer zij die problemen op school hebben, worden aangemoedigd om in het nieuwe programma te participeren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006786/13
to the Commission
Doris Pack (PPE), Petra Kammerevert (S&D) and Ivo Belet (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Learning mobility for early school leavers under the new EU educational programme

In the EU 2020 strategy, tackling early school leaving is recognised as an EU priority. Despite all (preventive) measures within the formal education system focusing on initial vocational training, there will still be young people who quit school without a secondary education qualification.

To help this group find their way to the labour market, Member States organise initial vocational training in training centres, vocational schools or businesses, enabling them to acquire certain competences and to find a job. Within this framework, the opportunity to benefit from learning-mobility opportunities can bring added value for their integration in the labour market and for their future career. Young unemployed job seekers can benefit from such learning mobility opportunities under the Leonardo da Vinci programme. Labour market research shows that employers appreciate a traineeship abroad and readily decide to recruit job-seekers with such an experience.

Can the Commission confirm that it will consider early school leavers as a priority when publishing calls for proposals within the new EU educational programme?

Does the Commission recognise that training designed for young unemployed job-seekers without a secondary education qualification can be considered as initial vocational training and will hence be eligible under the new programme?

Does the Commission agree that initiatives from Member States that make it possible for young unemployed job-seekers who left school without a qualification to benefit from learning mobility should be supported under the new EU educational programme?

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

Youth unemployment is certainly a top priority for the EU. Education has a strong role to play in improving the transition between education and work. Early school leaving is an important area to tackle.

Reducing early school leaving is a core target of the EU 2020 strategy and will be one of the political objectives of the Erasmus+ programme. Therefore, the Commission can confirm that this objective will be reflected in the Call for proposals under the Erasmus+ programme.

The Commission defines initial vocational training as training leading to a vocational qualification recognised by the competent authorities in the Member State in which it is obtained. It is therefore for Member States to determine the type of training which meets this criterion.

Learning mobility (Key Action 1) represents a very important action in Erasmus+. Erasmus + will support mobility opportunities in a range of different contexts, including where a formal qualification is not required. Furthermore, the new programme will particularly encourage the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, such as young people having encountered education difficulties.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006787/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre la prolifération du frelon asiatique

Selon deux rapports rendus publics le 21 février 2013 par l'Agence européenne pour l'environnement (AEE), les espèces exotiques envahissantes «présentent des risques sur la biodiversité, la santé humaine et les économies plus importants que ceux estimés jusqu'alors en Europe» et leur impact économique est estimé à environ 12 milliards d'euros par an. Parmi ces espèces invasives, le frelon asiatique entré en France en 2004. Classé comme espèce envahissante et comme danger sanitaire de 2e catégorie, il sévit dans plus de la moitié des départements français. Le frelon asiatique (Vespa velutina) est un redoutable prédateur pour les colonies d'abeilles qui constituent un maillon essentiel de notre biodiversité. Il dévaste les ruches et pénalise lourdement le secteur apicole. En outre, il représente un danger sanitaire pour la population dans trois cas précis: des piqûres multiples ou une piqûre simple mais localisée sur des muqueuses et, surtout, des piqûres sur des personnes allergiques au venin d'hyménoptère.

1. Comment la proposition de législation communautaire sur les espèces exotiques envahissantes prévue par la stratégie de l'UE en matière de biodiversité pourra-t-elle contribuer à la lutte contre le frelon asiatique?

2. Cette proposition permettra-t-elle notamment de soutenir financièrement des actions de surveillance sanitaire, de piégeage mais aussi de localisation et de destruction des nids (y compris s'agissant des besoins en termes de formation et d'équipement)?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(12 juillet 2013)

Dans une proposition législative à venir, la Commission examine un certain nombre de mesures de prévention et de gestion de l'introduction et de la propagation d'espèces exotiques envahissantes, telles que *Vespa velutina*. Cette proposition comprendra un système d'alerte et de réaction rapides visant les nouvelles invasions d'espèces exotiques envahissantes dans l'Union, qui sera associé à un système d'échange d'informations entre les États membres afin de permettre une action rapide et coordonnée, ainsi que des dispositions relatives à la gestion des espèces exotiques envahissantes déjà établies sur le territoire de l'Union.

Aucun soutien financier spécial n'est prévu dans cette proposition, mais tous les États membres peuvent obtenir des fonds pour faire face à ces invasions au moyen de projets financés au titre de l'instrument LIFE+. Outre l'instrument LIFE, le Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural (Feader) et le Fonds européen de développement régional (FEDER) peuvent également servir à cette fin.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006787/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Fight against the proliferation of yellow-legged hornet

According to two reports published by the European Environmental Agency on 21 February 2013, invading alien species constitute a threat to biodiversity and human health and cause serious economic damage, which is estimated to be around EUR 12 billion per year in Europe. These invading species include the yellow-legged hornet, which entered France in 2004. Classed as a Category c invading species and health threat, it is rampant in over half the departments in France. The yellow-legged hornet (*Vespa velutina*) is a serious predator of bee colonies, which are an essential link in our biodiversity chain. It ravages hives and inflicts serious damage on the beekeeping sector. It also represents a health threat to the population in three specific cases: when it stings several times or when it stings just once in the mucous membrane and, most importantly, when it stings persons allergic to hymenoptera venom.

1. How will the proposal for Union legislation on invading alien species provided for under the EU biodiversity strategy help in the fight against the yellow-legged hornet?

2. Will that proposal enable financial support to be given to health surveillance actions, trapping measures and measures to locate and destroy nests (including in terms of training and equipment requirements)?

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

In its forthcoming legislative proposal, the Commission is examining a number of measures for the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, such as *Vespa velutina*. This proposal will include an early warning and rapid response system for new invasions of invasive alien species of Union concern, coupled with a system for the exchange of information between Member States to ensure swift and coordinated action as well as provisions on the management of invasive alien species already established in the EU territory.

While no dedicated financial support is foreseen in the proposal, all Member States can access funding to manage invasive alien species through projects supported through the LIFE+ mechanism. Apart from LIFE funding, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) could also be used for such purposes.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006788/13
à la Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE), Corinne Lepage (ALDE), Riikka Pakarinen (ALDE) et Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Sécurité alimentaire des citoyens… chinois?

Avec ses 23 langues officielles, auxquelles viendra bientôt s'ajouter le croate, l'Union européenne est théoriquement un acteur engagé dans la promotion du multilinguisme en Europe et à travers le monde.

Ce respect de la diversité linguistique est particulièrement important car il doit permettre aux citoyens de s'informer sur l'action de l'Union européenne et de comprendre les règles applicables. À cet égard, internet joue un rôle crucial permettant aux citoyens européens d'avoir un accès rapide à une information précise et complète. Je salue d'ailleurs le travail de nombreuses directions générales de la Commission européenne qui ont le souci de rendre l'information disponible dans toutes les langues de l'Union européenne.

Cependant, je regrette que certains sites internet, comportant des informations pourtant cruciales pour les citoyens européens, ne soient que partiellement voire pas du tout traduits, par exemple pour les sujets de santé publique et de sécurité alimentaire.

Au regard par exemple de l'intérêt que les citoyens européens portent aux questions liées aux organismes génétiquement modifiés (OGM), est-il normal que la page du site de la Direction générale de la Santé et de la Protection des consommateurs portant sur cette question ne soit disponible qu'en anglais et en…. chinois ([1])?

1. Même s'il faut saluer l'intérêt de la Commission pour la langue chinoise, les citoyens européens ne sont-ils pas en droit d'obtenir ces informations sur les OGM dans leur propre langue avant que celles-ci ne soient traduites dans les langues d'États non-membres de l'Union?

2. La Direction générale pour la Santé et la Protection des consommateurs a-t-elle prévu de rendre à l'avenir son site accessible dans l'ensemble des langues de l'Union afin d'apporter des réponses aux questions que les 500 millions de citoyens européens se posent?

3. La Commission a-t-elle prévu des actions particulières pour permettre un accès de tous les citoyens, dans toutes les langues, aux informations clés?

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

La Commission attache une grande importance à la présentation d'informations sur les sites web Europa, dans le plus grand nombre de langues possible afin de les rendre accessibles à un maximum de personnes, tout en tenant compte des contraintes en matière de ressources humaines et budgétaires.

La page mentionnée contenant des informations traduites en chinois ([2]) à l'attention de parties prenantes faisait partie d'une présentation des politiques de l'UE à l'exposition universelle de Shanghai 2010 ([3]). Leur objectif ponctuel ayant été atteint, ces pages ont maintenant été supprimées. Plus globalement, la Direction générale de la santé et de la protection des consommateurs s'est engagée à fournir aux citoyens européens des informations sur les OGM dans leur propre langue, en coopération avec d'autres directions générales et agences. Tel est le cas pour les questions reçues via les centres de contact Europe Direct.

Les sites internet de la Direction générale de la santé et de la protection des consommateurs sont en cours de révision éditoriale et structurelle en vue d'en améliorer la navigation et la convivialité. Des synergies avec les sites d'autres directions générales sont également mises en place. Des ressources seront libérées pour améliorer les aspects relatifs au multilinguisme, en coopération notamment avec la Direction générale de la traduction.

([1]) cf. http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_zh.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_zh.htm
([3]) Autres pages figurant dans la présentation:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/bips/index_zh.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/traces/what_is/index_zh.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/foodlaw/principles/index_zh.htm

Le processus de remaniement des pages web de la Commission sur le site Europa contribuera à rationaliser l'utilisation des ressources en matière de traduction. Cela permettra de mettre en œuvre une politique de couverture linguistique plus cohérente, en veillant à ce que les informations essentielles pour tous les citoyens soient disponibles dans toutes les langues officielles de l'UE.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006788/13
aan de Commissie
Sophie Auconie (PPE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE), Corinne Lepage (ALDE), Riikka Pakarinen (ALDE) en Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(11 juni 2013)

Betreft: Voedselveiligheid van … Chinese burgers?

Met zijn 23 officiële talen, waar binnenkort ook het Kroatisch bij komt, is de Europese Unie in theorie een gedreven pleitbezorger van meertaligheid in Europa en elders in de wereld.

Deze eerbied voor de taalverscheidenheid is bijzonder belangrijk omdat zij de geldende regels verstaanbaar maakt en de burger in staat stelt zich over het optreden van de Europese Unie te informeren. In dat opzicht speelt internet een cruciale rol doordat het de Europese burgers snel toegang biedt tot nauwkeurige en volledige informatie. Prijzenswaardig is trouwens het werk van vele directoraten-generaal van de Europese Commissie, die hun best doen om informatie in alle talen van de Europese Unie beschikbaar te stellen.

Het valt echter te betreuren dat bepaalde websites met nochtans essentiële informatie voor de Europese burger, bijvoorbeeld over volksgezondheid en voedselveiligheid, slechts gedeeltelijk of helemaal niet zijn vertaald.

Zo stellen de Europese burgers veel belang in kwesties in verband met genetisch gemodificeerde organismen (ggo's). Is het dan normaal dat de desbetreffende pagina op de website van het directoraat-generaal Gezondheid en Consumenten alleen beschikbaar is in het Engels en het … Chinees ([1])?

1. De belangstelling van de Commissie voor het Chinees valt weliswaar toe te juichen, maar hebben de Europese burgers niet het recht die informatie over ggo's in hun eigen taal te krijgen voordat zij in talen van niet-EU-landen wordt vertaald?

2. Is het directoraat-generaal Gezondheid en Consumenten van plan zijn website in de toekomst in alle talen van de Unie beschikbaar te stellen om een antwoord te bieden op de vragen die de 500 miljoen Europese burgers zich stellen?

3. Heeft de Commissie specifieke acties gepland om alle burgers in alle talen toegang te bieden tot die essentiële informatie?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(30 juli 2013)

De Commissie hecht groot belang aan het verstrekken van informatie op Europa-websites in zoveel mogelijk talen zodat die informatie toegankelijk wordt gemaakt voor een zo breed mogelijk publiek, rekening houdende met budgettaire en personele beperkingen.

De desbetreffende pagina met de in het Chinees ([2]) vertaalde belanghebbendegerichte informatie maakte deel uit van de presentatie van het EU-beleid op de Shanghai Expo 2010 ([3]). Aangezien zij hun doel gediend hebben, zijn de pagina's nu verwijderd. Meer in het algemeen streeft het directoraat-generaal Gezondheid en Consumenten ernaar informatie over GMO te verschaffen aan Europese burgers in hun eigen taal, in samenwerking met andere dictoraten-generaal en agentschappen. Dit geldt ook voor vragen die de contactcentra van Europe Direct (EDCC) ontvangen.

De websites van het directoraat-generaal voor Gezondheid en Consumenten zijn momenteel aan een structurele en redactionele herziening onderhevig om de navigatie en gebruiksvriendelijkheid te vergroten. Daarnaast wordt gewerkt aan synergieën met websites van andere directoraten-generaal. In samenwerking met het directoraat-generaal Vertaling worden op die manier middelen vrijgemaakt om de meertaligheid te bevorderen.

De onlangs gestarte herziening van de webpagina's van de Commissie op de Europa-website zal leiden tot een efficiënter gebruik van vertaalmiddelen. Dit maakt de tenuitvoerlegging van een meer consistent beleid inzake talendekking mogelijk zodat belangrijke informatie voor alle burgers in alle officiële talen van de EU beschikbaar zal zijn.

([1]) zie http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_zh.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_en.htm
([3]) Andere pagina's die deel uitmaakten van de pesentatie waren: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/bips/index_zh.htm, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/traces/what_is/index_zh.htm, http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/foodlaw/principles/index_zh.htm

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006788/13

komissiolle

Sophie Auconie (PPE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE), Corinne Lepage (ALDE), Riikka Pakarinen (ALDE) ja Anne Delvaux (PPE)

(11. kesäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Onko terveys- ja kuluttaja-asioiden pääosaston verkkosivuston tiedot tarkoitettu Kiinan kansalaisille?

Euroopan unionissa on 23 virallista kieltä, joiden joukkoon liittyy pian myös kroatia. Unioni on siis ainakin teoriassa eurooppalainen toimija, joka on sitoutunut monikielisyyden edistämiseen Euroopassa ja koko maailmassa.

Kielellisen monimuotoisuuden kunnioittaminen on erittäin tärkeää, sillä sen avulla kansalaisille annetaan mahdollisuus saada tietoa Euroopan unionin toiminnasta ja ymmärtää sovellettavia sääntöjä. Tästä näkökulmasta tarkasteltuna internetillä on keskeinen rooli, sillä sen kautta unionin kansalaisilla on mahdollisuus saada nopeasti tarkkoja ja kattavia tietoja. Tässä yhteydessä on syytä antaa tunnustusta useille komission pääosastoille, jotka huolehtivat siitä, että tiedot ovat saatavilla kaikilla Euroopan unionin kielillä.

Samalla on kuitenkin valitettavaa, että tietyt verkkosivustot, joilla käsitellään esimerkiksi kansanterveyteen ja elintarviketurvaan liittyviä asioita, jotka ovat kansalaisten kannalta erittäin tärkeitä, on vain osittain tai ei lainkaan käännetty.

Esimerkiksi muuntogeenisiä organismeja (GMO) koskevat kysymykset herättävät kiinnostusta kansalaisissa. Onko siis normaalia, että terveys- ja kuluttajansuoja-asioiden pääosaston tätä aihetta koskeva verkkosivusto on saatavilla ainoastaan englanniksi ja kiinaksi? ([1])

1. Komission osoittamaa mielenkiintoa kiinan kieltä kohtaan on tietysti pidettävä myönteisenä, mutta eikö unionin kansalaisilla ole kuitenkin ensisijainen oikeus saada tietoa GMO:ista omalla kielellään ennen kuin sivustot käännetään unionin ulkopuolisen valtion kieleen?

2. Suunnitteleeko terveys- ja kuluttajansuoja-asioiden pääosasto asettavansa verkkosivustonsa saataville kaikilla unionin kielillä, jotta voitaisiin antaa vastauksia kysymyksiin, joita 500 miljoonalla unionin kansalaisella on esitettävänään?

3. Onko komissio kaavaillut erityistoimia, joiden avulla se voi tarjota kaikille unionin kansalaisille mahdollisuuden tutustua tärkeisiin tietoihin kaikilla kielillä?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus

(30. heinäkuuta 2013)

Komissio pitää erittäin tärkeänä, että Europa-sivustolla esitetään tiedot niin monella kielellä kuin budjetti- ja henkilöresurssien puitteissa on mahdollista, jotta ne ovat mahdollisimman laajan yleisön saatavilla.

Kyseinen sivusto, joka sisälsi sidosryhmille suunnattua kiinaksi käännettyä tietoa ([2]), liittyi vuonna 2010 järjestettyä Shanghain maailmannäyttelyä koskevan EU:n toimintalinjan esittelyyn ([3]). Kun sivut olivat täyttäneet tarkoituksensa, ne poistettiin. Yleisesti ottaen todettakoon, että terveys- ja kuluttaja-asioiden pääosasto on sitoutunut yhteistyössä muiden pääosastojen ja virastojen kanssa antamaan muuntogeenisiä organismeja koskevaa tietoa Euroopan kansalaisille näiden omalla kielellä. Tämä koskee muun muassa Europe Direct -neuvontapalveluun osoitettuja kysymyksiä.

Terveys- ja kuluttaja-asioiden pääosaston verkkosivuja muokataan parhaillaan rakenteellisesti ja toimituksellisesti navigoinnin ja käyttäjäystävällisyyden parantamiseksi. Samalla luodaan yhteisvaikutuksia muiden pääosastojen verkkosivustojen kanssa. Tällä tavoin pystytään vapauttamaan resursseja myös monikielisyyden parantamiseksi yhteistyössä käännöstoimen pääosaston kanssa.

Hiljattain käynnistynyt Europa-sivustolla olevien komission verkkosivujen parantaminen tehostaa käännöspalvelujen käyttöä. Tämä mahdollistaa kielivalikoimaa koskevan yhdenmukaisemman toimintamallin, jolla varmistetaan, että tärkeimmät tiedot ovat kaikkien kansalaisten saatavilla EU:n kaikilla virallisilla kielillä.

([1]) Ks. cf. http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_zh.htm

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_en.htm

([3]) Muita asiaan liittyviä sivuja olivat seuraavat: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/bips/index_zh.htm, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/traces/what_is/index_zh.htm ja http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/foodlaw/principles/index_zh.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006788/13
to the Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE), Corinne Lepage (ALDE), Riikka Pakarinen (ALDE) and Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Food security of citizens of … China?

With its 23 official languages, soon to be augmented by Croatian, the European Union is theoretically dedicated to promoting multilingualism in Europe and throughout the world.

This respect for linguistic diversity is especially important, because it enables citizens to obtain information on action by the European Union and to understand the rules that apply. In this respect, the Internet plays a vital role in granting European citizens fast access to accurate and comprehensive information. I also salute the work of numerous European Commission directorates general working to ensure that information is available in all the languages of the European Union.

Unfortunately, however, some websites containing crucial information for European citizens, for example on the subjects of public health and food security, are only partly translated, if at all.

Given the interest which European citizens have in issues relating to genetically modified organisms (GMO), for example, why is the page on the Directorate General for Health and Consumers on this issue only available in English and … Chinese ([1])?

1. Even if we must salute the Commission's interest in the Chinese language, are European citizens not entitled to obtain that information on GMO in their own language, before it is translated into the languages of third countries?

2. Has the Directorate General for Health and Consumers made provision for its website to be available in all the Union languages in the future, in order to reply to the questions which the 500 million citizens of the European Union are asking themselves?

3. Has the Commission planned any specific action to ensure that all citizens have access in all languages to key information?

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

The Commission attaches great importance to presenting information on Europa websites in as many languages as possible in order to make them accessible to the widest possible public while taking into account budgetary and human resource constraints.

The identified page containing translation of stakeholder oriented information into Chinese ([2]) formed a part of presentation of EU's policies on Shanghai Expo 2010 ([3]). Having served their purpose the pages have now been deleted. More broadly, Directorate General for Health and Consumers is committed to providing information on GMO to European citizens in their own language in cooperation with other Directorates General and Agencies. This is the case for the questions received through the Europe Direct Contact Centres (EDCC).

The websites of Directorate General for Health and Consumers are currently undergoing structural and editorial overhaul with a view of improving navigation and user-friendliness. Synergies with websites of other Directorates General are also being implemented. This will free up resources to improve multilingualism aspects as well in cooperation with Directorate General for Translation.

The recently started overhaul of the Commission's webpages on the Europa website will lead to a more efficient use of translation resources. This will enable the implementation of a more consistent language coverage policy, ensuring that key information for all citizens is available in all EU official languages.

([1]) see http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_zh.htm
([3]) Other pages included in the presentation were http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/bips/index_zh.htm, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/traces/what_is/index_zh.htm, http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/foodlaw/principles/index_zh.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006789/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(11 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Sprijin în caz de inundații

Mai multe regiuni din Austria, Germania, Republica Cehă, Slovacia, România și Ungaria sunt afectate, în această perioadă, de inundații. Numai în Germania primele estimări arătă că pagubele ar putea depăși 6 miliarde de euro, în timp ce în Cehia primele estimări realizate de companiile de asigurări evaluează pagubele la peste 300 de milioane de euro.

În sudul Germaniei și în Austria inundațiile au fost provocate de Dunăre, fiind afectate regiuni riverane acestui fluviu, iar în Cehia de râul Vltava, de-a lungul căruia se află cele mai fertile terenuri agricole și viticole din această țară.

În România, urmare a ploilor abundente care au afectat partea de est și de nord a țării, au suferit pagube peste 70 de case și 500 de anexe gospodărești, iar peste 500 de hectare de terenuri agricole și 160 de hectare de pășuni din Moldova au fost distruse de inundații. Pagube însemnate au înregistrat și legumicultorii din estul țării, în județul Galați aproximativ 300 de sere și peste 120 de grădini de legume au fost acoperite de ape.

Din păcate, de multe ori factorii de decizie care au stabilit măsurile de intervenție au hotărât inundarea terenurilor agricole sau a pășunilor, pentru a salva orașele.

În ce măsură sprijină Comisia eventualele măsuri ale autorităților locale și naționale din statele afectate de inundații privind acordarea unor facilități fiscale pentru companiile afectate și care se vor implica în lucrări de refacere, inclusiv în mediul rural, precum și pentru fermierii care și-au pierdut recoltele?

Are în vedere Comisia reanalizarea prevederilor din domeniul asigurărilor pentru includerea obligativității unei clauze de asigurare multirisc climateric în contractele de asigurări, pentru a contribui de asemenea la refacerea în timp util a caselor, instituțiilor, fermelor și serelor afectate de inundații?

Are în vedere Comisia acordarea unor sume în avans pentru a avea un impact inedit și eficient în atenuarea dificultăților provocate de inundații?

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(9 august 2013)

Comisia (CE) dorește să își exprime compasiunea și solidaritatea cu persoanele care se confruntă cu consecințele dramatice ale recentelor inundații. Având în vedere situația dezastruoasă, CE a oferit ajutor financiar din Fondul de Solidaritate. Centrul de răspuns în situații de urgență al CE a monitorizat îndeaproape situația și a acționat ca platformă de informații. De asemenea, a oferit informații de alertă timpurie și imagini prin satelit de înaltă rezoluție ale zonelor inundate.

1. Având în vedere că, în general, în UE aspectele de impozitare directă țin de competența statelor membre, CE nu are autoritatea de a interveni într-o chestiune pur internă, cum ar fi acordarea unor facilități fiscale în favoarea companiilor afectate de inundații.

Articolul 107 alineatul (2) litera (b) din TFUE permite statelor membre să acorde ajutoare pentru repararea pagubelor suferite de întreprinderi ca urmare a unui dezastru natural. Astfel de măsuri trebuie notificate Comisiei Europene. Aceasta va verifica circumstanțele în care s-a produs dezastrul și se va asigura că ajutorul este acordat numai pentru pagubele provocate în mod direct de acest dezastru și că ajutorul nu conduce la supracompensare.

Politica de dezvoltare rurală a UE oferă, de asemenea, sprijin ([1]) pentru restabilirea producției agricole după dezastre.

2. La 16 aprilie 2013, CE a adoptat o Carte verde privind asigurarea împotriva dezastrelor ([2]), prin care a lansat o consultare publică. După analizarea răspunsurilor, CE va decide cu privire la eventualele acțiuni ulterioare. Aceste acțiuni ulterioare vor facilita gradul de conștientizare al cetățenilor și măsura în care aceștia sunt pregătiți în cazul apariției unor astfel de evenimente.

3. Fondul de Solidaritate este disponibil pentru a ajuta statele membre să facă față costurilor măsurilor de urgență. Fondul poate fi activat numai după ce un stat membru și-a prezentat cererea. Orice ajutor trebuie să fie aprobat de Consiliu și de Parlament înainte de a fi plătit. Ajutorul poate fi utilizat retroactiv.

([1]) Articolul 20 litera (b) punctul (vi) din Regulamentul nr. 1698/2005 al Consiliului.
([2]) COM (2013) 213 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006789/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Support in flood situations

Many regions of Austria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Hungary are currently affected by flooding. In Germany alone early estimations show that losses could exceed EUR 6 billion, while in the Czech Republic early estimations carried out by insurance companies assess the damages at over EUR 300 million.

In Southern Germany and Austria the flooding was caused by the Danube, affecting the regions situated along the river. In the Czech Republic it was caused by the Vltava River, flanked by the most fertile agricultural land and vineyards in the country.

In Romania, following the heavy rains that hit the eastern and northern parts of the country, 70 homes and 500 household annexes were damaged and over 500 ha of agricultural land and 160 ha of grazing land in the Moldova region have been destroyed by flooding. Significant damage was also recorded by vegetable growers in the east of the country. In Galați county approximately 300 greenhouses and 120 vegetable gardens have been flooded.

Unfortunately the decision-makers who set intervention measures often decided to allow the agricultural or grazing land to be flooded in order to save towns.

How will the Commission support the potential measures to be taken by local and national authorities of the states affected by flooding to grant tax breaks for affected companies that will be involved in rebuilding work, including in rural areas, and also for farmers who have lost their crops?

Does the Commission intend to reassess the provisions in the insurance domain to include mandatory climatic multi-risk insurance clauses in insurance contracts, in order to contribute to the timely rebuilding of homes, institutions, farms and greenhouses affected by flooding?

Does the Commission intend to grant sums in advance in order to ensure a unique and effective impact on alleviating the difficulties caused by flooding?

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

The Commission (EC) would like to express its sympathy and solidarity with the people in facing the dramatic consequences of the recent floods. Given the disastrous situation, the EC offered financial help from the Solidarity Fund. The EC's Emergency Response Centre closely monitored the situation and acted as an information hub. It also provided early warning information and high resolution satellite images of the flooded areas.

1. Given that, in general, direct tax matters in the EU fall within Member States' (MS) competence, the EC does not have authority to engage itself in a purely domestic matter such as supporting the grant of tax breaks to companies affected by the floods.

Article 107(2)(b) TFEU allows MS to grant aid to compensate for the damage suffered by enterprises due to a natural disaster. Such measures have to be notified to the EC which will verify the occurrence of the disaster, and that aid is only granted for damage directly caused by this disaster and does not lead to overcompensation.

The EU rural development policy also offers support ([1]) for restoring agricultural production after disasters.

2. On 16 April 2013, the EC adopted a Green Paper on Disaster Insurance ([2]) that launched a public consultation. The EC will decide on possible follow-up actions after having studied the responses. These follow-ups shall facilitate the citizens' awareness of and coverage against such events.

3. The Solidarity Fund is available to provide assistance to MS in dealing with the costs of the emergency measures. The Fund can only be activated once a MS has submitted its application. Any aid has to be approved by the Council and Parliament before a pay-out. The aid may be used retroactively.

([1]) Article 20(b) (vi) of Council Regulation 1698/2005.
([2]) COM(2013) 213 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006790/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Calendrier législatif de l'itinérance

Le Parlement européen et de nombreux collègues se sont réjouis que la commissaire chargée des nouvelles technologies se fasse l'écho de leurs demandes d'abolir dès 2014 les tarifs appliqués pour l'itinérance dans l'Union européenne.

1. La Commission peut elle confirmer que le paquet législatif sera bien proposé en juillet comme annoncé?

2. La Commission opte-t-elle plutôt pour une nouvelle baisse des frais perçus après 2014, afin de tendre vers zéro, ou pour une abolition nette de ces frais, qui n'ont plus aucune raison d'être, dès 2015?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(25 juillet 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse donnée à la question E-006758/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006790/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Legislative schedule for roaming

The European Parliament and many of my colleagues have expressed their delight that the European Commissioner for Digital Agenda is answering their calls to abolish roaming charges in the European Union from 2014.

1. Can the Commission confirm that the legislative package will indeed be tabled in July as announced?

2. Is the Commission going to opt for a further reduction in charges imposed after 2014, moving towards a target of zero, or for outright abolition of these now unjustified charges from 2015?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the answer given in reply to Question E-006758/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006791/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Cambodge: mère de famille incarcérée pour avoir milité en faveur du droit au logement

Le 27 décembre 2012, le tribunal municipal de la capitale Phnom Penh a reconnu Yorm Bopha, âgée de 31 ans, coupable de «violence intentionnelle avec circonstances aggravantes» et l'a condamnée à une peine de trois ans d'emprisonnement. Elle était accusée d'avoir planifié une agression contre deux hommes en août 2012. Lors du procès, les témoignages étaient incohérents et parfois contradictoires, et certains témoins ont reconnu avoir été sous les effets d'une intoxication lorsque ladite infraction avait été commise. L'absence d'éléments de preuve contre Yorm Bopha suggère que les charges étaient sans fondement et que cette femme n'aurait jamais dû être condamnée. «Il faut qu'elle soit libérée sans plus attendre», a déclaré Isabelle Arradon, directrice adjointe d'Amnesty International pour la région Asie-Pacifique.

De trop nombreux défenseurs des droits humains ont été harcelés et ont fait l'objet de violences et de poursuites forgées de toutes pièces au cours des 12 derniers mois au Cambodge. Incarcérée depuis son arrestation le 4 septembre 2012, Yorm Bopha a laissé derrière elle son jeune fils et son époux, qui est malade. Avant cette date, elle défendait activement le droit à un logement pour les personnes qui habitaient près du lac Boeung Kak et qui ont été expulsées de force de chez elles depuis que le terrain a été loué à une société en 2007. Yorm Bopha a joué un rôle primordial dans la campagne menée pour obtenir la libération des «13 militantes de Boeung Kak» condamnées en mai 2012 à une peine de 2 ans et demi d'emprisonnement à la suite d'une manifestation pacifique. «Il semble que Yorm Bopha ait été condamnée en raison de son action légitime de défense des droits fondamentaux des habitants de son quartier, et de son appel l'année dernière en faveur de la libération des 13 militantes de Boeung Kak», a déclaré Isabelle Arradon.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante partage-t-elle l'idée que cette femme est une prisonnière d'opinion, détenue pour avoir exercé pacifiquement son droit à la liberté d'expression?

Quelle est la position de la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante face au harcèlement, aux violences et aux poursuites forgées de toutes pièces dont ont été victimes de nombreux défenseurs des droits humains au cours des 12 derniers mois au Cambodge?

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

La délégation de l'UE à Phnom Penh a observé le déroulement du procès et a donc suivi de près l'affaire impliquant M^me^ Yorm Bopha. Le 18 février, le chef de la délégation de l'UE a entrepris une démarche auprès du Premier ministre Hun Sen, appelant à la liberté d'expression de chacun.

L'UE a toujours utilisé l'ensemble des instruments dont elle dispose pour soutenir le travail des défenseurs des Droits de l'homme au Cambodge, y compris par le biais des instruments de coopération au développement. L'instrument européen pour la démocratie et les Droits de l'homme (IEDDH) a été essentiel pour favoriser le respect des Droits de l'homme dans le pays. La question du droit à la terre étant au cœur de la lutte contre la pauvreté, l'UE a joué un rôle majeur dans le financement des ONG menant des campagnes de sensibilisation dans ce domaine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006791/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Cambodia: mother gaoled for fighting for right to housing

On 27 December 2012, the municipal court in the capital Phnom Penh convicted Yorm Bopha, aged 31, for 'intentional violence with aggravating circumstances' and sentenced her to three years' imprisonment. She was accused of having planned an assault on two men in August 2012. During the trial witness testimonies were inconsistent, sometimes conflicting with each other, and some witnesses admitted to being intoxicated when the alleged crime occurred. The lack of credible evidence against Yorm Bopha suggests that the charges were baseless and that she should never have been convicted. Isabelle Arradon, Deputy Asia-Pacific Director of Amnesty International, has declared that she should be released immediately.

Numerous human rights defenders have faced harassment and violence and spurious legal action in Cambodia over the past year. Yorm Bopha, who has been in goal since her arrest on 4 September 2012, has left behind her young son and husband, who is in ill health. Until then, she had been actively defending the right to housing for the community living close to Boeung Kak Lake, which was forcibly evicted from their homes when the land was leased to a company in 2007. Yorm Bopha played a leading role in the campaign for the release of the 'Boeung Kak 13', the activists convicted and sentenced to two-and-a-half years' imprisonment in May 2012 after a peaceful protest. According to Isabelle Arradon, it seems that Yorm Bopha was convicted for her legitimate work defending her community's fundamental rights and her calls last year for the release of the 'Boeung Kak 13'.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that this woman is a prisoner of conscience, who has been gaoled for having peacefully exercised her right to freedom of expression?

What is the Vice-President/High Representative's stand on the harassment, violence and spurious action to which numerous human rights defenders have been subjected in Cambodia over the past year?

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

The EU Delegation in Phnom Penh has been closely following the case of Yorm Bopha by monitoring the trials. On 18 February, the EU Head of Delegation delivered a demarche to Prime Minister Hun Sen calling for the freedom of expression of all.

The EU has consistently used the range of tools available to support the work of Human Rights Defenders in Cambodia, including through development cooperation instruments. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights has been pivotal to securing that Human Rights are advanced in the country. Because land issue is at the core of poverty alleviation, the EU has been instrumental in funding NGOs leading advocacy work related to these issues.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006792/13
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Les autorités russes favoriseraient-elles l'homophobie?

Le fait que la police de Moscou n'ait pas protégé contre les agressions physiques les personnes qui manifestaient, samedi 25 mai, en faveur des droits des lesbiennes, des gays et des personnes bisexuelles, transgenres et intersexuées renforce l'impression que l'État autorise la violence et la discrimination.

Les militants tentaient de mettre en place des piquets pour protester contre des lois homophobes, notamment contre un projet de loi fédérale interdisant la «propagande de l'homosexualité», et pour attirer l'attention sur la discrimination et la violence persistantes dont sont victimes les personnes LGBTI dans le pays.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante ne pense-t-elle pas, qu'au lieu d'arrêter des manifestants pacifiques, les autorités russes devraient les protéger des attaques extrémistes dues au comportement discriminatoire de certaines personnes?

Selon la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, le fait de ne pas protéger les militants face à des agressions violentes menées par des contre-manifestants et de ne pas engager de poursuites judiciaires contre les responsables de violences envers des personnes LGBTI ne va-t-il pas à l'encontre des obligations de la Russie au regard du droit international relatif aux droits humains?

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante compte-t-elle mettre cette question à l'ordre du jour? La Vice-présidente/Haute représentante compte-t-elle communiquer officiellement et mettre en œuvre l'appareil diplomatique?

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

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a connaissance des événements mentionnés par l'Honorable Parlementaire. Elle suit l'évolution de la situation de très près et a exprimé publiquement sa déception à la suite de l'adoption de projets de loi interdisant la «propagande de l'homosexualité» au niveau régional d'abord, et maintenant au niveau national également.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a souligné que la mise en œuvre de cette loi pourrait renforcer les discriminations à l'encontre des lesbiennes, des gays, des personnes bisexuelles, transgenres et intersexuées et des personnes qui les soutiennent, en particulier en limitant leur liberté d'expression et leur liberté d'association et de réunion. Elle a observé que cela serait en contradiction avec les engagements nationaux et internationaux souscrits par la Russie en ce qui concerne le respect des droits fondamentaux de tous les individus.

L'Union européenne a soulevé ces questions à plusieurs reprises dans le contexte des consultations sur les Droits de l'homme qui se déroulent deux fois par an entre l'Union européenne et la Russie. Elle a souligné dans ce contexte que la Russie avait le devoir d'assurer la sécurité de tous les participants aux piquets, marches et réunions en les protégeant de contre-manifestants violents. Elle a aussi fait observer qu'elle estimait que les lois «anti-propagande», qui, dans certains cas assimilent homosexualité et pédophilie, pourraient attiser la violence et les discours homophobes. D'autres échanges à propos de ces lois ont aussi eu lieu par des canaux diplomatiques.

L'UE continuera de suivre avec beaucoup d'attention l'évolution des droits de la communauté LGTBI dans la Fédération de Russie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006792/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Are the Russian authorities promoting homophobia?

The fact that the Moscow police did not protect demonstrators in favour of the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community against physical attacks on Saturday 25 May, reinforces the impression that the Russian State authorises violence and discrimination.

The demonstrators were attempting to set up pickets to protest against homophobic laws, especially against a draft federal law banning the 'propaganda of homosexuality', and to draw attention to the ongoing discrimination and violence suffered by LGBTI people in the Russian Federation.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative not agree that, instead of arresting peaceful demonstrators, the Russian authorities ought to be protecting them against extremist attacks resulting from the discriminatory behaviour of certain individuals?

Is the Vice-President/High Representative of the view that, through failing to provide the demonstrators with protection against violent attacks perpetrated by counter-protesters and through failing to take legal action against those responsible for the violence committed against the LGBTI people, the Russian Federation is in breach of its obligations under international human rights law?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to put this matter on the agenda? Does she intend to initiate official communication on this matter via diplomatic channels?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the developments referred to by the Honourable Member. She has been following these developments very closely, expressing publically her disappointment with the adoption of bills prohibiting 'homosexual propaganda' first at regional, and now also at national level.

The HR/VP stressed that the implementation of this law could reinforce discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals and intersex people, and those supporting them, in particular by limiting their freedom of expression and their freedom of association and assembly. She noted that this would be in contradiction with Russia's national and international commitments to uphold fundamental rights of all individuals.

The European Union has discussed these issues repeatedly in the context of the EU-Russia human rights consultations which take place twice a year. The EU stressed in that context that Russia had a responsibility to ensure the safety of participants in such pickets, marches and rallies against violent counter-demonstrators. The EU also noted that it believed 'anti-propaganda' bills, which have in some instances assimilated homosexuality and paedophilia, could trigger homophobic violence and discourse. Further exchanges with regards to these laws have also taken place via diplomatic channels.

The EU will continue to follow very closely further developments with regard to the rights of the LGBTI community in the Russian Federation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006795/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juin 2013)

Objet: Stratégie de santé et de sécurité en panne devant les portes de la Commission

Le 31 mai, la Commission européenne a adopté un document d'évaluation sur sa précédente stratégie en matière de santé et sécurité. Elle a également lancé sur internet une consultation publique sur l'avenir de cette politique.

La consultation aura une durée de huit semaines. Toute organisation ou toute personne intéressée peut y répondre. Elle porte sur une vingtaine de questions. La consultation ne considère pas comme acquis qu'une nouvelle stratégie pour la santé et la sécurité au travail soit adoptée. Elle se contente d'une formulation ambiguë concernant un «nouveau cadre politique européen».

La Commission reconnaît enfin timidement la nécessité de se préoccuper de la santé et de la sécurité au travail.

1. Doit-on voir, dans la question de la consultation qui invite à formuler des propositions pour réduire la «charge administrative» que la santé et la sécurité représenteraient pour les petites et moyennes entreprises, un manque d'enthousiasme de la part de la Commission?

2. La Commission estime-t-elle à présent que l'adoption d'une nouvelle stratégie en la matière est indispensable?

3. Pourquoi la nouvelle stratégie, qui aurait dû être adoptée il y a six mois, qui a fait l'objet de nombreuses propositions du Parlement européen et qui a été déposée il y a deux ans, n'est-elle toujours pas en place?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(25 juillet 2013)

1. La Commission s'attache à réduire les charges administratives sans porter atteinte aux intérêts publics tels que la santé et la sécurité au travail ([1]). En outre, les États membres peuvent maintenir ou établir des mesures de protection plus strictes ([2]) et il est possible qu'une partie des charges imposées par la réglementation soit, non pas directement imputable à la législation de l'UE, mais à des mesures plus rigoureuses adoptées au niveau national. Les réponses à la question posée dans le cadre de la consultation publique, à laquelle l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence, peuvent aider à déterminer à quel niveau les charges pesant sur les PME trouvent leur origine, le cas échéant.

2. La Commission s'est engagée à améliorer la santé et la sécurité au travail dans l'UE. Une communication sur la santé et la sécurité au travail sera rédigée dans le cadre du programme de travail de la Commission pour 2013. Ce document tiendra compte des résultats de la consultation publique lancée le 31 mai 2013 sur un nouveau cadre d'action dans ce domaine. Sur la base de ces résultats et d'autres contributions institutionnelles, comme la résolution du Parlement européen du 15 décembre 2011 sur l'examen à mi-parcours de la stratégie européenne 2007-2012 pour la santé et la sécurité au travail ([3]) et les avis relatifs à une nouvelle stratégie en matière de santé et de sécurité au travail de l'UE adoptée par le comité consultatif pour la sécurité et la santé au travail et le comité des hauts responsables de l'inspection du travail en 2011, la communication susmentionnée devrait fournir les lignes directrices d'un nouveau cadre stratégique de l'UE dans ce domaine.

3. La Commission estime qu'avant d'adopter les orientations politiques pour les années à venir, il était nécessaire de réunir des éléments témoignant de l'impact de la précédente stratégie 2007-2012 et d'ouvrir une consultation publique en la matière. La Commission est convaincue que cette façon de procéder est la plus adéquate pour garantir la transparence et la participation, deux valeurs primordiales dans le processus décisionnel de l'UE.

([1]) Voir par exemple le rapport de la Commission, intitulé «Alléger les charges imposées aux PME par la réglementation — Adapter la réglementation de l'UE aux besoins des micro-entreprises» [COM(2011) 803].
([2]) Article 153, paragraphe 4, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.
([3]) P7_TA(2011)0589.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006795/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Occupational health and safety strategy spluttering outside the Commission's gates

On 31 May the European Commission adopted an Assessment Document on its previous occupational health and safety strategy. The Commission also launched an online public consultation on the future of this policy.

The consultation is set to run for eight weeks. Any interested party can respond. The consultation covers some twenty questions. It does not automatically assume that a new occupational health and safety strategy has to be adopted. It merely uses ambiguous wording regarding a 'new European policy framework'.

The Commission is timidly recognising, at long last, the need to address occupational health and safety.

1. Should one note a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Commission regarding the issue of consultation calling for the submission of proposals to reduce the 'administrative burden' imposed by health and safety on small and medium-sized enterprises?

2. Does the Commission currently believe that the adoption of a new strategy in this area is essential?

3. Bearing in mind that the new strategy should have been adopted six months ago, that a large number of suggestions have been forthcoming from the European Parliament, and that it was tabled two years ago, why is it still not in place?

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

1. The Commission is dedicated to reduce administrative burdens without undermining public policy obligations such as workplace health and safety ([1]). In addition, since Member States may maintain or introduce more protective measures ([2]), it is possible that part of the regulatory burden is caused not directly by EU legislation, but by more stringent measures adopted at national level. The question in the public consultation referred to by the Honorable Member may help to determine at what level burdens for SMEs, if any, originate.

2. The Commission is committed to improve health and safety at work in the EU. A Communication on health and safety at work is included in the Commission Work Programme 2013. This document will take stock of the results of the public consultation launched on 31 May 2013 on a new policy framework in this area. Based on these results and on other institutional contributions such as the Resolution of the European Parliament of 15 December 2011 on the mid-term review of the European strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work ([3]) and the opinions on a new EU Health and Safety at Work strategy adopted by the Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work and the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee) in 2011, the above Communication should provide the guidelines of a new EU policy framework in this area.

3. The Commission considers that, before adopting the policy orientations for the forthcoming years, it was necessary to gather factual evidence on the impact of the previous strategy 2007-2012 and to open a public consultation on this matter. The Commission is convinced that this course of action is the most appropriate to ensure transparency and participation, which are crucial values in the EU decision making process.

([1]) See e.g. COM(2011) 803, 'Minimising regulatory burden for SMEs — Adapting EU regulation to the needs of micro-enterprises'.
([2]) Article 153(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.
([3]) P7_TA(2011)0589.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006796/13
alla Commissione
Gianni Vattimo (ALDE)
(11 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Uso dei finanziamenti europei per la realizzazione della nuova linea ferroviaria ad alta velocità Torino-Lione (Progetto prioritario TEN-T 6)

Negli ultimi sei mesi l'associazione ambientalista italiana *Re: Common* e il comitato di cittadini italiani *Movimento No TAV* hanno chiesto alla DG Trasporti della Commissione europea di rendere noti cifre e documenti riguardanti l'utilizzo dei finanziamenti europei per il Progetto prioritario TEN-T 6, e in particolare per la realizzazione della nuova linea ferroviaria ad alta velocità Torino-Lione. La sovvenzione relativa alla realizzazione della tratta internazionale del progetto, decisa dalla Commissione il 5 dicembre 2008, prevedeva l'erogazione di EUR 671 800 000 (nello specifico EUR 234 599 988 per la Francia e EUR 437 200 012 per l'Italia) per studi e lavori da effettuare nel periodo 1º gennaio 2007-31 dicembre 2013, a fronte di un valore totale dei lavori di EUR 2 091 192 000.

La risposta della DG Trasporti è stata lenta e incompleta, in quanto, alla fine del 2012, è stato semplicemente comunicato ai richiedenti il valore dell'importo erogato fino ad oggi al governo italiano (ovvero 53 106 000 EUR) senza entrare nel dettaglio circa le finalità d'uso di tali finanziamenti. Nello specifico, le condizioni generali della decisione di finanziamento prevedono che le richieste in merito ai pagamenti debbano essere sostanziate da rapporti tecnici e finanziari, oltre che da informazioni su contratti, sub-contratti ed eventuali studi che riguardino il progetto. Risulta alquanto improbabile, quindi, che la Commissione europea non sia a conoscenza di come tali sovvenzioni siano state utilizzate dai governi di Italia e Francia. Tutto ciò appare in manifesto contrasto con le garanzie dei diritti dei singoli nei confronti di istituzioni, organi ed organismi appartenenti all'Unione in materia di trasparenza dei documenti (articolo 15 TFUE e articolo 42 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione), ma anche con i principi espressi dalla Convenzione di Åarhus del 25 giugno 1998 (direttiva 2003/4/CE) sull'accesso pubblico alle informazioni in materia ambientale.

Per quale motivo la Commissione non ha reso pubblica tutta la documentazione in suo possesso, come legittimamente domandato dai richiedenti secondo i diritti enunciati negli articoli summenzionati?

Può la Commissione spiegare e documentare in che modo e con quali finalità lo Stato italiano e lo Stato francese hanno speso i finanziamenti europei ad essi erogati fino a questo momento per la realizzazione della tratta internazionale della nuova linea ferroviaria ad alta velocità Torino-Lione?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

Le domande di accesso a documenti sono trattate in conformità al regolamento (CE) n. 1049/2001 ([1]). Dato che i progetti TEN-T sono realizzati dagli Stati membri (SM), i relativi documenti e le relazioni (finanziarie) presentati alla Commissione costituiscono documenti di terzi. Tale circostanza richiede che la Commissione, ai sensi dell'articolo 4, paragrafi 4 e 5, del regolamento 1049/2001, consulti gli Stati membri interessati prima di una loro eventuale divulgazione.

A seguito di una prima domanda di accesso a documenti, tramite risposta del 16 novembre 2012, la decisione di finanziamento ([2]) è stata divulgata al richiedente. Tenendo conto della posizione espressa dalle autorità nazionali, è stato negato l'accesso alle relazioni finanziarie. In seguito a una domanda di conferma in merito all'accesso a questi ultimi documenti a norma dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento n. 1049/2001, la Commissione ha intrapreso il riesame dei documenti richiesti. Nella sua domanda di conferma il richiedente segnalava che, in caso di divulgazione di informazioni sulla distribuzione e l'impiego dei fondi da parte dello Stato italiano, sarebbero venuti a cadere i motivi alla base di tale domanda. La Commissione ha risposto con lettere del 21 dicembre 2012 e del 30 gennaio 2013 fornendo al richiedente tutte le informazioni in suo possesso.

La Commissione ha chiuso l'accesso al documento nel marzo 2013, con il consenso del richiedente.

La Commissione fornisce informazioni sull'utilizzo dei fondi dell'Unione europea da parte degli Stati membri per il progetto Lione-Torino, nonché per gli altri progetti TEN-T, ad eccezione dei casi in cui la non divulgazione risulti giustificata ai sensi del regolamento n. 1049/2001.

Va ricordato che il Parlamento viene informato ogni anno dai coordinatori europei (cfr. relazioni ([3])) sullo stato di avanzamento dei progetti prioritari.

([1]) GU L 145 del 21.5.2001.
([2]) Decisione (CE) C(2008)7733.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t-implementation/priority-projects/annual-reports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006796/13
to the Commission
Gianni Vattimo (ALDE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Use of EU funds for the construction of the new Turin-Lyon high-speed rail line (TEN-T Priority Project 6)

In the past six months, the Italian environmental group 'Re: Common' and the Italian citizens' committee 'Movimento No TAV' have asked the Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport to disclose figures and documents regarding the use of EU funds for TEN-T Priority Project 6, in particular for the construction of the new Turin-Lyon high-speed rail line. The grant for the construction of the international section of the project, approved by the Commission on 5 December 2008, provided for the payment of EUR 671.8 million (specifically, EUR 234 599 988 for France and EUR 437 200 012 for Italy) for studies and works be to carried out between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2013, compared with a total works value of EUR 2 091 192 000.

The Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport was slow to respond and only gave a partial answer; at the end of 2012 it simply reported the amount granted to the Italian Government to date (EUR 53.106 million), without giving details on the intended uses of this funding. The general conditions of the decision to grant funding require that applications for payments be backed up by technical and financial reports, as well as information on contracts, subcontracts, and any project studies. It is therefore somewhat unlikely that the Commission is unaware of how these grants have been used by the Italian and French Governments. All of this seems clearly to contradict the guarantees of the rights of individuals with regard to EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies in terms of document transparency (Article 15 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 42 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights), but also the principles of the Aarhus Convention of 25 June 1998 (Directive 2003/4/EC) on public access to environmental information.

Why has the Commission not disclosed all the documents it has, as legitimately requested by the petitioners in accordance with the rights set out in the abovementioned articles?

Can the Commission explain and provide documents to show how and for what purposes the Italian and the French States have spent funds received up to this point for the construction of the international section of the new Turin-Lyon high-speed rail line?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

Ad 1:

Access to documents requests are dealt with in accordance with Regulation 1049/2001 ([1]). As TEN-T projects are undertaken by the Member States (MS), related (financial) reports and documentation submitted to the Commission are third-party documents. In such a case the Commission, pursuant to Article 4(4) and 4(5) of Regulation 1049/2001, has to consult the MS concerned on possible disclosure.

Following an initial request for access to documents, with the reply dated 16 November 2012 the funding decision ([2]) was disclosed to the applicant. Taking into account the position expressed by the national authorities, access was refused to the financial reports. Following a confirmatory application for access to the latter documents under Article 7(2) of Regulation 1049/2001 the Commission undertook the reassessment of the documents requested. The applicant signalled in its confirmatory request that it would become obsolete, if the information on how the distribution and use of funds by the Italian State was provided. The Commission replied with letters dated 21 December 2012 and 30 January 2013 and provided the applicant with all information in its possession.

The Commission closed the access to the document in March 2013 with the consent of the applicant.

Ad 2:

The Commission provides information on the spending of EU funds by the MS on Lyon-Turin as well as on other TEN-T projects except in cases where non-disclosure is justified under Regulation No 1049/2001.

It should be recalled that the Parliament is informed every year on the progress of the priority projects by the European coordinators (see reports ([3])).

([1]) OJ L145 of 21.5.2001.
([2]) EC decision C(2008)7733.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t-implementation/priority-projects/annual-reports_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006797/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(11 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sprawa przeciwko prezes Stowarzyszenia Żołnierzy AK na Białorusi za upamiętnienie polskiego dowódcy

12 maja Związek Polaków na Białorusi ustawił w miejscowości Raczkowszczyzna w obwodzie grodzieńskim krzyż upamiętniający dowódcę AK Anatola Radziwonika ps. Olech. W ten sposób działacze związku chcieli symbolicznie uczcić pamięć żołnierzy AK, którzy zginęli na tym terenie. W uroczystości poświęcenia krzyża i we mszy polowej zorganizowanej z tej okazji wzięło udział ok. 150 osób, w tym konsul generalny Grodna, kilku byłych żołnierzy AK oraz Prezes Stowarzyszenia Żołnierzy AK na Białorusi Weronika Sebastianowicz.

Jak poinformowały wczoraj media, białoruskie władze postawiły Weronice Sebastianowicz zarzut zorganizowania nielegalnego zgromadzenia i skierowały sprawę do sądu. Pragnę zaznaczyć, że krzyż ten, jak informuje prezes ZPB, Mieczysław Jaśkiewicz, postawiono na terenie prywatnym, a jego właściciel dał na to zgodę.

To zdarzenie to kolejny przykład represji stosowanych przez władze w Mińsku w stosunku do przedstawicieli mniejszości polskiej, próba utrudnienia im prowadzenia aktywnej działalności, kultywowania polskiej kultury, tradycji i historii oraz ograniczania prawa obywateli do pokojowego gromadzenia się. Zwracam się zatem z zapytaniem, czy Komisja Europejska ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w tej sprawie i wyrazić sprzeciw wobec oczywistych represji i prześladowań wobec mniejszości polskiej na Białorusi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(26 lipca 2013 r.)

UE jest zaniepokojona przejawami praktyk dyskryminacyjnych wymierzonych w grupy mniejszościowe na Białorusi. Delegatura UE w Mińsku dokładnie śledzi te kwestie, w tym sprawę Weroniki Sebastianowicz. Rozwój stosunków dwustronnych między UE a Białorusią zależy od postępów poczynionych przez Białoruś w zakresie poszanowania zasad demokracji, praworządności i praw człowieka. Obawy UE w tej kwestii są regularnie wyrażane w kontaktach z odpowiednimi władzami Białorusi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006797/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: Case against Polish Home Army Soldiers' Association in Belarus for commemorating a Polish leader

On 12 May 2013, the Union of Poles in Belarus planted a cross in the village of Rachkaushchyna in Hrodna Province, Belarus as a monument to the Polish Home Army leader Anatol 'Olech' Radziwonik and to honour the memory of the Home Army soldiers who fell in this region Around 150 people attended the dedication of the cross and the field mass which took place at the time, including the consul-general in Hrodna, a number of former Home Army soldiers and the president of the Home Army Soldiers' Association in Belarus, Weronika Sebastianowicz.

According to media reports yesterday, the Belarusian authorities have accused Weronika Sebastianowicz of organising an illegal gathering and have lodged the matter with the court. However, according to Mieczysław Jaśkiewicz, the president of the Union of Poles in Belarus, the cross was erected on private land and the owner had given his permission.

This attempt to hinder activities to foster Polish culture, tradition and history is yet another example of repression by the authorities in Minsk against the country's Polish minority, and a restriction of the right of citizens to gather peacefully. Does the Commission intend to intervene in this matter and register its protest against the clear repression and persecution of the Polish minority in Belarus?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

The EU is concerned about all manifestations of discriminatory practices towards minority groups in Belarus and the EU Delegation in Minsk closely monitors these issues, including the case of Ms Weronika Sebastianowicz. The development of bilateral relations with Belarus are conditional on progress towards respect by Belarus for the principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The EU's concerns in the matter are regularly raised with the relevant Belarusian authorities.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006798/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(11 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Liġijiet ġodda fin-Niġerja dwar iż-żwieġ u r-relazzjonijiet bejn persuni tal-istess sess

Fit-30 ta' Mejju 2013 il-Kamra tar-Rappreżentanti tan-Niġerja, b'maġġoranza assoluta, approvat abbozz ta' liġi kontra l-gays li, barra milli jrendi illegali ż-żwieġ bejn il-gays, jhedded il-libertajiet bażiċi ta' assoċjazzjoni u tal-kelma billi pproskriva sentenzi ta' priġunerija ħorox għall-wiri fil-pubbliku ta' affezzjoni omosesswali ("diretta jew indiretta") jew il-ħolqien ta' gruppi soċjali gays. Anki n-Niġerjani li jgħinu lill-koppji omosesswali biex jiżżewġu jistgħu jeħlu għaxar snin ħabs. Il-President Niġerjan, Goodluck Jonathan, għad irid jiffirma l-abbozz, u l-Istati Uniti heddew li jirtiraw l-għajnuna jekk dan isir liġi. Il-Prim Ministru tar-Renju Unit, David Cameron, afferma li l-gvern tiegħu jaf "jikkunsidra" l-istess linja ta' azzjoni meta l-abbozz għadda mis-Senat Niġerjan fl-2011. L-omosesswali fin-Niġerja diġà jsofru persekuzzjoni minħabba l-liġijiet tal-era kolonjali li jippenalizzaw il-konġunġiment karnali omosesswali, u l-applikazzjoni rigoruża tal-liġi tax-Xarija f'ċerti żoni. Fl-2006, l-Ambaxxatur Niġerjan għan-Nazzjonijiet Uniti ddefenda pubblikament l-eżekuzzjoni tal-omosesswali.

L-Unjoni Ewropea tagħti iktar minn EUR 150 miljun lin-Niġerja bħala għajnuna annwali. Skont id-dokument tal-2009 "EU — Nigeria Joint Way Forward" din l-għajnuna hija marbuta mal-promozzjoni tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem. Kif qiegħda tippjana l-Kummissjoni li tgħin l-isforz internazzjonali biex Goodluck Jonathan jiġi impedit milli johroġ tali provvedimenti b'liġi? Jekk din il-liġi tkun adottata, il-Kummissjoni sejra terġa' tivvaluta l-pożizzjoni tagħha li, skont is-sit tagħha, tgħid hekk "mir-reintroduzzjoni tad-demokrazija fl-1999, in-Niġerja hija llum eżempju pożittiv ta' demokrazija emerġenti, li qiegħda turi progress ċar fit-triq għal governanza aħjar u għar-rispett tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem, eċċ."? [traduzzjoni mhux uffiċjali]

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/ il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(25 ta' Lulju 2013)

L-UE adottat strateġija dwar id-drittijiet tal-bniedem tal-pajjiż għan-Niġerja biex tiggwida l-azzjonijiet tal-UE fil-qasam tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem. Għaldaqstant l-UE torganizza djalogu lokali annwali dwar id-drittijiet tal-bniedem, fejn hija konsistentement qajmet it-tħassib tagħha dwar għadd ta' kwistjonijiet, inklużi kwistjonijiet dwar leżbjani, gay, bisesswali u transġeneri (LGBT). Permezz tal-assistenza tagħha, l-UE tfittex li ssostni l-implimentazzjoni tar-riformi fl-oqsma ta' governanza demokratika bit-tama li jkollhom influwenza pożittiva fuq id-drittijiet tal-bniedem. Wara l-adozzjoni tal-abbozz ta' liġi dwar iż-żwieġ bejn persuni tal-istess sess (projbizzjoni) mill-Assemblea Nazzjonali, kienet ippubblikata dikjarazzjoni pubblika li fiha l-UE esprimiet it-tħassib tagħha dwar ksur tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem li l-persuni LGBT u l-organizzazzjonijiet tas-soċjetà ċivili jistgħu jiltaqgħu magħhom, kemm-il darba l-abbozz jirċievi l-kunsens tal-President. L-UE qed tkompli bl-isforzi tagħha u tuża d-djalogu tagħha mal-awtoritajiet tan-Niġerja — bħall-Presidenza, il-Kummissjoni għad-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem, l-organizzazzjonijiet tas-soċjetà ċivili — biex tinkoraġġixxi lill-President Jonathan biex ma jadottax l-abbozz ta' liġi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006798/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(11 June 2013)

Subject: New laws on gay marriage and relationships in Nigeria

On 30 May 2013, Nigeria's House of Representatives passed with an overwhelming majority an anti-gay bill that, in addition to making gay marriage illegal, threatens basic freedoms of association and speech by proscribing severe prison sentences for the public display of same-sex affection ('directly or indirectly') or the creation of gay social groups. Even Nigerians who aid gay couples in getting married could be jailed for a decade. The Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, has yet to sign the bill, and the US has threatened to withdrawal aid should it become law. The British Prime Minister, David Cameron, said his government would 'consider' the same line of action when the bill was passed by the Nigerian Senate in 2011. Homosexuals in Nigeria already suffer persecution from colonial-era laws criminalising homosexual intercourse, and the strict enforcement of Sharia law in some areas. In 2006, the Nigerian ambassador to the United Nations publicly defended the execution of homosexuals.

The EU provides over EUR 150 million in annual aid to Nigeria. According to the 2009 EU-Nigeria Joint Way Forward, this aid is tied to human rights promotion. How does the Commission plan to aid the international effort to prevent Goodluck Jonathan from enacting these measures into law? If this law be passed, will the Commission re-evaluate its stance, found on its website, that 'since the reintroduction of democracy in 1999, Nigeria is today a positive example of an emerging democracy, showing clear progress towards better governance and respect for human rights, etc.'?

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

The EU has adopted a country human rights strategy for Nigeria guiding the EU's actions in the field of human rights. Accordingly the EU holds a yearly local dialogue on human rights, where it has consistently raised its concerns on a number of issues, including Lesbian Gay Transgender Bi-Sexual (LGBT) matters. Through its assistance, the EU seeks to support the implementation of reforms in the areas of democratic governance which hopefully will have a positive influence on human rights. Following the adoption by the National Assembly of the same sex marriage (prohibition) bill, a public statement was published in which the EU expressed its concerns about the human rights violations LGBT persons and civil society organisations may encounter, should the bill receive the President's assent. The EU is maintaining its efforts and making use of its dialogue with the Nigerian authorities — such as the Presidency, the Human Rights Commission, civil society organisations — to encourage President Jonathan to not enact the bill.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006805/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(12. juni 2013)

Om: Roaming forordningen

Medlem af Kommissonen for den digitale dagsorden, Neelie Kroes, annoncerede på IMCO-udvalgets møde den 30. maj, at hun vil fremsætte et nyt forslag til at fjerne roaming-afgifter, som kan vedtages allerede omkring påske 2014.

Forventer Kommissionen, at det nye forslag vil videreføre de vedtagne strukturelle tiltag fra Roaming-forordningen fra 2013, der havde som formål at øge konkurrencen på markedet?

Forventer Kommissionen fortsat at operere med prislofter på tale, sms og dataoverførsler som i den gældende forordning?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Neelie Kroes
(22. juli 2013)

Som opfølgning på Det Europæiske Råds møde i foråret 2013, hvor Rådet opfordrede til konkrete foranstaltninger med det formål så hurtigt som muligt at etablere et indre marked for informations- og kommunikationsteknologi, arbejder Kommissionen for øjeblikket på en lovgivningsmæssig foranstaltning, der skal gøre det muligt for udbyderne at tilbyde digitale tjenester overalt i Europa og samtidig gøre det muligt for virksomheder og borgere at nyde godt af sådanne tjenesteydelser fra alle EU's lande, uanset hvor de befinder sig. Roamingafgiftsniveauet udgør stadig en stor hindring for det indre marked og er fortsat forbundet med høje omkostninger for borgere og virksomheder, og derfor er det en omfattende hindring for bevægeligheden. Kommissionen vil foreslå yderligere foranstaltninger, der skal tilskynde udbyderne til at tilbyde roaming til hjemmemarkedspriser. Dermed bygger Kommissionen videre på de konkurrencefremmende foranstaltninger i roamingforordningen fra 2012 og fastholder denne forordnings strukturelle tiltag.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006805/13
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: The Roaming Regulation

The Member of the Commission for the Digital Agenda, Neelie Kroes, announced to the IMCO Committee meeting of 30 May that she would submit a new proposal to eliminate roaming charges that could be adopted as early as Easter 2014.

Does the Commission expect this new proposal to continue the structural measures adopted in the Roaming Regulation of 2013, which aimed to increase competition in the market?

Does the Commission expect to continue to operate with price caps on voice mail, SMS text messages and data transfers, as in the current regulation?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

Following the 2013 Spring European Council's call for concrete measures to establish a Single Market for Information and Communications Technology as early as possible, the Commission is currently working on a legislative measure aimed at allowing operators to provide digital services across the EU and allowing citizens and businesses to enjoy such services from anywhere in Europe, wherever they are. The level of roaming charges is still an important obstacle to the single market, and continues to be an important cost to citizens and businesses and as such constitute significant impediment to mobility. Building on the pro-competitive measures of the 2012 Roaming Regulation and maintaining the structural solution it created, the Commission will propose further measures to incentivise operators to provide roaming at domestic price levels.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006806/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — La questione dell'intervento in Siria

Il 5 giugno 2013, il governo siriano ha annunciato che le sue forze avevano riconquistato la città di al-Qusayr, che per un anno era stata sotto il controllo delle forze ribelli. La cosa dovrebbe avere un impatto sui negoziati per un accordo di pace. Hezbollah, la milizia libanese sciita, ha significativamente aiutato i militari di Assad a riprendere al-Qusayr. Attualmente, le forze di Assad stanno combattendo su diversi fronti che avanzano quali Homs, Aleppo e la capitale Damasco. Ora si teme che la riconquista di al-Qusayr da parte del governo possa portare a nuove maggiori ondate di conflitti settari tra sunniti e sciiti, e con gli alawiti.

Per di più, secondo il quotidiano britannico Guardian, i governi sia del Regno Unito che francese hanno dichiarato che i campioni medici fatti pervenire dal territorio siriano sono risultati positivi per l'agente nervino sarin. Il governo francese ha trasmesso i suoi risultati alle Nazioni Unite.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sulla riconquista da parte dell'esercito siriano della città strategica di al-Qusayr, cui ha contribuito la presenza di combattenti di Hebollah dal Libano?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta a prendere in considerazione l'intervento di sostegno UE per conto delle forze ribelli sulla base del fatto che ci sono disposizioni che sanciscono l'obbligo di assicurare la protezione delle popolazioni civili?

3. Alla luce delle difficoltà di formare squadre di negoziato per i colloqui Kerry-Lavrov di Ginevra 2, quali passi si propone l'Unione europea per contribuire ad esercitare ulteriori pressioni sul governo siriano affinché offra concessioni concrete e una tabella di marcia per le elezioni democratiche?

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

L'UE esprime serie preoccupazioni circa il risultato delle operazioni militari condotte dal regime e dai suoi sostenitori nella città di Qusayr e circa la partecipazione di estremisti e attivisti stranieri nella lotta in Siria, che alimenta ulteriormente il conflitto e minaccia la stabilità nella regione.

L'UE aiuta la popolazione civile fin dall'inizio della crisi apportando assistenza umanitaria, economica e allo sviluppo per un importo che attualmente ammonta a quasi 1,2 miliardi di euro. L'Unione europea sta inoltre rivedendo il regime di sanzioni contro la Siria per sostenere e aiutare l'opposizione e consentire una migliore protezione della popolazione civile. La risposta globale alla crisi in Siria recentemente annunciata dall'Unione europea riguarda anche le preoccupazioni dell'UE che il conflitto possa estendersi a livello regionale coinvolgendo i paesi confinanti.

L'UE favorisce una soluzione politica del conflitto in Siria e accoglie con favore la recente iniziativa USA-Russia di organizzare a Ginevra una conferenza sulla Siria (Ginevra 2) per promuovere un processo politico basato sui principi inclusi nel comunicato di Ginevra del 30 giugno 2012. L'UE farà tutto il possibile per aiutare a creare le condizioni favorevoli per garantire il successo della conferenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006806/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Question of intervention in Syria

On 5 June 2013, the Syrian government announced that its forces had retaken the town of al-Qusayr, which had been under the control of rebel forces for a year. This is expected to have an impact on negotiations for a peace settlement. Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shi'ite militia, strongly aided Assad's military as it worked to take back al-Qusayr. At present, Assad's forces are fighting on a number of advancing fronts such as Homs, Aleppo and the capital Damascus. There are now fears that the government's takeover of al-Qusayr could lead to new increased waves of sectarian conflict between Sunnis and Shi'ites, as well as Alawites.

What is more, according to the British *Guardian* newspaper, both the UK and the French governments have said that that medical samples smuggled out of Syria have tested positive for the nerve agent sarin. The French Government has passed its findings on to the United Nations.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's position on the Syrian military's recapture of the strategic town of al-Qusayr, which was aided by the presence of Hezbollah fighters from Lebanon?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to consider supporting EU intervention on behalf of rebel forces on the basis that there are stipulations that they must ensure the protection of civilian populations?

3. In light of the difficulties of forming negotiating teams for the Geneva 2 Kerry-Lavrov talks, what steps does the EU propose to help put further pressure on the Syrian government to offer concrete concessions and a roadmap for democratic elections?

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

The EU is seriously concerned with the outcome of the military operations conducted by the regime and its supporters in the city of Qusayr and with the involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria, which is further fueling the conflict and posing a threat to regional stability.

The EU has been supporting the civilian population all along with humanitarian, economic and development assistance that now amounts to close to EUR 1.2 billion. The EU has also been reviewing its sanctions regime against Syria in order to support and help the opposition and to enable greater support for the protection of civilians. EU's recently announced comprehensive response to the crisis in Syria also addresses EU's concern with the regional spillover of the conflict to the neighbouring countries.

The EU supports a political solution to the conflict in Syria and welcomes a recent US-Russia initiative to hold a Geneva conference on Syria (Geneva 2) to promote a political process based on the principles included in the Geneva communique of 30 June 2012. The EU will spare no effort in helping to create the appropriate conditions for a successful convening of this conference.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006807/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Operatori di ONG condannati in Egitto

Il 5 giugno 2013, varie fonti di informazione hanno riferito che un tribunale penale del Cairo, la capitale egiziana, ha condannato 43 dipendenti egiziani e stranieri di diverse Organizzazioni non governative addirittura a cinque anni di carcere per aver lavorato illegalmente. Molti degli operatori delle ONG sono stati processati in contumacia.

Si è arrivati alle condanne a seguito di una serie di incursioni effettuate su ONG straniere nel 2011, col pretesto che molte di loro ricevevano finanziamenti stranieri ed operavano senza licenza durante la presidenza di Hosni Mubarak. Sotto le nuove autorità dell'Egitto, si è sostenuto che le ONG abbiano ricevuto fondi illeciti. Tra le ONG in questione figurano Freedom House, l'International Republican Institute, il National Democratic Institute, e la Fondazione Konrad Adenauer.

Al Cairo un dipendente statunitense di una ONG americana e una dipendente di un think tank tedesco sono stati multati per USD 143 e condannati a due anni di prigione. Il giornale del Regno Unito, Times, riferisce che la Casa Bianca le ha definite condanne politiche. Il governo egiziano è molto contrariato dal fatto che alcuni finanziamenti di aiuti degli Stati Uniti destinati all'Egitto siano stati stornati a sostegno delle ONG.

In Egitto, si sta discutendo di un progetto di legge sulle ONG che comporterebbe la creazione di un comitato direttivo presieduto dal ministro degli affari sociali, che dovrebbe approvare le richieste di finanziamenti esteri, e avrebbe anche facoltà di rigettare le richieste delle ONG ove i progetti fossero giudicati illegali.

1. Alla luce delle sentenze penali contro lavoratori delle ONG, sia in Egitto che in contumacia, la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta a discutere la posizione dell'UE nei confronti del governo egiziano che prende di mira ONG che ricevono un sostegno finanziario dall'Unione europea?

2. Che effetto potrebbero avere queste sentenze sulla politica «di più per di più» dell'UE nei confronti dell'Egitto?

3. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta a unirsi alla Casa Bianca nel condannare siffatte condanne di operatori di ONG come «condanne politiche»?

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

L'Unione europea è a conoscenza degli eventi preoccupanti a cui si riferiscono gli onorevoli parlamentari. Nella recente dichiarazione congiunta del 5 giugno 2013 ([1]), l'AR/VP e il Commissario responsabile per l'Allargamento e la Politica di vicinato hanno espresso la loro preoccupazione per la recente sentenza del tribunale egiziano che ha condannato i 43 dipendenti di organizzazioni non governative straniere, considerandola un segnale negativo nei confronti dell'azione della società civile.

A partire dalla revisione del 2011 della sua politica di vicinato, illustrata nella comunicazione «Una risposta nuova ad un vicinato in mutamento» ([2]), l'Unione si è impegnata a sostenere la lotta delle popolazioni del Sud del Mediterraneo a favore della democrazia, della dignità, della prosperità e della sicurezza dalle persecuzioni. L'UE intende analizzare e controllare la situazione sul terreno tramite la sua delegazione del Cairo, dialogando con il governo, l'opposizione, la società civile e le altre principali parti interessate, al fine di adottare misure adeguate in funzione del contesto politico e in linea con la nuova politica di vicinato e con la sua impostazione «more for more».

([1]) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/130605_8_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2011)303 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006807/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — NGO workers sentenced in Egypt

On 5 June 2013, various news sources reported that a criminal court in Cairo, the Egyptian capital, had sentenced 43 Egyptian and foreign employees of several non-governmental organisations to up to five years in prison for working illegally. Many of the NGO workers were tried in absentia.

The sentences came following a series of raids carried out on foreign NGOs in 2011, as many of them received foreign funding and were operating without licences during the time of President Hosni Mubarak. Under Egypt's new authorities, there were claims that the NGOs were receiving funds illicitly. The NGOs concerned include Freedom House, the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

In Cairo a US employee of an American NGO and a female employee of a German think tank were fined USD 143 and given two-year prison sentences. The UK's *Times* newspaper reports that the White House has called the sentences politically motivated. The Egyptian government is upset that some US aid funding for Egypt has been diverted to support NGOs.

In Egypt a draft NGO law is being debated which would entail the creation of a steering committee headed by the Social Affairs Minister, which would have to approve requests for foreign funding. It would also be able to turn down requests from NGOs if it deemed projects illegal.

1. In light of the criminal sentences against NGO workers both in Egypt and in absentia, is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to discuss the EU's stance towards the Egyptian government's targeting of NGOs receiving EU financial support?

2. What effect, if any, will these sentences have on the EU's 'more for more' policy towards Egypt?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to join the White House in condemning this sentencing of NGO workers as 'politically motivated'?

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

The EU is aware and concerned about the events referred to. In the recent 5 June 2013 joint statement ([1]), the HR/VP and Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy expressed their concern at the recent Court ruling in Egypt sentencing the 43 employees of foreign non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The verdict was condemned as a negative signal regarding the work of civil society.

Since the revision of the EU Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2011, illustrated in a 'New Strategy for a changing European neighbourhood' ([2]), the EU has been committed to supporting the peoples' struggle of the Southern Mediterranean in favour of democracy, dignity, prosperity and safety from persecution. The EU will continue to analyse and monitor the situation on the ground, through its Delegation in Cairo, in dialogue with the government, opposition, civil society and other key stakeholders in order to take the appropriate measures according to the political context and in line with the revised ENP and its 'more for more' approach.

([1]) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/130605_8_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2011) 303 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006808/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Preparazione delle elezioni presidenziali in Afghanistan

Il 3 giugno 2013. il Washington Post ha riferito che in Afghanistan sono in corso i preparativi per le elezioni presidenziali del 2014. L'attuale Presidente, Hamid Karzai, è in carica dal 2002, quando ha assunto l'amministrazione transitoria. Nel 2014, le truppe della NATO hanno in programma di lasciare il paese ed è considerato cruciale da parte della comunità internazionale, che chi subentra sia in grado di garantire la stabilità del paese.

Preoccupa che il Presidente Karzai sia riluttante a cedere il potere, anche se ha dichiarato che l'Afghanistan non deve essere oggetto di «esperimenti» politici con frequenza ravvicinata non volendo render conto di eventuali irregolarità che si siano verificate durante la sua amministrazione, e altri sostengono che crede di essere indispensabile come presidente per il futuro del paese. Si riferisce che Karzai abbia ostacolato o ritardato diverse riforme elettorali, che sono essenziali per garantire un processo elettorale equo, come il possesso di una carta d'identità elettronica per gli elettori. Deve ancora nominare nuovi membri alla Commissione elettorale nazionale.

Si riferisce che siano molti i nuovi candidati pronti a partecipare alle elezioni, quali gli attuali o ex membri del gabinetto, uomini d'affari afghanoamericani. Anche il fratello di Karzai, Qayum, si è presentato come candidato. La questione è che molti dei candidati cercheranno di competere sulla base del fatto che controllano clan e milizie.

Nel 2012, nel quadro dello Strumento per la stabilità, l'UE ha erogato 10 milioni di euro all'Afghanistan per aiutare la Commissione elettorale indipendente afghana a sviluppare e consolidare la capacità per future elezioni.

1. Quali passi intende effettuare l'UE per prepararsi per la sua missione di osservazione elettorale a lungo termine l'anno prossimo in Afghanistan?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ha effettuato passi volti a consultare altri leader internazionali sulle conseguenze dell'eventuale partecipazione del presidente Hamid Karzai, alle elezioni per un nuovo mandato nel 2014?

3. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'UE a Kabul sulle possibilità che le elezioni del prossimo anno siano libere e giuste?

4. Come vengono spesi i finanziamenti UE nell'ambito dello «Strumento per la stabilità» relativamente alla preparazione di queste elezioni in Afghanistan?

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

Il presidente Karzai ha dichiarato ripetutamente nel corso del 2013 che intende rispettare la Costituzione e non presentarsi alle elezioni. Recentemente ha sottolineato che considera proprio compito «istituzionalizzare la democrazia» in Afghanistan, intento che l'Unione europea ritiene lodevole e degno di essere sostenuto. L'UE ha invitato tutte le parti in Afghanistan a fare in modo che siano disponibili meccanismi fondamentali quali un quadro giuridico conforme alle regole internazionali, una commissione elettorale indipendente e imparziale presieduta da una persona scelta con un processo trasparente e mediante consultazioni, un meccanismo efficace per le contestazioni elettorali e un piano globale di sicurezza, che permetta agli afghani di esprimere liberamente la loro volontà democratica. Se, e nella misura in cui, queste iniziative saranno prese a tempo debito, l'UE ritiene che si verificheranno le condizioni essenziali affinché le elezioni siano sufficientemente credibili e trasparenti da produrre un risultato legittimo.

L'UE sovvenziona il fondo comune internazionale amministrato dal Programma delle Nazioni Unite per lo sviluppo (UNDP). I finanziamenti sono utilizzati per sostenere il processo di riforma elettorale e di potenziamento delle capacità della commissione elettorale indipendente e, in parte, per favorire la sensibilizzazione degli elettori. Se sarà invitata dal governo dell'Afghanistan a sorvegliare le elezioni, l'UE prenderà debitamente in considerazione la fattibilità e l'utilità di organizzare una missione di osservazione elettorale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006808/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Preparations for Afghanistan's presidential elections

On 3 June 2013, the *Washington Post* reported that preparations are under way in Afghanistan for the 2014 presidential elections. The current president, Hamid Karzai, has been in office since 2002 when he took over the transitional administration. In 2014, NATO troops are planning to leave the country and it is regarded as crucial by the international community that whoever takes over can ensure stability in the country.

There are concerns that President Karzai is reluctant to hand over power, even though he has said that Afghanistan should not have to undergo political 'experiments' every few years, as he does not want to be held to account for any wrongdoings that occurred during his administration, and others claim he believes he is indispensable as President for the country's future. Karzai has reportedly either obstructed or delayed several electoral reforms which are essential for ensuring a fair election process, such as having an electronic voter ID card. He has also yet to appoint new members to the National Election Commission.

There are reportedly plenty of new candidates prepared to run in the elections, such as former and current cabinet members, Afghan-American businessmen. Even Karzai's brother Qayum has put himself forward as a candidate. The issue at stake is that many of the candidates will try to compete on the basis that they control clans and militias.

In 2012, under the Instrument for Stability, the EU gave EUR 10 million to Afghanistan to help the Afghan Independent Electoral Commission develop and consolidate capacity for future elections.

1. What steps is the EU taking to prepare for its long-term Election Observation Mission next year in Afghanistan?

2. Has the Vice-President/High Representative taken steps to consult with other international leaders about the consequences if President Hamid Karzai runs for another term in 2014?

3. What is the assessment of EU officials in Kabul about the prospects for next year's election being free and fair?

4. How is EU funding under the 'Instrument for Stability' being spent to prepare for these elections in Afghanistan?

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

President Karzai has repeatedly stated that he intends to respect the Constitution and not stand in the elections during 2013. He has recently emphasised that he sees his legacy as 'institutionalising democracy' in Afghanistan. The EU believes that aim is commendable and worth supporting. The EU has called on all parties in Afghanistan to ensure that the key arrangements are in place, including a legal framework in line with international standards; an impartial Independent Election Commission (IEC) headed by a person identified through a transparent and consultative process; an effective electoral complaints mechanism; and a comprehensive security plan, so that Afghans are able to express their democratic will freely. If, and as long as, these steps are taken in good time, the EU believes that the key conditions will be in place for elections to be sufficiently credible and transparent to produce a legitimate outcome.

The EU is providing funding to the international pooled fund administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The funding is being used to support the process of electoral reform and capacity building of the IEC. Some will also be used to support voter education. If the Government of Afghanistan invites the EU to observe the elections, the EU will duly consider if the deployment of an Election Observation Mission would be feasible and useful.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006809/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Presunto complotto di Al-Qaeda irachena per attentati con armi chimiche

L'1 giugno 2013, varie fonti di informazione hanno riferito che cinque membri del ramo iracheno di Al-Qaeda sono stati arrestati con l'accusa di aver progettato di lanciare attacchi chimici in Iraq e anche di contrabbandare armi per attentati in Europa e Nord America. L'Intelligence irachena ne ha seguito le tracce per tre mesi prima di effettuare gli arresti.

Hanno scoperto laboratori improvvisati, creati per la produzione di gas nervino sarin e iprite. Al-Qaeda in Iraq, si auto denomina «Stato Islamico di Iraq». Il gruppo ha effettuato attacchi contro la popolazione sciita irachena e ha preso di mira il governo. Si era preparato a utilizzare dispositivi di telecomando per spruzzare armi chimiche durante la commemorazione sciita della morte dell'Imam Musa Al-Kadhim.

Si ritiene che Al-Qaeda in Iraq sia l'unico ramo del gruppo militante che ha utilizzato armi chimiche. Nel 2006 e nel 2007, Al-Qaeda ha lanciato bombe al cloro, ma per fortuna nessuno è rimasto ucciso.

1. Quali passi è disposta ad effettuare la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante onde indagare sul presunto complotto da parte del ramo iracheno di Al-Qaeda per il contrabbando di armi chimiche in Europa e Nord America?

2. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'UE a Baghdad, quanto alle circostanze dell'arresto dei cinque partecipanti al complotto di Al-Qaeda?

3. Quali passi sta effettuando l'UE per monitorare la minaccia costituita dal contrabbando di armi chimiche da paesi come l'Iraq e altri noti come esportatori di terrorismo?

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

L'AR/VP segue con attenzione la situazione della sicurezza in Iraq e condanna regolarmente il livello elevato e costante di violenza in Iraq, compresa la serie di attentati degli ultimi mesi. La maggior parte di questi attentati è imputabile al gruppo «Stato islamico dell'Iraq», cui gli onorevoli deputati fanno riferimento.

Come ha fatto nel corso della sua visita in Iraq del 17 giugno 2013, l'AR/VP non cessa di esortare tutte le parti a unirsi per creare un solido fronte contro ogni forma di violenza e a fare tutto il possibile per creare un contesto politico stabile e inclusivo.

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza dell'arresto di cinque uomini affiliati al gruppo «Stato islamico dell'Iraq» che si presume si apprestassero a utilizzare armi chimiche. L'UE sostiene la convenzione sulle armi chimiche ed è uno dei principali attori, anche dal punto di vista finanziario, delle attività dell'Organizzazione per la proibizione delle armi chimiche (OPCW). L'Unione europea esorta tutti i paesi che ancora non vi partecipano ad aderire alla convenzione sulle armi chimiche ed esorta quelli che ne fanno parte, come l'Iraq, ad attuarla pienamente. A tale riguardo, e per ragioni imperative, l'UE ha ripetutamente invitato la Siria — e continuerà a sollecitare le autorità del paese — ad aderire con urgenza alla convenzione sulle armi chimiche. Le autorità siriane hanno una particolare responsabilità: devono garantire che le armi chimiche in loro possesso siano custodite in luogo sicuro in attesa della loro distruzione, che sarà oggetto di una verifica indipendente, e non finiscano nelle mani di altri soggetti, statali o meno. L'Unione ribadisce che l'uso di armi chimiche, indipendentemente dagli attori o dalle circostanze, è un atto esecrabile e totalmente contrario alle norme giuridiche e agli standard della comunità internazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006809/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Iraqi al-Qaeda alleged chemical weapons plot

On 1 June 2013, various news sources reported that five members of Iraq's off shoot of al-Qaeda were arrested on charges that they were planning to launch chemical attacks in Iraq and also to smuggle weapons for plots in Europe and North America. Iraqi intelligence tracked the men for three months before making arrests.

They discovered makeshift laboratories, which were created to produce sarin nerve gas and mustard gas. Al-Qaeda in Iraq calls itself the 'Islamic State of Iraq'. The group has carried out attacks against Iraq's Shia population and has targeted the government. It had been preparing to use remote devices to spray chemical weapons during the Shia commemoration of the death of Imam Musa al-Kadhim.

Al-Qaeda in Iraq is believed to be the only branch of the militant group that has used chemical weapons. In 2006 and 2007, al-Qaeda launched chlorine bombs, but fortunately nobody was killed.

1. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take in order to investigate the alleged plot by Iraq's branch of al-Qaeda to smuggle chemical weapons into Europe and North America?

2. What is the assessment of EU officials in Baghdad regarding the circumstances around the arrest of the five al-Qaeda plotters?

3. What steps is the EU taking to monitor the threat of chemical weapons being smuggled out of countries such as Iraq and other countries which are known as exporters of terrorism?

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

The HR/VP follows the security situation in Iraq very closely. She has condemned consistently the continuing high level of violence in Iraq, including the spate of attacks in recent months. Most of these attacks are attributable to the Al Qaeda-related 'Islamic State of Iraq' that the Honourable Members are referring to.

The HR/VP urged repeatedly, including during her visit to Iraq on 17 June 2013, all parties to unite to create a strong front against all forms of violence and to do their utmost to create a stable and inclusive political environment.

The HR/VP is aware of the arrest of five men affiliated with the 'Islamic State of Iraq' who were allegedly plotting to use chemical weapons. The EU supports the Chemical Weapon Convention and is a major contributor, including financially, to the activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The EU urges all Countries that are yet not party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to adhere to it and those who are parties, like Iraq, to fully implement it. In this respect, and on a more pressing case, the EU has repeatedly call upon Syria — and will continue to urge its authorities — to accede to the CWC as a matter of urgency. The Syrian authorities bear a particular responsibility to ensure that their chemical weapons are stored securely pending independently verified destruction and are not permitted to fall into the hands of any other state or non-state actor. The EU recalls that any use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances would be reprehensible and completely contrary to the legal norms and standards of the international community.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006810/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Presunto uso eccessivo della forza contro i manifestanti turchi

Il 31 maggio 2013, una manifestazione pacifica contro il progetto di distruggere un parco nella città turca di Istanbul ha suscitato proteste antigovernative a livello nazionale poiché la polizia ha usato idranti e gas lacrimogeni per cercare di disperdere le proteste. Secondo diversi organi di stampa internazionali, i manifestanti hanno accusato l'attuale governo di imporre valori autoritari e islamici alla repubblica laica mostrando anche di non aver rispetto per la libertà di parola e di stampa. Di conseguenza, oltre 3 000 manifestanti sono stati arrestati e altri 3 000 sono stati feriti a causa delle azioni della polizia.

La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante, Catherine Ashton, ha dichiarato la propria «profonda preoccupazione per le violenze verificatesi a Istanbul e in alcune altre città della Turchia, deplora l'uso sproporzionato della forza da parte della polizia turca» e ha chiesto colloqui con le due parti.

Il 3 giugno 2013, il quotidiano Guardian ha riferito una dichiarazione del Presidente turco Abdullah Gül: «Democrazia non significa solo elezioni. Non ci può essere niente di più naturale dell'espressione di punti di vista differenti, in varie situazioni e di obiezioni espresse in una varietà di modi, accanto alle elezioni».

Il 4 giugno 2013, il quotidiano Telegraph ha riferito che il Primo ministro Erdoğan aveva respinto le accuse di uso eccessivo della forza per sedare le proteste e aveva negato che fosse in corso una «primavera turca». Dichiarava: «Siamo servi del popolo» e «non padroni». «Non abbiamo usato la violenza».

Tuttavia, il Viceprimoministro turco, Bülent Arinc, ha dichiarato: «La violenza eccessiva che è stata utilizzata in prima istanza contro coloro che si comportavano con rispetto per l'ambiente è sbagliata e ingiusta». Si è spinto anche a dire: «I nostri cittadini hanno dimostrato la loro reazione legittima, logica e giusta a Gezi Parck … Mi scuso con codesti cittadini».

1. Quali passi intende effettuare la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per persuadere le autorità turche ad evitare un uso eccessivo della forza contro i manifestanti turchi?

2. Alla luce delle proteste in corso, la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto ai colloqui di adesione della Turchia all'UE ne è in qualche modo influenzata?

3. LaVicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante impone di discutere la questione delle riforme necessarie in Turchia, come suggerito dal Presidente turco, Abdullah Gül, compreso il rafforzamento del diritto di assemblea, del diritto di dissenso e la valorizzazione del ruolo dei media liberi ?

4. Inoltre, la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta ad affrontare con i competenti funzionari turchi la questione del riconoscimento di Cipro, da parte della Turchia?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(4 settembre 2013)

La Commissione europea segue da vicino le questioni e le vicende citate dagli onorevoli deputati.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton e il commissario Štefan Füle hanno condannato ripetutamente, anche in occasione del dibattito durante la seduta plenaria del Parlamento europeo del 12 giugno 2013, l'uso eccessivo della forza per porre fine a proteste pacifiche. La democrazia richiede un dialogo con tutti i settori della società, compresi quelli non rappresentati dalla maggioranza parlamentare. L'Alta Rappresentante e il commissario Füle hanno ribadito alle autorità turche che occorre effettuare indagini rapide e trasparenti sulle violenze commesse dalla polizia e assicurare i responsabili alla giustizia.

I paesi che intendono aderire all'UE devono mettere in atto sistemi che garantiscano i diritti umani, fra cui la libertà di espressione, di riunione e di associazione, conformemente agli articoli 10 e 11 della Convenzione europea sui diritti umani e alla giurisprudenza della Corte europea dei diritti umani.

Le attuali vicende sottolineano l'importanza di impegnarsi ulteriormente con la Turchia nell'ambito del processo di adesione all'UE, anche in relazione ai capitoli di negoziato particolarmente importanti per le riforme: il capitolo 23 (diritti giudiziari e fondamentali) e il capitolo 24 (giustizia, libertà e sicurezza).

Per quanto riguarda Cipro, la Commissione ha sottolineato in molte occasioni, compreso nel documento di strategia 2012, che occorre riavviare il dialogo fra le due comunità sotto gli auspici dell'ONU per raggiungere rapidamente una soluzione globale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006810/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Alleged excessive use of force against Turkish protestors

On 31 May 2013, a peaceful demonstration against plans to destroy a park in the Turkish city of Istanbul sparked nationwide anti-government protests. Police have used tear gas and water cannons to try and disperse protests. According to various international newspapers, demonstrators have accused the current government of imposing authoritarian and Islamic values on the secular republic and showing disregard for freedom of speech and of the press. Consequently, over 3 000 demonstrators have been arrested and another 3 000 have been injured due to the actions of the police.

The Vice-President/High Representative, Catherine Ashton, stated her 'deep concern at the violence that occurred in Istanbul and some other cities in Turkey, and regrets disproportionate use of force by members of the Turkish police' and has called for talks on both sides.

On 3 June 2013, the Guardian newspaper reported a statement by the Turkish President, Abdullah Gül: 'Democracy does not mean elections alone. There can be nothing more natural for the expression of various views, various situations and objections through a variety of ways, besides elections.'

On 4 June 2013, the Telegraph newspaper reported that Prime Minister Erdoğan had dismissed allegations of using excessive force to quell the protests and had denied that a 'Turkish Spring' was underway. He stated: 'We are servants of the people' and 'not masters'. 'We did not use violence,' he said.

However, Turkey's Deputy Prime Minister, Bülent Arınç, said: 'The excessive violence that was used in the first instance against those who were behaving with respect for the environment is wrong and unfair.' He went further to say: 'Our citizens showed their legitimate, logical and righteous reaction at Gezi Park… I apologise to those citizens.'

1. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take to persuade the Turkish authorities to avoid excessive use of force against Turkish demonstrators?

2. In light of the ongoing protests, is the Vice-President/High Representative's position regarding Turkish EU accession talks affected in any way?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to discuss the issue of necessary reforms in Turkey, as suggested by the Turkish President, Abdullah Gül, to include strengthening of the right of assembly, the right of dissent and the enhancement of the role of free media?

4. Furthermore, is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to address the issue of Turkey's recognition of Cyprus with the relevant Turkish officials?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The European Commission has followed the issues and events mentioned by the Honourable Members closely.

HR/VP Ashton and Commissioner Füle have repeatedly condemned, including during the plenary debate in the European Parliament on 12 June 2013, the excessive use of force to silence peaceful protests. Democracy requires dialogue with all segments of society, including those not represented by the parliamentary majority. HR/VP Ashton and Commissioner Füle have stressed to the Turkish authorities that a swift and transparent investigation into police violence needs to be followed through and those responsible need to be brought to account.

Any country negotiating its EU accession needs to put in place systems guaranteeing human rights, including freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly and association, in line with Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

Current events underline the importance of further engagement with Turkey within the framework of the EU accession process, including on those negotiating chapters most fundamental to its reform efforts: Chapter 23 — Judiciary and Fundamental Rights and Chapter 24 — Justice, Freedom and Security.

Regarding the Cyprus issue, the Commission has emphasised on many occasions, including in the 2012 Strategy Paper, that there is urgent need for a re-launch of talks between both communities under UN auspices with a view to swiftly reaching a comprehensive settlement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006811/13
al Consiglio
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Presunto tentativo da parte di agenti iraniani di infiltrare i paesi sudamericani

Il 29 maggio 2013, il Buenos Aires Herald, un giornale in lingua inglese pubblicato in Argentina, ha riferito che un pubblico ministero aveva accusato degli agenti iraniani di cercare di infiltrare i paesi sudamericani.

Alberto Nisman, il pubblico ministero che indaga sull'attentato dinamitardo del 1994 contro la Mutual Association argentino-israeliana (AMIA) di Buenos Aires, che costò la vita a 85 persone, ha accusato il regime iraniano di «costruire stazioni di intelligence clandestine locali destinate a sponsorizzare, promuovere ed eseguire attacchi terroristici», con l'obiettivo di «esportare la rivoluzione islamica».

Nisman ha aggiunto che, sulla base di «innumerevoli relazioni, prove, testimonianze e documenti giudiziari e investigativi relativi a indagini concernenti altri paesi della regione, il Nord America e l'Europa», aveva scoperto identici meccanismi decisionali, di pianificazione ed esecuzione di attentati terroristici verificatisi in diversi paesi che sono stati giudiziariamente attribuiti ad agenti segreti iraniani.

Ci sono rapporti che rivelano che il regime iraniano sta cercando di estendere la propria intelligence nelle principali città europee, dove i suoi agenti raccolgono informazioni per il programma nucleare e monitorano le attività dei propri oppositori all'estero.

1. Quali passi intende effettuare il Consiglio per affrontare il problema degli agenti iraniani che eventualmente utilizzino alcuni Stati membri dell'Unione europea come scali principali per attività relative all'approvvigionamento di informazioni per il regime di Teheran?

2. Il Consiglio ha in programma di intraprendere azioni comuni o di condividere parti di intelligence con governi amici sudamericani e di altri paesi, onde affrontare il problema dell'infiltrazione di agenti iraniani?

Risposta
(16 settembre 2013)

Per principio, il Consiglio non si pronuncia su articoli pubblicati dalla stampa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006811/13
to the Council
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: Iranian agents' alleged attempt to infiltrate South American countries

On 29 May 2013, the *Buenos Aires Herald*, an English-language newspaper published in Argentina, reported that a prosecutor had accused Iranian agents of trying to infiltrate South American countries.

Alberto Nisman, the state prosecutor who is investigating the 1994 bomb attack against the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires, which cost the lives of 85 people, has accused the Iranian regime of 'building local clandestine intelligence stations designed to sponsor, foster and execute terrorist attacks', the aim being to 'export the Islamic revolution'.

Nisman added that on the basis of 'countless reports, evidence, testimonies and court and investigative records related to other countries of the region, North America and Europe', he had discovered 'the identical decision-making mechanism, planning and execution of terrorist attacks verified in different countries, which were judicially attributed to Iranian intelligence agents'.

There are reports that the Iranian regime is trying to extend its intelligence arm in major European cities, where its agents collect information for its nuclear programme and monitor the activities of its opponents abroad.

1. What steps is the Council taking to address the problem of Iranian agents possibly using certain EU Member States as hubs for activities related to supplying intelligence to the regime in Tehran?

2. Does the Council plan to undertake common actions or share intelligence with friendly South American governments and other countries in order to tackle the problem of infiltration by Iranian agents?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

As a matter of principle, the Council does not comment on articles in the press.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-006812/13
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(12 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Reenvio de perguntas sobre o programa POSEI Pescas (Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007)

A 21 de março de 2013 enviei uma pergunta escrita prioritária à Comissão (P-003231/2013) sobre a descontinuação do programa POSEI Pescas (Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007), tendo recebido uma resposta da Comissária Damanaki a 4 de junho de 2013. A pergunta continha 5 questões concretas, algumas das quais se desdobravam; a resposta, porém, apenas cobriu a questão n.° 2, ficando todas as outras por responder.

Além disso, e lamentavelmente, a resposta apresenta um elemento incoerente, a saber: a Comissão refere que «*Na preparação das suas propostas… a Comissão tirou partido da avaliação independente*» e que o POSEI Pescas foi integrado no FEAMP «*para simplificar a sua aplicação pelos Estados-Membros e aumentar a sua eficiência*», o que contradiz o relatório de avaliação independente, que classificou este regime de compensação das RUP como «*adequado*», «*coerente*», «*eficaz*» e «*com uma carga administrativa aceitável*».

Acresce o facto de o terceiro parágrafo ser ininteligível, não se percebendo qual a abordagem que a CE irá adotar: integração do POSEI Pescas no FEAMP ou manutenção de um regulamento autónomo como no POSEI Agricultura.

Face ao exposto, volto a perguntar:

— Como justifica o enorme atraso para apresentação do relatório que o Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007 obriga? Que peso vai reconhecer à apreciação do PE sobre o referido relatório?

— Esta proposta é da iniciativa da Comissão das Pescas ou do colégio de Comissários? Uma vez que o POSEI Agricultura se mantém, como se justifica um procedimento diferente no setor das pescas?

— A Comissão ponderou as consequências políticas e económicas, presentes e futuras, desta sua proposta no que se refere à eliminação da discriminação positiva, reconhecida como um direito das RUP ao abrigo do artigo 299.° do Tratado?

E ainda:

— Se o relatório independente considera o regulamento «adequado», do ponto de vista administrativo, em que se fundamenta a Comissão para o querer «simplificar»?

— A Comissão vai optar pela integração do POSEI Pescas no FEAMP ou pela manutenção de um regulamento autónomo como no caso do POSEI Agricultura?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(19 de setembro de 2013)

No que se refere à primeira pergunta, o relatório foi tornado público mais tarde do que o previsto, uma vez que a Comissão já propôs a continuação do regime no Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas (FEAMP). A avaliação apoiava a proposta e a Comissão não tinha razões para a reconsiderar. Por conseguinte, a Comissão também considerou não ser necessário um relatório separado. A avaliação foi tornada pública em abril de 2013, para que o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho se pudessem pronunciar sobre as medidas propostas.

No que se refere à segunda pergunta, a Comissão propôs a integração deste regime ([1]) no FEAMP. Isso permite a racionalização da programação, execução e acompanhamento das ações.

No que diz respeito à terceira pergunta a Comissão reconhece as desvantagens específicas das regiões ultraperiféricas e comprometeu-se a implementar um regime de compensação para as pescas e a aquicultura. Por isso, propõe medidas específicas, bem como um aumento em mais de 50 % da dotação para o regime de compensação. Tal como estabelece na sua Orientação Geral de 15 de julho de 2013, o Conselho concorda com essas medidas.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007 do Conselho, de 21 de maio de 2007, que institui um regime de compensação dos custos suplementares relativos ao escoamento de determinados produtos da pesca das regiões ultraperiféricas dos Açores, da Madeira, das ilhas Canárias, da Guiana Francesa e da Reunião.

No que se refere à quarta pergunta, a simplificação tem por objetivo reduzir a carga administrativa para todos os intervenientes e proporcionar mais segurança jurídica, equidade e transparência. Também assegurará uma melhor comparabilidade e controlo da utilização dos fundos, a fim de otimizar a sua concessão aos operadores.

Por último, no que se refere à última pergunta, a Comissão tinha proposto em 2011 integrar o regime de compensação no FEAMP e esta abordagem foi confirmada pela Orientação Geral do Conselho de 15 de julho de 2013. Contudo, esta integração em nada prejudica o tratamento específico das regiões ultraperiféricas, tal como previsto no artigo 349.° do TFUE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006812/13
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: Retabling of questions on the POSEI Fisheries programme (Regulation (EC) No 791/2007)

On 21 March 2013 I tabled a priority written question to the Commission (P-003231/2013) on the discontinuation of the POSEI Fisheries programme (Regulation (EC) No 791/2007). I received an answer from Commissioner Damanaki on 4 June 2013. The question contained five specific subquestions, some of which were divided into separate points. The answer, however, addressed only the second question, and all the remaining questions were left unanswered.

Moreover, the answer contained a regrettable inconsistency: the Commission stated that 'when preparing its proposals (…) the Commission took advantage of the (…) independent evaluation', and that POSEI Fisheries was integrated into the EMFF 'to simplify its implementation by the Member States and to increase efficiency'. This contradicts the independent evaluation report, which described this compensation scheme for the outermost regions as 'relevant', 'consistent' and 'effective', with a 'reasonable' administrative burden.

The third paragraph of the answer is also incomprehensible, since it is unclear which approach the Commission will take: integrating POSEI Fisheries into the EMFF or maintaining a separate regulation as in the case of POSEI Agriculture.

I am therefore reiterating the following questions:

— How does the Commission justify the extremely long delay in submitting its report pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 791/2007? What significance will it attach to Parliament's assessment of the report?

— Did this proposal stem from an initiative of the Commissioner for Fisheries, or from an initiative of the College of Commissioners? Given that POSEI Agriculture is to continue, what justification is there for taking a different line in the case of fisheries?

— Has the Commission weighed up the present and future political and economic consequences of its proposal to end the positive discrimination to which the outermost regions are entitled under Article 299 of the Treaty?

Further:

— Since the independent report concludes that the scheme is 'reasonable' from an administrative point of view, on what grounds does the Commission wish to 'simplify' it?

— Will the Commission opt to integrate POSEI Fisheries into the EMFF, or to maintain a separate regulation as in the case of POSEI Agriculture?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(19 September 2013)

With regard to the 1st question the report was made public later than foreseen as the Commission already proposed to continue the scheme in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). The evaluation supported the proposal and the Commission did not have grounds to reconsider it. Therefore, the Commission also felt that a separate report was not necessary. The evaluation was made public in April 2013 to allow the European Parliament and Council to react on the proposed measures.

Concerning the 2nd question the Commission proposed to integrate this scheme ([1]) in the EMFF. This allows for a streamlining of the programming, implementation and monitoring of actions.

With regard to the 3rd question the Commission recognises the specific handicaps of the Outermost regions and is committed to the compensation scheme for fisheries and aquaculture. It therefore proposes specific measures as well as an increase of the envelope for the compensation scheme by more than 50%. The Council agrees with this as set out in the Council general approach of 15 July 2013.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 791/2007 of 21 May 2007 introducing a scheme to compensate for the additional costs incurred in the marketing of certain fishery products from the outermost regions the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands, French Guiana and Réunion.

Concerning the 4th question the simplification aims at reducing the administrative burden for all stakeholders and giving more legal certainty, equity and transparency. It will also ensure a better comparability and controllability of the use of funds to optimise their allocation to operators.

Finally with regard to the last question the Commission had proposed in 2011 to integrate the compensation scheme into the EMFF and this approach was confirmed by the Council General Approach of 15 July 2013. This integration however in no way prejudices the specific treatment of the outermost regions as laid down by Art. 349 TFEU.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006813/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Explotación de la cantera El Acebo, en Asturias (España)

En el municipio de Salas, en el Principado de Asturias (España), se ha comenzado la actividad en la cantera El Acebo, una cantera que está operando aparentemente sin disponer de una declaración de impacto, puesto que los trabajos en la cantera están poniendo en riesgo un acuífero subterráneo que en la actualidad abastece a cinco pueblos con abundante actividad ganadera y muchos manantiales en prados y pastizales.

La empresa Calizas Alper S.A. ha comenzado los trabajos de desarrollo de la cantera en terrenos alquilados, provocando daños ambientales irreparables, hasta que el Ayuntamiento de Salas paralizó las obras de explotación por carecer del permiso municipal. Pese a haber sido detenidos por las fuerzas de seguridad, la empresa ha continuado con las obras que, además de destruir numerosas hectáreas de bosque, pondrán en riesgo el suministro de agua de la comarca, así como una de sus principales actividades económicas, la ganadería, que depende considerablemente de un gran consumo de agua.

La actuación de esta empresa, que está tratando de ser impedida por la pequeña corporación municipal, parece hacer caso omiso a las instituciones locales, pero cuenta con el inexplicable beneplácito del Principado de Asturias y la Confederación Hidrográfica del Cantábrico, que no actúan pese a que la declaración de impacto ambiental se realizó hace más de cinco años, y la normativa europea obliga a realizar una nueva declaración si se pretende reactivar un proyecto de estas características.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de la reciente puesta en marcha del proyecto de la cantera El Acebo? ¿Dispone de una declaración de impacto ambiental que se haya realizado hace menos de cinco años y haya tenido en cuenta la opinión de los afectados tal y como estipula la Directiva 2011/92/UE? ¿Considera que el citado proyecto de explotación de la cantera podría suponer el incumplimiento del artículo 4, letra b), de la Directiva 2000/60/CE al permitir la entrada de contaminantes en el flujo subterráneo del citado acuífero? ¿Qué acciones pretender emprender la Comisión para tratar de evitar que la citada empresa continúe con la explotación de la cantera en una situación no conforme al Derecho europeo?

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

La Comisión no tenía conocimiento de los hechos expuestos por Su Señoría, así que tratará de esclarecer si se ha respetado o no la legislación medioambiental de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006813/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: Operation of El Acebo quarry in Asturias (Spain)

In the municipality of Salas in Asturias, work has resumed at El Acebo quarry, presumably without a valid environmental impact statement, whose activity risks affecting an underground aquifer that currently provides water to five villages containing many livestock farms and is the source of numerous springs that are the lifeblood of the area's meadows and pastures.

The company Calizas Alper S.A. recently began operating the quarry on rented land, causing irreparable damage to the environment. The town council of Salas has ordered it to cease work on the grounds that no municipal permit was granted. Despite the intervention of the police, the company has continued work that is set to destroy many hectares of forest, jeopardise the region's water supply and threaten the survival one of its main economic activities, livestock farming, which requires large quantities of water.

This company pays scant regard to local institutions, but is inexplicably being supported by the government of Asturias and the Cantabrian Water Council, which refuse to take action, despite the fact that its environmental impact statement is over five years old. European law stipulates that a new impact statement must be made if work on project of this kind is resumed.

Is the Commission aware that work at El Acebo quarry has recently resumed? Does it have an environmental impact statement from the last five years which takes account of the views of the people affected, as per the requirements of Directive 2011/92/EU? Does the Commission believe quarrying at El Acebo to be in breach of Article 4(b) of Directive 2000/60/EC since it is causing the input of pollutants into groundwater? What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that this company stops acting in breach of European law?

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

The Commission is not aware of the facts raised by the Honourable Member, and will therefore seek to ascertain whether or not the relevant environmental EU legislation has been complied with.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006814/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(12 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απαίτηση Τρόικας για κατάργηση της απαγόρευσης εξώσεων

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο στις 11 Ιουνίου ψήφισε την έκθεση της Karima Delli σχετικά με την κοινωνική στέγαση στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Η έκθεση τονίζει, ως αναφαίρετο δικαίωμα των Ευρωπαίων πολιτών, την πρόσβασή τους σε αξιοπρεπή κατοικία, ζητά να ληφθούν μέτρα σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο για την αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου των εξώσεων και καλεί για καθιέρωση ευνοϊκών για τους καταναλωτές ρυθμίσεων αναφορικά με τα ενυπόθηκα δάνεια και αποφυγή της υπερχρέωσης.

Παρόλα αυτά, λόγω της απρόσμενης οικονομικής κρίσης, πολλοί Έλληνες πολίτες έχουν υποστεί δραστική μείωση των εισοδημάτων τους με αποτέλεσμα να αδυνατούν να ανταποκριθούν στις υποχρεώσεις στεγαστικών δανείων στα οποία δεσμεύτηκαν όταν οι οικονομικές τους δυνατότητες ήταν διαφορετικές από ό,τι είναι τώρα.

Έχουμε λοιπόν το θέμα της επιτακτικής ανάγκης για επίλυση των ενυπόθηκων στεγαστικών δανείων (και τα οποία δεν εξυπηρετούνται λόγω των απρόβλεπτων συνθηκών) και το θέμα της απαγόρευσης των εξώσεων μέχρις ότου τελειώσει η ανακεφαλαίωση των τραπεζών και δοθεί μια ορθολογική λύση σε αυτό το πρόβλημα.

Παρόλα αυτά η Τρόικα ανακοινώνει ότι θα άρει το μέτρο της απαγόρευσης εξώσεων.

Με βάση αυτά τα δεδομένα ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Πώς κρίνει την αντίφαση, από τη μία η Τρόικα να ζητά την κατάργηση αυτού του τελευταίου μέτρου προστασίας της περιουσίας και της αξιοπρέπειας των Ελλήνων πολιτών τη στιγμή που το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο ψηφίζει έκθεση που παροτρύνει την Επιτροπή να κινηθεί προς την αντίθετη κατεύθυνση για το θέμα αυτό;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τη δυσχερή οικονομική θέση στην οποία έχουν περιέλθει τα νοικοκυριά λόγω της οικονομικής κρίσης στην Ελλάδα και έχει εξετάσει το συγκεκριμένο θέμα στο πλαίσιο του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα. Ως αποτέλεσμα της δεύτερης αποστολής ελέγχου, η οποία ολοκληρώθηκε τον Μάιο του 2013, και προκειμένου να βρεθεί μια λογική λύση για τα νοικοκυριά που βρίσκονται σε δυσχερή θέση, στο μνημόνιο οικονομικών και χρηματοπιστωτικών πολιτικών (ΜΟΧΠ), παράγραφος 25 ([1]) προβλέπεται ότι οι ελληνικές αρχές, σε διαβούλευση με την ΕΕ, την ΕΚΤ και το ΔΝΤ θα καταρτίσουν ένα νέο «πρόγραμμα διευκόλυνσης» που απευθύνεται σε άτομα με χαμηλό εισόδημα που βρίσκονται σε βαθιά οικονομική δυσπραγία, προκειμένου να διευκολύνουν την εξυγίανση του μη βιώσιμου χρέους των νοικοκυριών. Η αναγκαία νομοθεσία γι' αυτό το νέο «πρόγραμμα διευκόλυνσης» έχει ήδη θεσπιστεί. Η τακτική συμμετοχή στο πρόγραμμα θα επιτρέψει στα νοικοκυριά να αποφύγουν τις εξώσεις, εξασφαλίζοντας έτσι την προστασία της ιδιοκτησίας τους.

Όσον αφορά την αναστολή κατασχέσεων λόγω μη εξυπηρέτησης των ενυπόθηκων δανείων των νοικοκυριών, ο ισχύων νόμος 4128/2013 παραμένει σε ισχύ έως τις 31 Δεκεμβρίου 2013. Η Επιτροπή είναι της άποψης ότι στο πλαίσιο των διαδικασιών εξυγίανσης για τα νοικοκυριά με ληξιπρόθεσμα ενυπόθηκα δάνεια πρέπει να τηρείται μια ισόρροπη προσέγγιση με σκοπό τη διευκόλυνση της μακροπρόθεσμης οικονομικής ανάπτυξης της χώρας και της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf (σελίδα 134).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006814/13
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: Demand by the troika for the ban on evictions to be revoked

On 11 June the European Parliament adopted the report by Karima Delli on social housing in the European Union. The report emphasises the inalienable right of European citizens to have access to decent housing, calls for measures at EU level to tackle the phenomenon of evictions and calls for the establishment of favourable rules for consumers concerning mortgages and debt avoidance.

However, due to the unexpected financial crisis, many Greek citizens have suffered a drastic reduction in income and as a result are unable to meet the mortgage obligations which they assumed when their financial capabilities were different from what they are now.

There is therefore an urgent need to solve the problem of mortgage loans (which are not being served due to unforeseen circumstances); in the meantime, a ban must be imposed on evictions until the recapitalisation of banks is completed and a rational solution is found to this problem.

However, the troika has announced that it will withdraw the ban on evictions.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

How does it view the fact that the troika is calling for the removal of this last measure protecting the property and dignity of Greek citizens, despite the fact that the European Parliament has adopted a report urging the Commission to move in the opposite direction on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the difficult financial situation of households due to the economic crisis in Greece, and has addressed this issue in the context of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece. As a result of the second review mission, which finished May 2013, and in order to find a sensible solution for households in distressed situations, it is envisaged in the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) Paragraph 25 ([1]) that the Greek Authorities, in consultation with the EC/ECB/IMF staff will introduce a new 'Facilitation Program' targeted to low-income individuals in deep financial distress to facilitate the resolution of unsustainable household debt. The necessary legislation for this new 'Facilitation Program' has already been introduced. Regular participation in the scheme will allow households to avoid evictions, thus providing protection to their property.

With regard to moratoria for household mortgage foreclosure, the current Law 4128/2013 is effective until 31 December 2013. The Commission is of the view that resolution procedures for households with mortgage loans in arrears should take a balanced approach to facilitate long term economic growth in the country and financial stability.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf (page 134).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006817/13
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: European Agency for Fundamental Rights — simple definition

In my original written question (E-011371-12), I asked about two distinct words, which must refer to two distinct concepts: 'racism' and 'xenophobia'. Indeed, in your reply you refer to concepts in the plural. However, you only provide one definition:

'Violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin.'

Are you saying these two distinct words have the same definition? If so, why not employ a single word instead of two?

The word 'xenophobia' means, literally, fear of strangers, which is a state of mind. How can one legislate against a state of mind, which is presumably an involuntary condition? Legislation against states of mind was exactly what George Orwell was referring to when he coined the term 'thought crime'.

There are two quite distinct dictionary definitions of 'racism':

— political or social belief in hereditary differences between different ancestral groups,

— and abusive or aggressive words or behaviour towards people of a different ancestral group.

Would your proposed offence include only the latter or would it extend to the former?

When you use the terms 'violence' and 'hatred', I presume you mean incitement to violence and hatred. Violence is easily understood; hatred is less easy to define.

Literally, it means extreme dislike which would seem to go beyond mere generalisations that might or might not be flattering. Would you agree?

When one legislates on criminal offences punishable by imprisonment, definitions must be crystal-clear.

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to Questions E-011372/2012 and E-002953/2013 and to the Commission's replies to those questions.

The Commission points out that its forthcoming report on the implementation by Member States of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law is scheduled for publication in December 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006818/13
alla Commissione
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Integrità dei pagamenti ai beneficiari: compensazione crediti-debiti

Il regolamento (CE) n. 1083/2006 del Consiglio dell'11 luglio 2006 recante disposizioni generali sul Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, sul Fondo sociale europeo e sul Fondo di coesione si applica al periodo di programmazione 2007/2013.

L'articolo 80 del suddetto regolamento intitolato «Integrità dei pagamenti ai beneficiari» dispone che gli Stati membri si accertano che gli organismi responsabili dei pagamenti assicurino che i beneficiari ricevano l'importo totale del contributo pubblico entro il più breve termine e nella sua integrità. Non si applica nessuna detrazione o trattenuta né alcun onere specifico o di altro genere con effetto equivalente che porti alla riduzione di detti importi per i beneficiari.

Considerato che la Corte di Giustizia dell'Unione europea ha più volte espresso la propria posizione in merito alla preminenza del principio dell'integrità dei pagamenti ai beneficiari può la Commissione riferire se ritiene conforme al diritto dell'Unione europea, specificamente al suddetto articolo 80, la compensazione di un debito di un beneficiario (sia esso persona fisica o giuridica) nei confronti di un'autorità o organismo responsabile del pagamento con una trattenuta sul credito vantato dal medesimo beneficiario come contributo pubblico a valere su altri progetti/programmi/finanziamenti cui lo stesso ha diritto?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(6 agosto 2013)

L'articolo 80 del regolamento (CE) n. 1083/2006 ([1]) (regolamento generale) relativo all'integrità dei pagamenti ai beneficiari stabilisce esplicitamente che i beneficiari ricevono l'importo totale del contributo pubblico nella sua integrità e che non si applica nessuna detrazione o trattenuta né alcun onere specifico o di altro genere con effetto equivalente che porti alla riduzione di detti importi per i beneficiari.

Il beneficiario può tuttavia scegliere di compensare un debito nei confronti di un'autorità o di un organismo responsabile del pagamento riducendo in tal modo l'importo richiesto all'autorità di pagamento. In questo caso egli riceverà, in termini contabili, il contributo pubblico integrale e detrarrà simultaneamente il debito nei confronti dell'autorità, registrando nei suoi conti un contributo netto.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1083/2006 del Consiglio, dell'11 luglio 2006, recante disposizioni generali sul Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, sul Fondo sociale europeo e sul Fondo di coesione e che abroga il regolamento (CE) n. 1260/1999, GU L 210 del 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006818/13
to the Commission
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: Wholeness of payment to beneficiaries: set-off

Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund applies to the 2007-2013 programming period.

Article 80 of that regulation, headed 'Wholeness of payment to beneficiaries', calls on Member States to satisfy themselves that the bodies responsible for making payments ensure that beneficiaries receive the total amount of public contributions as quickly as possible and in full. No amount may be deducted or withheld, and it is likewise forbidden to levy specific charges or other charges with equivalent effect, as the amounts payable to beneficiaries must not be reduced.

The Court of Justice has repeatedly maintained that payment in full is a principle of paramount importance. That being the case, does the Commission consider it allowable under EC law, specifically the abovementioned Article 80, for a given beneficiary (be it a natural or a legal person) to set off a debt to an authority or body responsible for payment against a deduction from the public contributions claimed in respect of other projects/programmes/sources of financing arising out of the beneficiary's entitlement?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

Article 80 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 ([1]) (General Regulation) on wholeness of payment to beneficiaries explicitly requires that the beneficiaries receive the total amount of the public contribution in full and that no amount shall be deducted or withheld and no specific charge or other charge with equivalent effect shall be levied that would reduce these amounts for the beneficiaries.

However, the beneficiary may choose to reconcile his accounts and set off a debt to an authority or body responsible for the payment and therefore reduce the amount claimed to the payment authority. He will receive in this case in accounting terms the public contribution in full and deduct simultaneously the debt to the authority, so retaining in his accounts a net contribution.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006819/13
alla Commissione
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Commercio on-line: iniziative per coniugare la netta crescita del settore e la tutela dei consumatori

Di recente in Italia un consorzio di imprese ha creato un marchio per contraddistinguere i siti internet particolarmente affidabili per l'acquisto di merci on-line. La procedura di rilascio della certificazione viene gestita dal consiglio di amministrazione del consorzio e il buon esito è vincolato al rispetto di precisi standard fissati in modo da garantire qualità, trasparenza e affidabilità al consumatore finale. L'iniziativa assume una particolare rilevanza soprattutto in virtù dei dati che le vendite on-line hanno fatto registrare negli ultimi anni: infatti, nel 2012 in Europa il volume d'affari ha superato i 300 miliardi di euro, dei quali circa la metà in Regno Unito, Germania e Francia, cifra superiore anche al controvalore delle transazioni effettuate nello stesso periodo negli Stati Uniti.

Inoltre il tasso di crescita su base annuale è stato del 22 %. Anche in Italia si registra un trend esponenziale di crescita con percentuali tra il 15 ed il 20 % e il fatturato, sempre nel 2012, è arrivato a sfiorare i 10 miliardi di euro; il numero di e-shopper nel paese è, infine, quantificabile attorno ai 15 milioni di utenti. A fronte dei dati riportati e dell'assunto che la sicurezza dei consumatori per gli acquisti effettuati on-line deve essere garantita con misure adeguate, soprattutto considerata la maggiore vulnerabilità degli stessi quando vengono concluse transazioni a distanza;

Può la Commissione riferire:

— come ha tutelato o intende tutelare i cittadini europei nelle compravendite on-line e in che modo intende uniformare le normative degli Stati membri;

— se intende promuovere iniziative sulla base dell'esperienza italiana per contraddistinguere i siti internet più affidabili?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2013)

La Commissione europea promuove lo sviluppo dell'economia digitale per mezzo del commercio elettronico. Le iniziative nell'ambito dell'Agenda digitale europea, del piano d'azione per il commercio elettronico e dell'Agenda europea dei consumatori mirano anch'esse a identificare misure strategiche efficaci per migliorare la protezione del consumatore in questo settore. La direttiva di recente adozione sui diritti dei consumatori ([1]) e il regolamento sulla risoluzione delle controversie online costituiscono strumenti potenti per tutelare i consumatori. A titolo di esempio, la direttiva stabilisce misure come il divieto degli oneri occulti (le cosiddette «trappole dei costi» su internet) e l'uso delle caselle preselezionate per imporre supplementi, solo per citarne alcuni. Anche la comunicazione e la relazione sull'applicazione della direttiva sulle pratiche commerciali sleali ([2]) adottate il 14 marzo 2013 ([3]) identificano il settore online come uno dei settori in cui è auspicabile intensificare il controllo.

La Commissione ha varato un dialogo multilaterale sulla trasparenza e l'affidabilità degli strumenti di confronto online ([4]) e intende studiare più approfonditamente ulteriori modalità per raccogliere un maggior numero di elementi a tal proposito per un'eventuale futura azione strategica. In marzo 2013 è stato inoltre portato a termine uno studio per la Commissione dal titolo «EU online Trustmarks — Building Digital Confidence in Europe» ([5]) e si esplorano eventuali azioni per darvi seguito.

Per quanto riguarda la più generica vulnerabilità del consumatore, nel 2013 la Commissione intende avviare due studi, uno sugli schemi di vulnerabilità all'interno e fra i settori chiave (energia, servizi finanziari e mercati online) e l'altro sul marketing online mirato ai bambini e agli adolescenti fra 6 e 14 anni, nello specifico sulle piattaforme sociali, le applicazioni mobili e i giochi online.

([1]) Direttiva 2011/83/UE del 25 ottobre 2011 (GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag. 64). Gli Stati membri sono tenuti a recepire tale direttiva nell'ordinamento nazionale entro il 13 dicembre 2013 e ad applicarne le misure dal 13 giugno 2014.
([2]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE dell'11 maggio 2005 (GU L 149 del 11.6.205, pag. 22).
([3]) COM(2013)138 def. e COM(2013)139 def.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/eu-online-trustmarks-%E2 %80 %93-building-digital-confidence-europe-smart-20110022

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006819/13
to the Commission
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: Online business: initiatives to ally the sector's marked growth with consumer protection

Recently in Italy a consortium of businesses has produced a trademark to label certain Internet sites as being particularly trustworthy for online purchases. The consortium's board manages the certification procedure for these sites, which must comply with specific set standards that guarantee the end consumer quality, transparency and trustworthiness. This is a particularly important initiative, especially considering the figures online sales have recorded in recent years: in 2012 the volume of business in Europe exceeded the EUR 300 billion mark, with the United Kingdom, Germany and France accounting for almost half of this. This is also higher than equivalent figures for the same period in the United States.

Furthermore, the year-on-year growth rate was 22%. Italy too has reported an exponential growth trend, with percentages of between 15% and 20%. Sales there in 2012 almost hit the EUR 10 billion mark. The number of e-shoppers in Italy has been quantified at around 15 million users.

In view of the above facts and the fact that suitable measures should be taken to safeguard consumers when purchasing goods online, especially since they are much more vulnerable in distance transactions, can the Commission say:

— How it already protects or plans to protect EU members of the public in regard to online purchases and how it plans to standardise regulations in Member States?

— Whether it plans to promote initiatives to label Internet sites that can be trusted, based on what has been done in Italy?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The European Commission is promoting the development of the online economy, stimulating e-commerce. Initiatives in the Digital Agenda for Europe, the e-commerce Action plan, and the European Consumer Agenda also aim at identifying effective policy measures for better consumer protection in this area. The recently adopted Consumer Rights Directive ([1]) (CRD) and the Online Dispute Resolution Regulation are powerful tools to protect consumers. For example, the CRD provides for measures such as prohibition of hidden charges (Internet 'cost traps') and of the use of 'pre-ticked' boxes for charging additional payments — to name only a few. Also the communication and the report on the application of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([2]) adopted on 14 March 2013 ([3]) identify the online sector as one of the key areas where enforcement should be stepped up.

The Commission has launched a Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on the transparency and reliability of online comparison tools ([4]) and will study further ways to gather more in-depth evidence about such tools for possible future policy action. In addition, a study for the Commission on 'EU online Trustmarks — Building Digital Confidence in Europe' was completed in March 2013 ([5]) and potential follow-up actions are being explored.

With regard to the more general topic of consumer vulnerability, the Commission will launch two studies in 2013, one on vulnerability patterns within and across key sectors: energy, financial services and online markets, and one on online marketing to children and adolescents (6-14 years) in social media, mobile applications and online games.

([1]) Directive 2011/83/EU of 25 October 2011, OJ L 304 of 22.11.2011, p. 64. Member States have to adopt measures transposing this directive by 13 December 2013 and to apply those measures from 13 June 2014.
([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC of 11 May 2005, OJ L 149 of 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([3]) COM(2013) 138 final and COM(2013) 139 final.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/eu-online-trustmarks-%E2%80%93-building-digital-confidence-europe-smart-20110022

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006820/13
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(12 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Emergenza sovrappopolamento di tonno rosso nel Mar Ligure

In Liguria sono praticati diversi tipi di pesca (con reti, a strascico, con reti da posta, con sciabica da spiaggia, ecc.), tutti nel rispetto delle normative europee e nazionali vigenti nell'ottica di una salvaguardia delle risorse marine. Nei giorni scorsi i pescatori liguri hanno chiesto alla Regione lo stato di calamità in quanto da settimane il Mar Ligure è invaso da tonni rossi che causano danni ingenti alle attività produttive: infatti bucano le reti con dentro le acciughe lasciandole scappare oppure si avventano sotto le luci mangiando tutti i pesci.

Considerato che:

— la giusta tutela del tonno rosso — Thunnus Thynnus — specie ad alto rischio per una pesca industriale in passato enorme e selvaggia dovrebbe tenere conto delle caratteristiche morfologiche di ogni mare;

— nel caso del Mar Ligure si registra il rischio opposto ovvero il sovrappopolamento della specie;

— la pesca al tonno rosso è sospesa sia per i dilettanti che per i professionisti, ai quali resta una quota di sei quintali l'anno;

— per ogni tonno catturato il pescatore deve compilare una dichiarazione, pesarlo, fotografarlo e inviare il tutto a Roma, il che rappresenta una lungaggine burocratica soprattutto per coloro che non mirano alla pesca del tonno rosso;

e stante la normativa vigente a livello comunitario (regolamento (CE) n. 302/2009, modificato dal regolamento (UE) n. 500/2012) e le disposizioni della nuova raccomandazione ICCAT n.12-03, vincolanti per tutti gli Stati membri ai sensi e per gli effetti dell'articolo 216, paragrafo 2, del Trattato UE, che disciplinano la campagna di pesca del tonno rosso nel 2013;

può la Commissione far sapere:

— se è a conoscenza della particolare situazione creatasi nel Mar Ligure;

— se intende adottare particolari misure per tutelare il comparto ittico ligure fortemente colpito dal sovrappopolamento del tonno rosso nelle acque del Mar Ligure;

— se intende rivedere la normativa vigente tenendo conto delle peculiarità della pesca italiana e mediterranea e sulla scorta di nuovi previsioni dato che quelle su cui si basano le norme attuali si sono rivelate errate?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(5 agosto 2013)

La Commissione collabora con gli Stati membri per un'adeguata gestione delle attività di pesca. A tal fine è in contatto costante con le autorità. Per quanto riguarda la situazione particolare del Mar Ligure, le autorità italiane non hanno informato la Commissione circa situazioni specifiche di rischio per la pesca in Liguria.

Nel corso della stagione riproduttiva, nel Mar Ligure e in altre zone di riproduzione note (Isole Baleari, Golfo di Sirte e Malta meridionale) si possono trovare grandi banchi di tonno rosso.

La Commissione non ha ricevuto dagli organismi scientifici che operano nel Mediterraneo (il comitato permanente per la ricerca e le statistiche dell'ICCAT e il comitato scientifico consultivo della CGPM) nessuna informazione circa situazioni di rischio nel Mar Ligure. Non intende pertanto modificare la legislazione vigente, che è stata convenuta dagli Stati membri, né i relativi risultati in termini di protezione e conservazione delle risorse acquatiche viventi e degli ecosistemi marini.

Nell'ambito della riforma della politica comune della pesca, la Commissione continuerà a collaborare con gli Stati membri e gli organismi consultivi regionali per far sì che tutte le parti interessate siano in grado di svolgere il loro ruolo per garantire la sostenibilità della pesca nel Mediterraneo e il rispetto delle regole internazionali e dell'Unione in materia di pesca.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006820/13
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(12 June 2013)

Subject: Emergency caused by overpopulation of bluefin tuna in the Ligurian Sea

In Liguria, various types of fishing have been practised (with nets, by trawling, with gillnets, with beach seines, etc.), in all these cases in full compliance with European and national law with the aim of conserving marine resources. In recent days, fishermen in Liguria have asked the Regional Authority to declare a state of emergency because for weeks the Ligurian Sea has been invaded by bluefin tuna, which are causing enormous damage to the fishing industry: they are making holes in anchovy nets, allowing them to escape, or swimming at speed under the lights and eating all the fish.

The correct conservation of bluefin tuna, Thunnus Thynnus — a high-risk species due to massive industrial fishing of wild stocks in the past — ought to take into account the morphological characteristics of each sea. In the case of the Ligurian Sea, however, the opposite risk exists, namely overpopulation of the species.

Fishing for bluefin tuna by either amateur or professional fishermen has been suspended, the remaining quota for them being 600 kg per annum. For each tuna caught, a fisherman must make a written declaration, weigh it and send everything to Rome, which represents a huge amount of red tape, especially for those who are not deliberately fishing for bluefin tuna.

In the light of the law in force at EU level (Regulation (EC) No 302/2009, as amended by Regulation (EU) No 500/2012), and the provisions of the new ICCAT Recommendation No 12-03, which are binding on all Member States as referred to in Article 216(2) TEU and for the purposes indicated there and which govern the campaign of fishing for bluefin tuna in 2013, can the Commission indicate:

— whether it is aware of the particular situation which has arisen in the Ligurian Sea?

— whether it intends to take particular measures to protect fishing in the Ligurian Sea, which is being seriously damaged by the overpopulation of bluefin tuna there?

— whether it will revise the law in force, taking into account the specific characteristics of the Italian and Mediterranean fishing industry and on the basis of new forecasts, as those on which the current legislation is based have proven to be inaccurate?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The Commission is working with Member States to ensure good management of the fisheries. To this end is in permanent contact with the authorities. Regarding the particular situation of the Ligurian Sea, the Italian authorities did not inform the Commission of any specific situation of risk for the fisheries in Liguria.

During the spawning season, the bluefin tuna could be found in big shoals, in the Ligurian Sea and in other well-known spawning grounds in the Mediterranean (including the Balearic islands, Gulf of Syrte, South of Malta).

The Commission has not received any indication by the scientific bodies working in the Mediterranean (Standing Committee for Research and Statistics of ICCAT and Scientific Advisory Committee of GFCM) on any particular risk situation in the Ligurian Sea. The Commission therefore has not the intention to modify the legislation in force, which has been agreed by Member States and its delivering results on protecting and conserving living aquatic resources and marine ecosystems.

In the context of the reform of the common fisheries policy, the Commission will continue to work with the Member States and the Regional Advisory bodies to ensure that all stakeholders are able to play their role in ensuring that fisheries in the Mediterranean are sustainable and fished in accordance with EU and international rules.

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