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IV *Obavijesti*

OBAVIJESTI INSTITUCIJA, TIJELA, UREDA I AGENCIJA EUROPSKE UNIJE

Europski parlament

PISANA PITANJA S ODGOVOROM

2013/C 193 E/01 Pisana pitanja zastupnika Europskog parlamenta i odgovori institucije Europske unije na njih 1

(vidi napomenu čitateljima)

HR

Napomena čitateljima

Ova publikacija sadrži pisana pitanja zastupnika Europskog parlamenta i odgovore institucije Europske unije na njih.

Svako pitanje i odgovor navedeni su u izvornoj jezičnoj verziji ispred možebitnog prijevoda.

U nekim je slučajevima moguće da se odgovor na pitanje daje na drugom jeziku. To ovisi o radnom jeziku odbora od kojeg se odgovor zahtijeva.

Ova se pitanja i odgovori objavljuju u skladu s člancima 117. i 118. Poslovnika Europskog parlamenta.

Svim pitanjima i odgovorima moguće je pristupiti na internetskoj stranici Europskog parlamenta (Europarl) u rubrici „Parlamentarna pitanja":

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

KRATICE ZA NAZIVE KLUBOVA ZASTUPNIKA

PPE	Klub zastupnika Europske pučke stranke (demokršćani)
S&D	Klub zastupnika Progresivnog saveza socijalista i demokrata u Europskom parlamentu
ALDE	Klub zastupnika Saveza liberala i demokrata za Europu
Verts/ALE	Klub zastupnika Zelenih/Europskog slobodnog saveza
ECR	Klub zastupnika Europskih konzervativaca i reformista
GUE/NGL	Konfederalni klub zastupnika Ujedinjene europske ljevice i Nordijske zelene ljevice
EFD	Klub zastupnika Europe slobode i demokracije
NI	Nezavisni zastupnici

HR

IV

(Obavijesti)

OBAVIJESTI INSTITUCIJA, TIJELA, UREDA I AGENCIJA EUROPSKE UNIJE

EUROPSKI PARLAMENT

PISANA PITANJA S ODGOVOROM

Pisana pitanja zastupnika Europskog parlamenta i odgovori institucije Europske unije na njih

(2013/C 193 E/01)

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(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000006/12
an die Kommission
Marije Cornelissen (Verts/ALE) und Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(11. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Gerichtliches Überprüfungsverfahren in Serbien

Vor einigen Monaten habe ich die EU-Delegation in Serbien um den Überwachungsbericht zum gerichtlichen Überprüfungsverfahren in Serbien, Berichtszeitraum 4.7.2011-28.8.2011, gebeten. Er wurde mir nicht über die Kommissionskanäle zugänglich gemacht, doch verfüge ich jetzt über ein Exemplar. Der Überwachungsbericht und die Schlussfolgerungen in der Stellungnahme der Kommission zum Antrag Serbiens auf Mitgliedschaft in der Europäischen Union vom 12.10.2011 widersprechen einander. Wir zitieren:

Hinsichtlich des gerichtlichen Überprüfungsverfahrens in Serbien

— „it can be concluded that the entire decision review process was conducted only in order to satisfy form and is a schoolbook example of travesty of justice" [kann der Schluss gezogen werden, dass das gesamte Verfahren zur Entscheidungsüberprüfung nur zur Wahrung der Form durchgeführt wurde und es sich um ein Lehrbuchbeispiel für die Pervertierung der Gerechtigkeit handelt.] (Überwachungsbericht zum gerichtlichen Überprüfungsverfahren in Serbien, Berichtszeitraum 4.7.2011-28.8.2011)

— „the review on judges has been so far conducted in a satisfactory manner. Despite some procedural shortcomings, the majority of decisions were generally taken in line with the guidelines" [wurde die Überprüfung der Richter bisher zufriedenstellend durchgeführt. Trotz einiger Unzulänglichkeiten bei den Verfahren wurden die meisten Entscheidungen im Allgemeinen im Einklang mit den Leitlinien getroffen.] (Stellungnahme der Kommission zum Antrag Serbiens auf Beitritt zur Europäischen Union, 12.10.2011).

1. Könnten Sie die Diskrepanz zwischen den Erklärungen in der Stellungnahme der Kommission von letztem Oktober und dem Überwachungsbericht der EU-Delegation in Serbien von August hinsichtlich des gerichtlichen Überprüfungsverfahrens klären?

2. Sind Sie angesichts der Bedeutung, die den von der Kommission bereitgestellten Informationen im Entscheidungsfindungsprozess des Europäischen Parlaments beizumessen sind, auch der Ansicht, dass die zur Verfügung gestellten Informationen in diesem Fall unvollständig und irreführend sind? Was werden Sie unternehmen, um zu vermeiden, dass dies in Zukunft erneut geschieht?

3. Angesichts der Bedeutung, die dem Aufbau einer wirklich unabhängigen Justiz in Serbien und deren wirksamer Überwachung im Zusammenhang mit dem Beitrittsprozess dieses Landes zur EU beizumessen sind, ist es wichtig, dass die für die Anhörungen des Hohen Justizrates und des Staatsanwaltsrates erstellten EU-Überwachungsberichte Beachtung finden. Wird die Kommission diese Berichte dem Europäischen Parlament in Zukunft zuleiten?

4. Was wird die Kommission als Reaktion auf die von den EU-Beobachtern angesprochenen Unzulänglichkeiten unternehmen, wie die fehlende Transparenz und Legitimität des Überprüfungsverfahrens, die mögliche Befangenheit der Richter des Hohen Justizrates und den auf gewählte Richter und Staatsanwälte ausgeübten politischen Druck?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(22. Februar 2012)

1. und 2. Serbien befindet sich im schwierigen Prozess der Reform seines Justizsystems. Was die von der Kommission im Fortschrittsbericht 2010 festgestellten Mängel in Bezug auf die Wiederernennung von Richtern und Staatsanwälten betrifft, so haben die serbischen Behörden eine Überprüfung des Verfahrens eingeleitet, das vom Hohen Justizrat und vom Staatsanwaltsrat in ihrer endgültigen Zusammensetzung, nämlich in erster Linie aus von ihresgleichen gewählten Richtern und Staatsanwälten, durchgeführt wird.

Die Kommission verfolgt dieses Überprüfungsverfahren genau. Zu diesem Zweck hat die EU-Delegation Sachverständige vor Ort beauftragt, einen Zwischenbericht zu erstellen, in dem sie ihren Standpunkt und nicht den der Delegation oder der Kommission darstellen. Die Stellungnahme der Kommission von 2011 stellt den damaligen Sachstand dar: „Die Überprüfung der Wiederernennung von Richtern und Staatsanwälten muss noch zu einem zufriedenstellenden Abschluss gebracht werden".

3. Die Kommission stützt ihre Bewertung auf verschiedene Quellen, nicht nur auf die Arbeit einzelner

Sachverständiger, die unter Umständen nicht immer ein so umfassendes Bild der gesamten Problematik wie die Kommission haben. Dieser Bericht von lokalen Sachverständigen wurde ausschließlich für den kommissionsinternen Gebrauch erstellt. So werden die Interessen der Union in ihren bilateralen Beziehungen geschützt und die Sachverständigen können Stellung nehmen, ohne Druck von außen befürchten zu müssen.

4. Die Kommission wird das Überprüfungsverfahren weiter überwachen und alle möglicherweise auftretenden Fragen zur Sprache bringen. Die abschließende Prüfung der Kommission wird auf die einzelnen schriftlichen Stellungnahmen eingehen, um ein klares Bild der Auswirkungen etwaiger Verfahrensmängel auf das Ergebnis der Überprüfung zu ermöglichen.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000006/12
aan de Commissie
Marije Cornelissen (Verts/ALE) en Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(11 januari 2012)

Betreft: Rechterlijke toetsingsprocedure in Servië

Een aantal maanden geleden heb ik de EU-delegatie in Servië om het monitoringverslag over de rechterlijke toetsingsprocedure in Servië, voor de verslagleggingsperiode 4.7.2011-28.8.2011 verzocht. Dat verslag werd mij niet overgemaakt via de Commissie, maar ik heb ondertussen wel een exemplaar ervan in mijn bezit. Het monitoringverslag en de conclusies in het advies van de Commissie over de Servische aanvraag tot lidmaatschap van de Europese Unie van 12.10.2011 zijn tegenstrijdig. We citeren:

Betreffende de rechterlijke toetsingsprocedure in Servië

— „er kan besloten worden dat het hele heroverwegingsproces enkel pro forma werd uitgevoerd en een typische karikatuur van rechtvaardigheid is." (EU monitoringverslag over de rechterlijke toetsingsprocedure in Servië, verslagleggingsperiode 4.7.2011-28.8.2011)

— „de toetsing van rechters verliep tot nu toe naar tevredenheid. Ondanks een aantal procedurele tekortkomingen, werden de meeste beslissingen genomen in overeenstemming met de richtsnoeren." (Advies van de Commissie betreffende de Servische aanvraag tot lidmaatschap van de Europese Unie, 12.10.2011).

1. Kunt u de tegenstrijdigheid van de verklaringen in het advies van de Commissie van afgelopen oktober en het monitoringverslag van de EU-delegatie in Servië van augustus over de rechterlijke toetsingsprocedure toelichten?

2. Bent u het ermee eens dat, gezien het belang dat in de besluitvormingsprocedure van het Parlement gehecht wordt aan de informatie van de Commissie, de verschafte informatie in dit geval onvolledig en misleidend was? Wat zult u ondernemen om te voorkomen dat dit zich in de toekomst herhaalt?

3. Gezien het belang van de instelling van een werkelijk onafhankelijk gerechtelijk apparaat in Servië en een effectieve monitoring van dat apparaat voor het toetredingsproces van dat land tot de EU, is het belangrijk om de monitoringverslagen van de EU die opgesteld zijn voor de hoorzittingen van de Hoge Raad voor Justitie en de Hoge Raad voor Rechtsvervolging in aanmerking te nemen. Zal de Commissie deze verslagen in de toekomst overmaken aan het Europees Parlement?

4. Welke stappen zal de Commissie ondernemen om de tekortkomingen die door de EU-waarnemers werden aangekaart, zoals het gebrek aan transparantie en legitimiteit van de rechterlijke toetsingsprocedure, de mogelijke partijdigheid van de rechters van de Hoge Raad voor Justitie en de politieke druk op verkozen rechters en openbare aanklagers, aan te pakken?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(22 februari 2012)

1. en 2. Servië is betrokken bij een moeilijk hervormingsproces van zijn gerechtelijke systeem. Wat betreft de tekortkomingen die de Commissie in het voortgangsverslag 2010 inzake de verlenging van de benoeming van rechters en openbare aanklagers heeft vastgesteld, hebben de Servische autoriteiten een herziening van de procedure ingeleid die uitgevoerd wordt door de raden in vaste samenstelling; dit zijn voornamelijk door hun collega's verkozen rechters en openbare aanklagers.

De Commissie volgt dit hervormingsproces op de voet. De EU-delegatie heeft daartoe lokale deskundigen aangewezen die een tussentijds verslag gebracht hebben met hun standpunten en dus niet met deze van de delegatie of van de Commissie. Het advies dat de Commissie in 2011 uitbracht, had toen de situatie als volgt omschreven: „het e.a.uatieproces van herbenoeming van rechters en openbare aanklagers heeft nog niet tot een bevredigend resultaat geleid."

3. De Commissie baseert haar beoordeling op verschillende bronnen en dus niet enkel op de werkzaamheden van individuele deskundigen die, in tegenstelling tot de Commissie, niet altijd een volledig beeld hebben van alle belangen die op het spel staan. Dit verslag van de lokale deskundigen was enkel voor intern gebruik. Op deze manier worden de belangen van de Unie in haar bilaterale betrekkingen beschermd en kunnen de deskundigen zich zonder angst voor externe druk uitspreken.

4. De Commissie blijft toezicht houden op het hervormingsproces en zodr. problemen geconstateerd worden, vraagt zij verklaringen. De definitieve beoordeling van de Commissie zal rekening houden met de individuele schriftelijke bewijsstukken die een duidelijk beeld moeten geven van het effect van eventuele procedurele tekortkomingen na afloop van de hervorming.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000006/12
to the Commission
Marije Cornelissen (Verts/ALE) and Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(11 January 2012)

Subject: Judicial review procedure in Serbia

A couple of months ago, I asked the EU delegation in Serbia for the monitoring report on the judicial review procedure in Serbia, reporting period 4.7.2011-28.8.2011. It was not made available to me through Commission channels, but I do have a copy now. The monitoring report and the conclusions in the Commission opinion on Serbia's application for membership of the European Union of 12.10.2011 contradict each other. We quote:

Concerning the judicial review procedure in Serbia

— 'it can be concluded that the entire decision review process was conducted only in order to satisfy form and is a schoolbook example of travesty of justice.' (EU monitoring report on the judicial review procedure in Serbia, reporting period 4.7.2011-28.8.2011)

— 'the review on judges has been so far conducted in a satisfactory manner. Despite some procedural shortcomings, the majority of decisions were generally taken in line with the guidelines.' (Commission opinion on Serbia's application for membership of the European Union, 12.10.2011).

1. Could you clarify the discrepancy between the statements mentioned in the Commission's opinion of last October and the monitoring report of the EU Delegation in Serbia of August concerning the judicial review procedure?

2. Given the importance attached to information provided by the Commission in Parliament's decision-making process, do you agree that in this case the information offered was incomplete and misleading? What will you do to prevent this from happening again in future?

3. Given the importance of creating a truly independent judiciary in Serbia and effective monitoring thereof related to the accession process of this country to the EU, it is important that notice is taken of the EU monitoring reports prepared for the hearings of the High Judicial Council and State Prosecutorial Council. Will the Commission submit these reports to the European Parliament in future?

4. What will the Commission do to address the serious shortcomings addressed by the EU monitors, such as the lack of transparency and legitimacy of the review process, the probable partiality of the High Judicial Council judges, and the political pressure exerted on elected judges and prosecutors?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2012)

1 and 2. Serbia is engaged in a difficult process of reform of its judicial system. Concerning the shortcomings identified by the Commission in the 2010 Progress Report regarding the re-appointment of judges and prosecutors, the Serbian authorities launched a review of the procedure now conducted by the Councils in their permanent composition, mainly by judges and prosecutors elected by their peers.

The Commission monitors this review process closely. To this end, the EU Delegation hired local experts who produced an interim report which expresses their views, not those of the Delegation or Commission. The Commission's 2011 Opinion presented the situation at the time stating 'the review process of re-appointment of judges and prosecutors still needs to be brought to a satisfactory conclusion'.

3. The Commission bases its assessments on various sources, not just the work of individual experts who may not always have as complete an understanding as the Commission of all issues at stake. This report from local experts was produced for its internal use only. This protects the interests of the Union in its bilateral relations and enables the experts to express themselves without fear of external pressure.

4. The Commission continues to monitor the review process and raises any issues as soon as they are identified. The Commission's final assessment will take into account the individual written justifications allowing a clear picture of the impact of any procedural shortcomings on the result of the review.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000050/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(12 ianuarie 2012)

Subiect: Zone metropolitane

Într-o lume aflată în plin proces de globalizare, Europa trebuie să țină cont de dezvoltarea zonelor metropolitane şi de rolul acestora în dezvoltarea regională, precum şi de cooperarea transfrontalieră între zonele urbane şi periurbane din zonele de frontieră din statele Uniunii Europene, care pot fi incluse în asemenea zone.

Dezvoltarea zonelor metropolitane, promovarea conexiunilor între regiuni şi oraşe în diverse domenii de interes public şi dezvoltarea unor iniţiative transfrontaliere sunt strâns legate de cooperarea autorităţilor locale şi regionale. Ca atare, este necesară o abordare globală pentru corelarea acestor iniţiative în perspectiva dezvoltării unor zone metropolitane puternice.

Ce strategie are în vedere Comisia pentru stabilirea unor obiective clare pentru dezvoltarea zonelor metropolitane cu o abordare transsectorială şi pentru cooptarea partenerilor publici şi privaţi interesaţi la stabilirea acestor obiective?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(23 februarie 2012)

Comisia recunoaște importanța zonelor metropolitane și a cooperării transfrontaliere și susține cooperarea la aceste niveluri, în special prin programul de cooperare interrregională INTERREG IVC, care face parte din obiectivul „cooperare teritorială europeană” din cadrul politicii de coeziune pentru perioada de programare 2007-2013. Cu toate acestea, responsabilitatea de a stabili strategii în domeniul zonelor metropolitane este de resortul regiunilor și statelor membre.

În perspectiva propunerilor Comisiei pentru politica de coeziune 2014-2020, ar putea fi utilizate mai multe noi instrumente precum investițiile teritoriale integrate (ITI) sau dezvoltarea locală realizată de actori locali, pentru a întări dezvoltarea zonelor metropolitane și pentru a favoriza dialogul și participarea tuturor părților interesate, inclusiv a autorităților locale, a actorilor din sectoarele publice și private, a asociațiilor și cetățenilor. În propunerile de regulamente, se acordă o atenție deosebită parteneriatelor și guvernanța la mai multe niveluri, prin adoptarea unui contract de parteneriat. Prin urmare, Comisia ar trebui să dispună de instrumente care să favorizeze dezvoltarea integrată a legăturilor dintre orașe și regiuni și strategiile de dezvoltare ale zonelor urbane, periurbane și metropolitane.

Un raport recent privind orașele viitorului ([1]), publicat de Comisie, a subliniat importanța zonelor periurbane, a zonelor metropolitane și a rețelelor de orașe din Europa.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/citiesoftomorrow/citiesoftomorrow_summary_ro.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000050/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(12 January 2012)

Subject: Metropolitan areas

In a world in the midst of globalisation, Europe must give consideration to the development of metropolitan areas and to their role in regional development, as well as to cross-border cooperation between urban and peri-urban areas in the border regions of the European Union's Member States, which may be included in such areas.

Developing metropolitan areas, promoting ties between regions and cities in different areas of public interest and developing cross-border initiatives are closely linked to cooperation between local and regional authorities. Consequently, a global approach is required to correlating these initiatives with a view to developing strong metropolitan areas.

What strategy does the Commission have in mind for setting clear objectives for the development of metropolitan areas using a cross-sector approach, and for co-opting public and private partners interested in setting these objectives?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(23 février 2012)

La Commission reconnait l'importance des aires métropolitaines et de la coopération transfrontalière et soutient la coopération à ces niveaux, notamment à travers le programme de coopération interrégionale Interreg IVC, qui s'inscrit dans le cadre de l'objectif «coopération territoriale européenne» poursuivi par la politique de cohésion pour la période de programmation 2007-2013. Néanmoins, la responsabilité d'établir des stratégies dans le domaine des aires métropolitaines est du ressort des régions et des États membres.

Dans la perspective des propositions de la Commission pour la politique de cohésion 2014-2020, plusieurs nouveaux outils tels que l'Investissement Territorial Intégré (ITI) ou le développement local mené par les acteurs locaux, pourraient être utilisés afin de renforcer le développement des aires métropolitaines et de favoriser le dialogue et l'inclusion de tous les acteurs concernés, incluant autorités locales, acteurs des secteurs publics et privés, associations et citoyens. Dans les projets des règlements, une attention particulière est portée à la question des partenariats et de la gouvernance multi-niveaux, via l'adoption d'un contrat de partenariat. La Commission devrait donc pouvoir disposer d'instruments favorisant le développement intégré des liens entre villes et régions et les stratégies de développement des territoires urbains, périurbains et métropolitains.

Un récent rapport sur les villes de demain ([1]), publié par la Commission, a mis en évidence l'importance des aires périurbaines, des zones métropolitaines et des réseaux de ville en Europe.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/citiesoftomorrow/index_en.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000053/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(12 January 2012)

Subject: Commission response to written question on destruction of EU-funded projects

1. The Commission has only provided partial responses to my Question E-009278/2011.

(a) The answers to Questions E-4514/2009 and E-4637/2009 referred to cover only the value of the damages which occurred up to September 2009. Could the Commission confirm the total cost to date?

(b) Question E-009278/2011 also requested the Commission to list all projects destroyed for the period 2001-October 2011. Will the Commission provide such a list?

2. In reply to Part 4 of my Question E-4637/2009 the Commission stated that: 'The Commission has not received so far any compensation from Israel for damages to EC-funded projects.'

(a) Has the Commission since then received any compensation for these damages?

(b) If not, how does the Commission intend in its contacts with Israel to deal with the need for the EU to receive compensation for such damages?

(c) Does the Commission intend to deduct the total costs of the projects destroyed from the funds it makes available to Israel in the context of the EU-Israel Association Agreement (e.g. the EUR 14 million allocated under the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan for 2007-13)?

— If not, what are the reasons for not doing so?

— What other possible ways and means are there for the EU to obtain compensation?

(d) Does the Commission acknowledge the need for codified procedures to be adopted to deal with instances of destruction of EU taxpayer-funded projects by third countries which enjoy preferential trade agreements with the EU, e.g. by obliging those countries to refrain from such acts of destruction, and, in the event of destruction, through the provision of compensation or other effective remedies?

(e) How does the Commission defend its current policy or lack thereof as formulated in the above to EU taxpayers, who find themselves in such a very difficult economic and financial situation?

— How does the Commission intend to deal with the possible destruction of EU projects by the Israeli armed forces in the future? Will the Commission detail what discussions have taken place with the Israeli authorities on the need for such compensation to be provided? If not, what are the reasons for not doing so?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

1. The total cost of physical damage inflicted by Israeli armed forces attacks on EU-funded Development Projects amounted approximatively to EUR 49.14 million for the period from 2001-11, with the estimated EU-funded share in the loss amounting to EUR 29.37 million. The list requested is attached.

2a. No. It should nevertheless be noted that in the vast majority of cases, the donor was an EU Member State.

2b. The EU Representative Office in East Jerusalem has protested to the Israeli Ministry of Defence and asked for compensation for the 'on going' projects. On other occasions, the property damaged had been transferred to the final beneficiary and the EU has therefore no more legal title to the property.

2c. There are currently no plans to do so. Such cases can be raised in the appropriate Association Council fora with Israel and by diplomatic ways.

2d. It is not clear if codified procedures would be helpful, given the great diversity of scenarios possible and the difficulty of drawing up a code which would address all of these in an effective manner.

2e. The EU Representative Office in East Jerusalem is currently requesting Member States for any information in order to update the list of damaged infrastructure if necessary. The Commission aims, by publicly associating itself in a visible way with the infrastructure projects in the Occupied Palestinian Territory financed by the EU, to at least discourage demolition or damage on the part of the Israeli authorities. Discreet demarches are often more effective than public announcements in such occasions. To that end it would not be appropriate to divulge the precise content of discussions with Israel on such matters.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-004789/12
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(10 Bealtaine 2012)

Ábhar: Príosúnacht Leanaí

Meastar go bhfuil suas le 7 500 leanbh Palaistíneach, leanaí atá 12 bhliain d'aois san áireamh, curtha faoi choimeád, ceistithe agus curtha i bpríosún faoi dhlí míleata Iosrael le 11 bhliain anuas.

Bhailigh an eagraíocht neamhrialtasach *Defence for Children* teistiméireacht faoi mhionn ó 311 leanbh atá faoi choimeád míleata in Iosrael. De réir tuarascála a foilsíodh bunaithe ar na teistiméireachta sin faoi mhionn, is i lár na hoíche a ghabhtar formhór na leanaí, agus is minic, de réir tuairisce, go n-eagraíonn an t-arm ruathair scáfara chuige sin. I bhformhór na gcásanna ceanglaítear lámha na leanaí taobh thiar dá ndromanna agus cuirtear dallóga orthu sula n-aistrítear go suíomh anaithnid iad chun iad a cheistiú. Is minic go mbíonn maslúchán teanga, uirísliú agus bagairtí chomh maith le foréigean i gceist le linn na gabhála agus an aistrithe.

Cén seasamh atá á ghlacadh ag an gCoimisiún i dtaca leis an ngéarchéim dhaonnúil atá in Iosrael faoi láthair agus céard a bheidh á dhéanamh ag an gCoimisiún chun dul i ngleic le droch-íde leanaí sa chomhthéacs sin?

Cén freagairt atá ag an gCoimisiún ar an bhféidearthacht go bhfuil Iosrael ag sárú Choinbhinsiún na Náisiún Aontaithe um Chearta an Linbh (1989) agus leanaí á gcoimeád acu i bpríosúin do dhaoine fásta?

An bhfuil sé i gceist ag an gCoimisiún na hionstraimí ar fad atá ar fáil aige a úsáid chun a chinntiú go gcloíonn rialtas Iosrael go hiomlán leis an gCoinbhinsiún in aghaidh Céastóireachta agus in aghaidh Íde nó Pionóis eile atá Cruálach, Mídhaonna nó Táireach?

Freagra ón Ardionadaí/Leas-Uachtarán Ashton thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(7 Meán Fómhair 2012)

Tá an AE ag cur in iúl i gcónaí an imní atá air maidir leis an mbealach a chaitear le leanaí Palaistíneacha i gcóras breithiúnach agus coinneála Iosrael. Mar a tuairiscíodh i dTuarascáil 2012 ar dhul chun cinn maidir le Beartas Comharsanachta na hEorpa i ndáil le hIosrael, ag deireadh 2011 bhí 4 281 príosúnach Palaistíneach i bpríosúin Iosraelacha, agus leanaí iad 135 acu sin. Bhí mionaoiseach amháin i gcoinneáil riaracháin ag deireadh 2011.

Fáiltíodh roimh ardú na lán-aoise ó aois 16 go 18 sa dlí míleata is infheidhme i ndáil leis an gcríoch Phalaistíneach faoi fhorghabháil i mí Mheán Fómhair 2011. Faoin leasú sin, ní mór mionaoisigh a chur ar an eolas faoina gceart dul i gcomhairle le haturnae go príobháideach, roimh cheistiúchán agus lena linn. Mar sin féin, is faoin mionaoiseach atá sé sonraí aturnae a sholáthar agus tá an AE buartha nach ndéanfaidh ach líon beag mionaoiseach sin. Tá imní ar an AE freisin nach dtugtar cosaint leordhóthanach do leanaí le linn gabhála agus coinneála, go háirithe sa mhéid is nach gceadaítear do leanaí dlíodóir nó tuismitheoir a bheith in éineacht leo le linn ceistiúcháin. Tá leanaí á gcoinneáil i ngaibhniú aonair fós, rud a sháraíonn Airteagal 16 den Choinbhinsiún in aghaidh an Chéasta. Diúltaítear bannaí do 90 % de na leanaí atá á gcoinneáil, rud a sháraíonn Coinbhinsiún na Náisiún Aontaithe um Chearta an Linbh, agus tá formhór na leanaí Palaistíneacha á gcoinneáil laistigh d'Iosrael de shárú ar Airteagal 76 de Cheathrú Coinbhinsiún na Ginéive.

Tá ábhair imní an AE curtha in iúl aige arís agus arís eile d'údaráis Iosrael faoi chuimsiú an idirphlé rialta maidir le cúrsaí polaitiúla agus cearta an duine a eagraítear go rialta eatarthu, agus leanfaidh sé den mhéid sin a dhéanamh.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004789/12
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: The imprisonment of children

It is estimated that up to 7 500 Palestinian children, some as young as 12, have been held, questioned and imprisoned under Israeli military law during the last 11 years.

The non-governmental organisation Defence for Children has gathered sworn testimonies from 311 children in military custody in Israel. According to a published report on those testimonies, most children are arrested in the middle of the night and reports say that the army frequently organises terrifying raids for that purpose. Usually the children's hands are tied behind their backs and they are blindfolded before being brought to an unknown location for questioning. Verbal abuse and, humiliation, threats and physicsal violence are frequent features of arrests and transfers.

What is the Commission's position on the current humanitarian emergency in Israel and what will the Commission do to tackle the mistreatment of children in such cases?

What is the response of the Commission to the possibility that Israel may be violating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) by keeping children in adult prisons?

Does the Commission intend to use all instruments at its disposal to ensure that the Israeli government observes in full the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 September 2012)

The EU continues to voice its concerns about the treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli judicial and detention system. As reported in the 2012 ENP Country Progress Report on Israel, by the end of 2011 there were 4,281 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, of which 135 were children. There was also one minor in administrative detention at the end of 2011.

A welcome development was the raising of the majority age from 16 to 18 in the military law applicable to the occupied Palestinian territory in September 2011. Under the amendment minors must be informed of their right to consult with an attorney in private, prior and during an interrogation. However, it is the minor who should provide the details of an attorney and the EU is concerned that few minors may do so. The EU also remains concerned about insufficient protection of children during arrest and detention, in particular the failure to permit children to be accompanied by a lawyer and parent during questioning. Cases of solitary confinement of children continue, in contravention of Article 16 of the Convention against Torture. Around 90% of children in detention are still denied bail in violation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and most Palestinian children are still detained inside Israel in violation of Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The EU has repeatedly conveyed its concerns about these practices to the Israeli authorities in the framework of its regular political and human rights dialogue and will continue to do so.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004790/12
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD) e Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Sindrome del cromosoma 18

La sindrome del cromosoma 18 è una malattia rara appartenente al gruppo delle patologie determinate da alterazioni del numero e della struttura dei cromosomi, la cui casistica è minima data la mancanza di conoscenze ed informazione su tale sindrome.

A differenza degli Stati Uniti, dove da tempo è stato avviato un progetto di registri e di banche dati, in Europa tale iniziativa è lasciata all'opera di associazioni di pazienti non collegate tra loro da un network europeo.

Considerato che la condivisione di informazioni e la presenza di registri e banche dati sono strumenti essenziali per raccogliere un numero significativo di campioni necessari per la ricerca epidemiologica e/o clinica, quali strumenti può attuare la Commissione per elaborare una strategia comune per questa malattia a livello europeo?

Quali misure può essa inoltre adottare per incoraggiare gli Stati membri ad attuare piani nazionali che consentano di fornire assistenza sociale e materiale ai soggetti colpiti da tale sindrome e alle loro famiglie?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(29 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che le anomalie cromosomiche costituiscono una causa importante di patologie. La banca dati dell'UE sulle malattie rare Orphanet fornisce informazioni sulle sindromi associate alle anomalie nel cromosoma 18 ([1]).

La trisomia 18 (o sindrome di Edwards) è seguita da EUROCAT, rete europea per la sorveglianza delle anomalie congenite ([2]), sostenuta dal programma dell'Unione europea per la salute. Si tratta di un network europeo dei registri per la sorveglianza epidemiologica delle anomalie congenite che opera dal 1979 e che segue più di 1,7 milioni di nascite all'anno in Europa (il 29 % di tutte le nascite) tramite 43 registri in 23 paesi. La trisomia 18 è aumentata notevolmente nell'UE, del 36 % dal 2000-2001 al 2008-2009 ([3]).

La Commissione ha finanziato in misura consistente la ricerca sulle anomalie cromosomiche nell'ambito del sesto e del settimo programma quadro per la ricerca (PQ6 e PQ7). Nell'ambito del PQ6 sono state finanziate due reti di eccellenza, SAFE ed Eurogentest ([4]) (seguito da Eurogentest 2 ([5]) nel PQ7), dando impulso alla ricerca sulle diagnosi prenatali e sugli esami genetici per le anomalie cromosomiche. In totale, il contributo finora fornito dall'UE ai progetti sopramenzionati ammonta a 24 milioni di EUR.

La Commissione segue un approccio integrato per tutte le anomalie congenite. La prevenzione primaria delle anomalie congenite dovrebbe essere inclusa nei piani nazionali per le malattie rare, attualmente in fase di elaborazione.

I registri possono chiedere il sostegno finanziario del programma UE per la salute, se il settore in questione è compreso nel piano di lavoro annuale.

([1]) http://www.orpha.net/consor/cgi-bin/Disease_Search_Simple.php?lng=EN&diseaseGroup=chromosome+18.
([2]) http://www.eurocat-network.eu/.
([3]) http://www.eurocat-network.eu/clustersandtrends/statisticalmonitoring/statisticalmonitoring-2010.
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/lifescihealth/major/rare-diseases-projects-1.htm
([5]) http://www.eurogentest.org/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004790/12
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD) and Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Chromosome 18 syndrome

Chromosome 18 syndrome is a rare illness belonging to the group of conditions determined by changes in the number and structure of chromosomes. The case history of this syndrome is minimal given the lack of knowledge and information.

Unlike in the United States, where a registration and database project was launched long ago, in Europe this work is left to patient associations that are not linked to each other by a European network.

Given that information sharing and registers and databanks are essential tools for gathering the significant number of samples necessary for epidemiological and/or clinical research, what instruments can the Commission implement to develop a common strategy for this illness at EU level?

What measures can it adopt to encourage Member States to implement national plans which allow social and material support to be provided to individuals affected by this syndrome and their families?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

The Commission is aware of the fact that chromosomal abnormalities are a significant cause of health problems. The EU rare diseases database Orphanet provides information about syndromes associated to anomalies in chromosome 18 ([1]).

Trisomy 18 (or Edwards Syndrome) is followed by the EUROCAT (European Surveillance on Congenital Anomalies) ([2]) network supported by the European Union Health Programme. This is a European network of registries for the epidemiologic surveillance of congenital anomalies active from 1979 onwards and following more than 1.7 million births per year in Europe (29% of all births) via 43 registries in 23 countries. Trisomy 18 has increased significantly in the EU, by 36% from 2000-2001 to 2008-2009 ([3]).

The Commission has provided substantial funding for research on chromosomal abnormalities throughout the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research (FP6 and FP7). In FP6, two Networks of excellence, SAFE and Eurogentest ([4]) (followed under FP7 by Eurogentest 2) ([5]) were funded, providing the impetus for the research in the prenatal diagnosis and genetic testing for chromosomal abnormalities. Altogether, the EU contribution so far to the abovementioned projects amounts to up to EUR 24 million.

The Commission is following an integrated approach related to all congenital anomalies. Primary prevention of congenital anomalies should be added to National Plans for Rare Diseases, currently under development.

Relevant registers may apply for financial support under the EU Health Programme, if the area in question is covered in the annual work plan.

([1]) http://www.orpha.net/consor/cgi-bin/Disease_Search_Simple.php?lng=EN&diseaseGroup=chromosome+18.
([2]) http://www.eurocat-network.eu/.
([3]) http://www.eurocat-network.eu/clustersandtrends/statisticalmonitoring/statisticalmonitoring-2010.
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/lifescihealth/major/rare-diseases-projects-1.htm
([5]) http://www.eurogentest.org/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004791/12
à Comissão
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(10 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Valor económico da natureza — relatório do Banco Mundial

A Comissão Europeia definiu como linha de ação que «os Estados-Membros, com a assistência da Comissão, procederão à cartografia e avaliação do estado dos ecossistemas e seus serviços no seu território nacional até 2014 e avaliarão o valor económico desses serviços e promoverão a integração desses valores em sistemas de contabilidade e comunicação de informações a nível nacional e da UE até 2020» (Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (COM(2011)0244)).

O Banco Mundial acaba de apresentar um relatório (Crescimento Verde Inclusivo: O Caminho para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável) que procura incentivar os governos a agirem no mesmo sentido. De acordo com esta instituição financeira, «a determinação de valores às propriedades agrícolas, minérios, rios, oceanos, florestas e biodiversidade, bem como a concessão de direitos de propriedade, oferecerão aos governos, indústria e indivíduos o incentivo suficiente para geri-los de forma eficiente, inclusiva e sustentável». O Banco adianta ainda que «apoia firmemente a incorporação do capital natural nas contas nacionais» e que procurará obter «compromissos dos países neste sentido na Cimeira Rio+20 das Nações Unidas», que se realiza no próximo mês no Brasil.

Face ao exposto, solicito as seguintes informações à Comissão:

1. O relatório do Banco Mundial destina-se explicitamente a exercer pressão sobre os governos no sentido da adoção de novas políticas. Que pensa a Comissão Europeia do conteúdo e das propostas apresentadas no relatório?

2. O plano de ação da Comissão visa também a concessão de direitos de propriedade dos recursos e serviços naturais, tal como o proposto no relatório do Banco Mundial? Essa propriedade seria exclusivamente pública? Seria transacionável?

3. Na Cimeira Rio+20, a Comissão Europeia vai aderir ou apoiar esta sugestão do Banco Mundial?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004792/12
à Comissão
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(10 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Valor económico da natureza — apoio a países em desenvolvimento

O Banco Mundial acaba de apresentar um relatório em que advoga a determinação do valor económico de bens e serviços naturais e ecológicos, assim como a concessão dos direitos de propriedade dos mesmos (Crescimento Verde Inclusivo: O Caminho para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável). Esta sugestão visa explicitamente influenciar os governos e vai, pelo menos em parte, ao encontro do plano de ação da Comissão (Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (COM(2011)0244)).

Na apresentação do estudo, o Vice-Presidente do Banco Mundial para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável considerou que o facto de os países não atribuírem valor económico aos seus recursos e serviços ecológicos contribuiu para a degradação dos recursos num contexto de busca de crescimento económico a curto prazo. O mais provável é que os países ricos que fornecem ajuda aos países em desenvolvimento ponderem as questões ambientais e alertem para a necessidade de estes últimos protegerem a sua natureza, podendo ficar mais relutantes em atribuir fundos caso este alerta seja ignorado.

O relatório do Banco Mundial surge no seguimento de outros relatórios do G8 e da União Europeia (por exemplo, «A Economia dos Ecossistemas e Biodiversidade»), pelo que solicito as seguintes informações à Comissão:

1. O relatório do Banco Mundial destina-se explicitamente a exercer pressão sobre os governos no sentido da adoção de novas políticas. Tenciona a União Europeia condicionar o seu apoio aos países em desenvolvimento, estabelecendo como critério a adoção desta política de avaliação do capital da natureza e/ou da concessão dos direitos de propriedade dos bens e serviços naturais?

2. Não considera a Comissão que este modelo de desenvolvimento, a ser implementado na União, pressionando os países em desenvolvimento a fazer o mesmo, pode ser perigoso para a sustentabilidade ambiental e social dos referidos recursos e serviços ecológicos, nomeadamente com a concessão da sua propriedade?

Resposta conjunta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(16 de julho de 2012)

A Comissão congratula-se com o citado relatório do Banco Mundial, que constitui um contributo útil no debate em curso sobre o valor económico e social da natureza.

A estratégia da UE para a biodiversidade inclui, entre as suas ações destinadas a manter e a reforçar os ecossistemas e os serviços conexos, a avaliação do valor económico desses serviços e a integração desses valores nos sistemas contabilísticos e de relato financeiro, a nível nacional e da EU, até 2020. A estratégia da União Europeia para a biodiversidade não tem por objetivo atribuir direitos de propriedade a recursos naturais.

A Comissão respeita plenamente os princípios de eficácia da ajuda estipulados na Declaração de Paris sobre a Eficácia da Ajuda ao Desenvolvimento e do Programa de Ação de Acra e que são reiterados na Parceria de Busan para uma Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento Eficaz. A Comissão não aplica as condições específicas para a ajuda ao desenvolvimento a que se refere a pergunta, e a introdução de condições específicas desse tipo não está atualmente em discussão. A Comissão toma, contudo, todas as medidas possíveis para garantir que a sua ajuda ao desenvolvimento não tenha consequências negativas para os recursos ecológicos e os serviços conexos.

O objetivo de melhorar os conhecimentos sobre valores dos ecossistemas e os serviços conexos e de os integrar nos sistemas contabilísticos e de relato financeiro é manter e reforçar a sustentabilidade ambiental e social dos ecossistemas e dos serviços conexos e não de os prejudicar.

A Comissão e a Presidência exprimiram o seu apoio à iniciativa de contabilização de capital natural, do Banco Mundial, que está em consonância com o contributo conjunto da UE e dos seus Estados-Membros para a Cimeira Rio+20 ([1]).

([1]) Doc. 15841/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004791/12
to the Commission
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: The economic value of nature — World Bank report

The European Commission has set out an action plan whereby 'Member States, with the assistance of the Commission, will map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services in their national territory by 2014, assess the economic value of such services, and promote the integration of these values into accounting and reporting systems at EU and national level by 2020' (Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (COM(2011)0244)).

The World Bank recently presented a report (Inclusive Green Growth: The Pathway to Sustainable Development) that seeks to encourage governments to do the same. According to this financial institution, 'assigning value to farmland, minerals, rivers, oceans, forests and biodiversity, and awarding property rights, will offer governments, industry and individuals sufficient incentive to manage them in an efficient, inclusive and sustainable manner'. The Bank goes on to say that it 'strongly supports incorporating natural capital into national accounts' and that it 'will be seeking country commitments at the United Nations Rio+20 Summit in Brazil next month'.

1. The World Bank report is clearly intended to put pressure on governments to adopt new policies. How does the Commission view the content of this report and the proposals it sets out?

2. The Commission's action plan also seeks to assign property rights for natural resources and services, as proposed in the World Bank report. Would this property be exclusively public? Would it be tradable?

3. At the Rio+20 Summit, will the Commission adhere to and support the World Bank's suggestion?

Question for written answer E-004792/12
to the Commission
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: The economic value of nature — supporting developing countries

The World Bank recently presented a report that advocates assigning an economic value to natural and ecological goods and services and awarding property rights for them (Inclusive Green Growth: The Pathway to Sustainable Development). This suggestion is clearly designed to influence governments and is at least partially in line with the Commission's action plan (Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (COM(2011)0244)).

When presenting the report, the World Bank's Vice-President for Sustainable Development said that a contributory factor in resource degradation was that countries fail to assign economic value to their ecological resources and services, while seeking short-term economic growth. It is more likely that rich countries providing assistance to developing countries will look at the environmental issues involved and warn developing countries of the need to protect their natural resources, perhaps being more reluctant to allocate funds if this warning is ignored.

The World Bank report follows on from other reports by the G8 and the European Union (for example, 'The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity').

1. The World Bank report is clearly intended to put pressure on governments to adopt new policies. Does the EU intend to put conditions on its aid to developing countries, making it subject to adoption of this policy of placing value on natural capital and/or awarding property rights for natural goods and services?

2. Does the Commission believe that this development model, if it is applied in the EU and developing countries are pressured to follow suit, could harm the environmental and social sustainability of these ecological resources and services, particularly through the awarding of property rights for them?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2012)

The Commission welcomes the cited World Bank report as a useful contribution to the ongoing debate on the economic and social value of nature.

The EU Biodiversity Strategy indeed provides among its actions, aimed at maintaining and enhancing ecosystems and their services, assessment of the economic value of such services and to integrate these values into reporting and accounting systems, at EU and national level by 2020. The EU Biodiversity Strategy does not seek to assign property rights to natural resources.

The Commission fully respect principles of aid effectiveness enshrined in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Accra Agenda for Action, and which are re-iterated in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. The Commission does not apply the specific conditionality for development assistance, referred to in the question and there is no discussion at present on introducing such specific conditionality. The Commission does however take all possible measures to ensure that its development assistance does not have negative consequences for ecological resources and services.

The purpose of improving knowledge about values of ecosystems and their services, and of bringing them into accounting and reporting systems is to preserve and enhance the environmental and social sustainability of ecosystems and their services, not to undermine them.

The Commission and Presidency expressed support to the initiative on natural capital accounting by the World Bank, which is line with the joint contribution of the EU and its Member States for Rio+20 ([1]).

([1]) Doc. 15841/11.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004793/12
à Comissão
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(10 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Financiamento público europeu a touradas

O cartaz de uma tourada a realizar em 12 de maio em Almendralejo, Espanha, ostenta nos seus patrocinadores o símbolo da União Europeia (FEDER). A avaliar pelo mesmo e pela divulgação do salão internacional, a tourada está integrada no VINAC 2012 (13.° Salón del Vino y la Aceituna de Almendralejo — Extremadura). O VINAC 2012 apresenta-se como sendo financiado pelo FEDER a 70 %.

Face ao exposto, solicito as seguintes informações à Comissão:

1. A Comissão confirma que a tourada foi realizada com financiamento comunitário? De que valor?

2. Que verba dos fundos comunitários recebeu o VINAC 2012? Sendo a tourada parte integrante deste evento, a mesma foi assim financiada mesmo que desta forma indireta, quer tenha sido organizada pelo VINAC ou apoiada por este?

3. Em países como Portugal, a tourada tem perdido imenso público ao longo da última década. Assim, neste contexto, a sua viabilidade financeira só é garantida devido a generosos apoios públicos, financeiros ou logísticos. Qual a política da Comissão sobre apoios de fundos públicos, nomeadamente europeus, à realização ou apoio de touradas?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(28 de junho de 2012)

1. Não foi certificada nenhuma despesa no quadro do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) destinada a financiar o VINAC 2012 ou a tourada.

2. A tourada, que fazia parte do VINAC 2012, foi totalmente financiada pelo município de Almendralejo. A única atividade durante a exposição VINAC cofinanciada com apoio do FEDER foi a missão comercial (apoio do FEDER: 47 600 euros). Por conseguinte, a presença do logótipo do FEDER no cartaz da exposição conduz a um mal-entendido, dado que apenas uma atividade de toda a exposição foi cofinanciada pelo FEDER.

3. No quadro da gestão partilhada, a responsabilidade pela seleção, gestão e execução de projetos no âmbito dos programas incumbe exclusivamente aos Estados-Membros, em total conformidade com a legislação da UE e nacional aplicáveis. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de qualquer projeto cofinanciado pela UE relativo à construção de novas instalações tauromáquicas, embora não possa excluir que algumas destas instalações tenham beneficiado indiretamente de investimentos destinados a melhorar ou a reestruturar infraestruturas públicas locais. Nos termos do artigo 5.°, n.° 2, do Regulamento FEDER ([1]), a ajuda do FEDER pode contribuir para o património cultural em apoio do desenvolvimento socioeconómico e para potenciar o desenvolvimento do turismo sustentável. O princípio da subsidiariedade previsto no Tratado não confere à Comissão autoridade para avaliar o que é abrangido pelo âmbito do património cultural, uma vez que tal compete aos Estados-Membros.

A Comissão remete a Senhora Deputada para a sua resposta conjunta às perguntas escritas E-000690/12, E-000691/12 e E-000692/12.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 1080/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 5 de julho de 2006, relativo ao Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004793/12
to the Commission
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: European public funding for bullfights

The poster for a bullfight on 12 May 2012 in Almendralejo, Spain, displays the logo of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) among its sponsors. It can be seen from this poster and from the publicity for VINAC 2012 (the 13th Extremadura Wine and Olive Show) that the bullfight forms part of this event. VINAC 2012 states that 70% of its funding comes from the ERDF.

In view of the above, can the Commission provide the following information:

1. Is it able to confirm that the bullfight was held using EU funds? What was the sum involved?

2. What was the value of EU funds received by VINAC 2012? As the bullfight was an integral part of this event, was it financed, even indirectly, as an activity organised or supported by VINAC?

3. In countries such as Portugal, bullfights have lost a great deal of their public support over the last decade. In this context, their financial viability can only be assured through generous public support, whether financial or logistical. What is the Commission's policy on the use of public funds, specifically European funds, to hold or to support bullfights?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

1. No expenditure has been certified under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) from VINAC 2012 or the bullfight.

2. The bullfight, which formed part of VINAC 2012, was totally financed by the Municipality of Almendralejo. The only activity during the VINAC exhibition which was co-financed with ERDF support was the reverse trade mission (ERDF support: EUR 47 600). Therefore, the presence of the ERDF logo on the banner of the exhibition leads to a misunderstanding because only one activity of the whole exhibition was co-financed by the ERDF.

3. Within the framework of shared management, the responsibility for the selection, management and implementation of projects within programmes lies solely with the Member States, in full compliance with applicable EU and national legislation. The Commission is not aware of any EU co-financed project for building new bullfighting facilities, although it cannot exclude that some of these facilities have indirectly benefited from investments aimed at either upgrading or restructuring local public facilities. Under Article 5(2) of the ERDF Regulation ([1]), ERDF support may contribute to cultural heritage in support of socioeconomic development and as potential for the development of sustainable tourism. The subsidiarity principle underlined in the Treaty does not give the Commission the authority to appraise what falls under the scope of cultural heritage, as this lies with the Member States.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its joint answer to written questions E-000690/12, E-000691/12 and E-000692/12.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004794/12
à Comissão
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(10 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Touradas: bem-estar animal

A União Europeia tem avançado com legislação relativa ao bem-estar animal, nomeadamente nas questões de produção alimentar, circos ou zoos. Contudo, apesar de toda a atenção que o assunto tem merecido, nenhuma desta legislação tem sido aplicada ou é aplicável aos animais envolvidos na tourada.

Face ao exposto, coloca as seguintes questões à Comissão:

1. A Comissão planeia avançar com legislação, com alterações à legislação em vigor ou à forma como é aplicada, para que as questões do bem-estar animal se estendam à tourada?

2. Por que motivo toda a legislação europeia existente sobre o bem-estar animal não é aplicada às touradas? A Comissão não considera que a legislação sobre o bem-estar animal impede a realização de touradas na Europa?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(3 de julho de 2012)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada às perguntas escritas E-002699/2011, E-008975/2011 e E-010978/2011 ([1]).

([1]) (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=PT).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004794/12
to the Commission
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Bullfights: animal welfare

The European Union has progressed with legislation on animal welfare, particularly with regard to food production, circuses and zoos. However, despite the deserved attention given to this subject, none of this legislation has been applied, or is applicable, to the animals involved in bullfights.

In view of the above, I ask the Commission:

1. Is it planning to propose legislation, amend existing legislation or change the way existing legislation is applied, to extend animal welfare issues to bullfights?

2. Why is existing European animal welfare legislation not applied to bullfights? Does the Commission not agree that current animal welfare legislation should prevent bullfights taking place in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its replies to Written Questions E-002699/2011, E-008975/2011 and E-010978/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp?language=en.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004795/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Compatibilità UE/USA in tema di privacy e trattamento dei dati personali

In USA la EFF (Electronic Frontier Foundation) organizzazione senza fini di lucro internazionale che si occupa delle libertà civili legate all'attuale panorama dell'era digitale, ha reso noto, sulla scorta di documenti ufficiali ai quali ha avuto accesso grazie al Freedom of Information Act, che si sta portando avanti un progetto legislativo fortemente supportato dalle richieste dell'FBI. Si tratta di modificare l'attuale Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act, col quale si imporrebbe alle aziende ICT del paese di dotare i propri servizi voip, e-mail e peer-to-peer di un accesso privilegiato ad uso delle forze dell'ordine per facilitarne le intercettazioni in ambito di indagine.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di questa iniziativa?

Nel caso in cui venisse accolta dal sistema americano, ne reputa compatibili le conseguenze con l'attuale normativa vigente in Europa in materia di privacy e trattamento dei dati personali?

Considerato che i servizi gestiti dalle società che sarebbero sottoposte a tale normativa sono ampiamente diffusi e usati anche nell'Unione europea, ritiene che i diritti dei propri cittadini possano essere messi a rischio?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(6 luglio 2012)

La Commissione ha già sollevato in diverse occasioni la questione dell'applicazione extraterritoriale delle leggi con le autorità statunitensi, da ultimo durante la riunione ministeriale «Giustizia e affari interni» UE-USA del 21 giugno 2012.

La Commissione ritiene fermamente che, sotto il profilo del diritto internazionale pubblico, un atto giuridico adottato da un paese terzo non può essere applicato direttamente e automaticamente nel territorio dell'UE, a meno che il diritto dell'Unione o le leggi degli Stati membri non riconoscano esplicitamente gli effetti di tale atto nelle rispettive giurisdizioni.

Nessun atto legislativo statunitense può prevalere legalmente sulla pertinente legislazione dell'Unione o degli Stati membri, compresa quella relativa alla protezione dei dati applicabile al trattamento dei dati personali. Qualsiasi trattamento dei dati personali all'interno dell'UE deve rispettare la legislazione applicabile dell'UE sulla protezione dei dati. I meccanismi di cooperazione tra le autorità competenti, come gli accordi sulla mutua assistenza giudiziaria o altri accordi, conclusi a livello bilaterale e/o a livello dell'UE, sono il canale logico di cooperazione per il trasferimento dei dati personali.

La Commissione continuerà a collaborare con gli Stati Uniti per identificare la soluzione migliore al problema dell'accesso da parte delle autorità di contrasto ai dati detenuti da enti privati al di fuori del territorio degli Stati Uniti e delle informazioni richieste da altre autorità statunitensi citate nell'interrogazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004795/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: EU-US compatibility with regard to privacy and processing of personal data

The Electronic Frontier Foundation, an international non-profit organisation based in the US that deals with civil liberties in the context of the digital age, has announced, on the basis of official documents to which it had access through the Freedom of Information Act, that moves are afoot to adopt legislation that is strongly supported by FBI requests. It involves amending the existing Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act so as to require ICT companies in the country to equip their VOIP, e-mail and peer-to-peer services with preferential access for use by law enforcement bodies to facilitate interceptions during their investigations.

Is the Commission aware of this initiative?

If the proposal is adopted as part of the American system, does the Commission consider the consequences compatible with the rules currently in force in Europe regarding privacy and personal data?

Given that the services managed by the companies which would be subject to these rules are also widely disseminated and used in the European Union, does the Commission consider that the rights of its citizens may be put at risk?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

The Commission has already raised at several occasions the issue of extraterritorial application of laws with US authorities and most recently at the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial meeting on 21 June 2012.

The Commission believes and supports the view that, as a matter of international public law, a legal act enacted by a third country cannot be directly and automatically applied in the territory of the EU, unless Union law or Member States' laws explicitly recognise the effects of such an act in their respective jurisdictions.

No US legal acts as such can legally overrule relevant EU legislation or Member States legislation, including the EU data protection legislation applicable to personal data processing. Any processing of personal data in the EU has to respect applicable EU data protection law. The cooperation mechanisms between competent authorities, such as Mutual Legal Assistance agreements or other agreements, concluded at bilateral level and/or at EU level, are the logical channel of cooperation to transfer personal data.

The Commission will continue to work with the US in order to identify the best solution to address the issue of access by law enforcement authorities to data held by private entities outside their territory as well as information required by other US authorities referred to in the question.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004796/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Giochi Olimpici di Londra 2012 e rispetto dei diritti umani delle società sponsor

La International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation ha redatto un rapporto pubblicato dall'ONG Fair Play, che riguarda i processi e le modalità di produzione delle multinazionali coinvolte nelle Olimpiadi 2012 di Londra come sponsor o come fornitori delle divise degli atleti e del merchandising.

Dal rapporto si evince che, per effetto delle politiche industriali di delocalizzazione, la produzione degli articoli commercializzati da queste società si svolge in paesi come la Cina, lo Sri Lanka e le Filippine, dove i diritti umani dei lavoratori non vengono per nulla garantiti. Gli operai, cui non viene assicurata nessuna tutela sindacale, sono infatti costretti a turnazioni di 12 ore, ricevono esigui stipendi mensili fra i 70 e i 200 dollari, spesso non dispongono di alcuna garanzia contrattuale e devono sostenere ritmi estenuanti di lavoro per consegnare le commesse in tempi strettissimi.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di questi fatti?

Posto che le Olimpiadi rappresenteranno una vetrina internazionale che farà convergere l'attenzione del mondo su di uno Stato membro dell'UE e considerato che tra le politiche principali dell'Europa figura la difesa dei diritti dell'uomo e dei lavoratori, come intende agire la Commissione per evitare che vengano creati fraintendimenti e diffusi messaggi poco chiari sulla politica europea a difesa del lavoro, dei lavoratori e della loro sicurezza?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 agosto 2012)

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza del rapporto citato dall'onorevole parlamentare. L'UE utilizza regolarmente gli incontri con i paesi terzi, come il dialogo sui diritti umani, per esortarli a ratificare e applicare le convenzioni dell'Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro (OIL) riguardanti il diritto di associazione sindacale, il diritto di contrattazione collettiva e il diritto di beneficiare di condizioni di lavoro decenti. Il piano d'azione dell'UE sui diritti umani adottato dal Consiglio Affari esteri il 25 giugno 2012 prevede che l'UE promuova la ratifica e l'applicazione universali 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 ha ripetutamente sollevato il tema della ratifica delle convenzioni sulle norme fondamentali del lavoro dell'OIL con la Cina nell'ambito del dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani e in altri incontri e continuerà a farlo.

L'UE si adopera per promuovere l'applicazione dei principi guida dell'ONU sulle imprese e sui diritti umani. In seguito all'adozione di una sua comunicazione sulla responsabilità sociale delle imprese nel 2011, la Commissione sta elaborando orientamenti sui diritti umani per specifici settori economici e per le piccole e medie imprese. Entro la fine del 2012 pubblicherà inoltre una relazione sulle priorità dell'UE per l'efficace applicazione dei principi guida dell'ONU.

La Commissione collabora strettamente anche con altre organizzazioni internazionali come l'OCSE e l'OIL in materia di responsabilità sociale delle imprese, diritti umani e diritti dei lavoratori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004796/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: London 2012 Olympic Games and respect for human rights by corporate sponsors

The International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation has written a report published by FairPlay 2012, a non-governmental organisation examining the processes and production methods of the multinational corporations involved in the 2012 London Olympics as sponsors or suppliers of the athletes' kit and merchandising goods.

The report shows that, as a result of industrial outsourcing policies, the articles marketed by these companies are manufactured in countries like China, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, where the human rights of employees are by no means guaranteed. The workers, who are not offered any union protection, are in fact forced to work 12-hour shifts, receive meagre monthly salaries of between USD 70 and 200, often have no contractual guarantee and have to endure a gruelling pace of work to deliver the orders in extremely short turnaround times.

Is the Commission aware of these facts?

Given that the Olympics are an international showcase that will focus world attention on an EU Member State and given that one of the main policies of Europe is the defence of human rights and workers' rights, how does the Commission intend to act in order to avoid creating any misunderstandings and sending mixed messages regarding European policy of protecting labour, workers and their safety?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2012)

The HR/VP is aware of the report referred to by the Honourable Member. The EU regularly uses meetings with third countries, such as human rights dialogues, to urge third countries to ratify and implement International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions concerning the right to form trade unions, to engage in collective bargaining and to enjoy decent conditions of work. The EU Action Plan on Human Rights adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 25 June 2012 provides that the EU will promote 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 repeatedly raised ratification of the ILO core labour standards conventions with China in the EU-China human rights dialogue and in other meetings and will continue to do so.

The EU is working to promote implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and human rights. Following the adoption of a Commission Communication on Corporate Social Responsibility in 2011, the Commission is currently developing human rights guidance for specific business sectors and for small and medium-sized enterprises. The Commission will also publish a report on EU priorities for the effective implementation of the UN Guiding Principles by the end of 2012.

The Commission also works closely with other international organisations such as the OECD and the ILO on CSR and human and labour rights.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004797/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(10 mai 2012)

Subiect: Coerență în prezentarea beneficiarilor fondurilor de asistență umanitară pe site-ul internet oficial al DG ECHO

În conformitate cu orientările privind consolidarea răspunsurilor umanitare prin dezvoltarea capacităților la nivel global, DG ECHO intenționează să sporească impactul investițiilor sale prin intermediul dezvoltării capacităților pentru organizațiile internaționale și prin intermediul finanțării mecanismului de grant pentru ONG-urile europene.

Site-ul internet oficial al DG ECHO prezintă proiectele finanțate în cadrul mecanismului de grant pentru perioada 2000-2008 la secțiunea „Funding -> Grants & Contracts -> Grant facilities" (actualizată ultima dată la 30 octombrie 2009) și acordurile privind ajutorul umanitar acordat anual de către ECHO, pentru perioada 2004-2010, la secțiunea „Funding -> Grants & Contracts -> Humanitarian operations", fără nicio indicație cu privire la proveniența fondurilor, respectiv prin dezvoltarea capacităților la nivel global sau prin intermediul cadrului global pentru consolidarea capacității sau al cadrului pentru mecanismul de grant. Cu toate acestea, site-ul internet indică faptul că asistența umanitară finanțată de către Comisie este implementată prin intermediul organizațiilor umanitare (ONG-urile europene, agențiile ONU și organizațiile internaționale). Acest aspect sugerează că „operațiunile umanitare" includ, de asemenea, „mecanisme de grant", destinate ONG-urilor.

Această situație este generatoare de confuzii, în special în ceea ce privește perioada 2004-2008.

În cazul în care informațiile cuprinse în secțiunea „mecanisme de grant" nu se repetă pentru perioada 2004-2008 în secțiunea „Operațiuni umanitare", în ce constă diferența dintre contractele prezentate în aceste două secțiuni?

Răspuns dat de dna Georgieva în numele Comisiei
(4 iulie 2012)

Înainte de 2010, Comisia [Direcția Generală Ajutor Umanitar și Protecție Civilă (DG ECHO)] acorda finanțări atât pentru „consolidarea capacităților" (denumite în trecut „finanțări tematice"), destinate organizațiilor internaționale, cât și pentru mecanismul de grant, destinate în principal organizațiilor neguvernamentale (ONG-urilor).

În 2010, ambele tipuri de finanțare au fost înlocuite cu finanțările pentru Capacitatea consolidată de reacție (ERC). Această situație prezintă avantajul că o singură decizie de finanțare este deschisă tuturor partenerilor, atât organizațiilor internaționale, cât și ONG-urilor. Această nouă caracteristică îi încurajează pe parteneri să colaboreze, precum și să îmbunătățească sinergiile și coordonarea în ceea ce privește gestionarea contractelor. Site-ul internet al DG ECHO ([1]) conține o pagină dedicată capacității consolidate de reacție. Aceasta cuprinde orientările privind capacitatea consolidată de reacție și prezintă în detaliu acțiunile finanțate.

Finanțările pentru mecanismul de grant au încetat a fi utilizate și, în consecință, pagina dedicată acestora de pe site-ul internet al DG ECHO urmează să fie suprimată. Această pagină conținea o prezentare mai detaliată a contractelor din cadrul mecanismului de grant; până în 2008, acestea erau incluse în secțiunea intitulată „operațiuni umanitare". În anul 2009 nu au fost acordate granturi.

În 2010, 2011 și 2012, capacitatea consolidată de reacție (ERC) a utilizat 5 milioane EUR din linia bugetară pentru asistența alimentară, pentru fiecare dintre acești ani, restul fondurilor provenind din linia bugetară destinată ajutorului umanitar.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/grants_contracts/capacity_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004797/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Coherence in the presentation of beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance funds on the official website of DG ECHO

According to the guidelines on strengthening humanitarian responses through global capacity building, DG ECHO is aiming to increase the impact of its investments through Capacity Building for International Organisations and Grant Facility funding for European NGOs.

The official website of DG ECHO presents the projects funded under the Grant Facility for the period 2000-2008 under the section 'Funding -> Grants & Contracts -> Grant facilities' (last updated on 30 October 2009) and agreements on humanitarian aid granted by ECHO annually, for the period 2004-2010, under the section 'Funding -> Grants & Contracts -> Humanitarian operations', with no indication as to whether the funds are received through the Global Capacity Building or Grant Facility framework. The website nevertheless indicates that Commission-funded humanitarian assistance is implemented through humanitarian organisations (European NGOs, UN agencies and international organisations). This suggests that 'humanitarian operations' also include 'grant facilities', which are intended for NGOs.

This situation leads to confusion, especially for the period 2004-2008.

If the information under the section 'Grant facilities' is not duplicated for the period 2004-2008 in the section 'Humanitarian operations', what is the difference between the contracts presented under these two sections?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2012)

Prior to 2010, the Commission (Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO)) allocated 'Capacity Building' funding (formerly 'Thematic Funding') for international organisations, and Grant Facility funding mainly to non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In 2010, both of these were superseded by the Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) funding. This had the advantage of one funding decision being open to all partners, both international organisations and NGOs. This new feature is encouraging partners to work together, and improve synergies and coordination in contract management. An ERC page is available on DG ECHO's website ([1]). It contains the ERC Guidelines and shows in detail what is being funded.

Grant Facility funding is no longer operational and therefore its dedicated page on ECHO's website is to be removed. What this page showed was a more detailed overview of the Grant Facility contracts that were included under the section labelled 'humanitarian operations' until 2008. No grants were awarded in 2009.

ERC in 2010, 2011, and 2012 used EUR 5 million from the food assistance budget line for each of these years, with the rest coming from the humanitarian budget line.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/grants_contracts/capacity_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004800/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(10 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: Tratamiento de aguas en el Municipio de Arteixo (A Coruña)

Galicia es una región con una importante diversidad natural. Uno de los recursos más valiosos de la misma son sus ríos y zonas costeras. Ahora bien, el agua, además de ser un recurso natural, genera puestos de trabajo y tiene un importante valor económico para Galicia, por lo que se hace necesaria una correcta depuración y aprovechamiento de las aguas gallegas, como han reconocido ya públicamente diversos gobiernos de distintas orientaciones políticas.

En el caso concreto del Municipio de Arteixo (A Coruña, Galicia), el Gobierno anunció una inversión de 12 millones de euros para la construcción de una red de colectores secundarios y una serie de plantas de pequeñas dimensiones para el tratamiento de aguas residuales.

El proyecto recibió duras críticas y motivó diversas manifestaciones de protesta debido, entre otras cuestiones polémicas, a que los sistemas de saneamiento se instalarían en la proximidad del Lugar de Interés Comunitario (LIC) Costa da Morte, integrado en la Red Natura 2000. Además, el proyecto de sistema de saneamiento preveía que uno de los conductos desembocase cerca de una toma de agua potable en el lugar de Sisalde (Arteixo). Los residentes enviaron una carta a la Dirección General de Medio Ambiente de la Comisión Europea (con fecha de 4 de septiembre de 2006), sin obtener respuesta alguna.

En la actualidad, a pesar de las modificaciones introducidas en el proyecto, ni la red de saneamiento ni las plantas de tratamiento de aguas residuales previstas en los planes del Gobierno de Galicia se encuentran en funcionamiento, con la consiguiente contaminación de las aguas de la Playa de Barrañán y de una serie de regatos que confluyen en ese espacio natural.

— ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de la gravedad de la situación?

— ¿Dispone de información sobre la utilización de fondos europeos en este proyecto?

— ¿Qué medidas pretende tomar si se demuestra la infracción de la legislación europea en materia de medio ambiente?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de julio de 2012)

Según la información de que dispone la Comisión Europea ([1]), en los últimos años (2011) únicamente las aguas de la playa de Barrañán se han clasificado como de mala calidad.

Actualmente, la Comisión está evaluando la información recibida recientemente acerca de la aplicación de la Directiva sobre el tratamiento de las aguas residuales urbanas ([2]). Según la información publicada por las autoridades regionales ([3]) en la zona funcionan actualmente dos plantas depuradoras: Bens (destinada a tratar también la carga de Arteixo) y Barrañán, pero no se menciona ningún proyecto de construcción de nuevas plantas. Por consiguiente, la Comisión no está en condiciones de determinar la supuesta gravedad de la situación. La utilización de desagües marinos para descargar efluentes es una opción que puede ser eficaz en la protección de las aguas costeras. Todo proyecto debe ser objeto de una evaluación adecuada si su realización puede afectar a un lugar designado en la Directiva sobre hábitats ([4]). En el caso de un significativo impacto negativo y en ausencia de soluciones alternativas, el proyecto solo puede ser autorizado por razones imperiosas de interés público.

El proyecto «Red de colectores secundarios en Arteixo» es uno de los proyectos incluidos en la Decisión C(2003)898 de la Comisión (modificada en último lugar por la Decisión C(2008)2170 de la Comisión) sobre «Saneamiento y recuperación del entorno de las rías de A Coruña, O Burgo y municipios limítrofes». El proyecto ha recibido financiación del Fondo de Cohesión.

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/status-and-monitoring/state-of-bathing-water-1/bathing-water-data-viewer.
([2]) Directiva 91/271/CEE del Consejo, DO L 135 de 30.5.1991.
([3]) http://augasdegalicia.xunta.es/gl/MapaEdars.htm
([4]) Decisión 92/43/CEE del Consejo, DO L 206 de 22.7.1992.

La Comisión está siguiendo de cerca la aplicación de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia Europeo de 14 de abril de 2011 (asunto C-343/10), que en particular se refiere a algunas aglomeraciones de la región. La Comisión continuará realizando un seguimiento de la situación y adoptará las medidas que procedan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004800/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Water treatment in the municipality of Arteixo (A Coruña)

Galicia is a region with significant natural diversity. Galicia's rivers and coastal areas are among its most valuable resources. As well as being a natural resource, water creates jobs and is economically important for Galicia. It is therefore essential to ensure that Galician water is clean and used properly. This has been publicly acknowledged by several governments of different political persuasions.

In the case of the municipality of Arteixo (A Coruña, Galicia), the Government has announced a EUR 12 million investment in the construction of a network of subsidiary drains and a number of small waste water treatment plants.

This project has been heavily criticised and the subject of several protests due, among other controversial issues, to the plan to construct sewage systems near the Costa da Morte, a site of Community importance (SCI) and part of the Natura 2000 network. In addition, the sewage system plans included a pipe discharging near a drinking water source in the Sisalde area (Arteixo). Residents sent a letter to the Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment (on 4 September 2006) but did not receive a reply.

Today, despite several changes to the project, neither the sewage system nor the waste water treatment plants planned by the Galician Government are operational, resulting in water pollution at Barrañán beach and pollution of a number of streams flowing through this natural environment.

— Is the Commission aware of the seriousness of this situation?

— Does the Commission have information on the use of European funds in this project?

— What action will the Commission take if EU environmental legislation is being violated?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2012)

According to the information held by the European Commission ([1]), only the water at the beach 'Barrañán' has been classified as presenting poor quality in recent years (2011).

The Commission is at present assessing the latest information received on the implementation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive ([2]). According to the information published by the regional authorities ([3]) there are two plants currently running in the area, Bens (also intended to treat also the load from Arteixo) and Barrañán, but does not mention any new plant to be built. The Commission is therefore unable to ascertain the alleged seriousness of the situation.

The use of sea outfalls to discharge effluents is an option that can be effective to protect coastal waters. Any project must be subject to an appropriate assessment if a site designated under the Habitats Directive ([4]) is affected. In the event of significant negative impact and in the absence of alternative solutions, the project may be authorised only for imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

The project 'Red de colectores secundarios en Arteixo' is one of the projects included in the Commission Decision C(2003)898 (and modified by the last time by Commission Decision C(2008)2170) on 'Sanitation and environmental recovery of the Rias de A Coruña, O Burgo and bordering municipalities'. The project has received funding from the Cohesion Fund.

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/status-and-monitoring/state-of-bathing-water-1/bathing-water-data-viewer.
([2]) Council Directive 91/271/EEC, OJ L 135, 30.5.1991.
([3]) http://augasdegalicia.xunta.es/gl/MapaEdars.htm
([4]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

The Commission is closely following the implementation of the ruling of the European Court of Justice of 14 April 2011 (Case C-343/10), which *inter alia* concerns some agglomerations in the Region. The Commission will continue to follow the situation and will take further measures as appropriate.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004801/12
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD) e Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Ingresso dell'Italia nell'euro

Nei giorni scorsi sono state rese note alcune pesanti rivelazioni da parte di autorevoli esponenti politico-economici, tra cui spiccano quelle dell'attuale responsabile del fondo salva-Stati Efsf Klaus Regling, già capodipartimento del Ministero delle Finanze tedesco, il quale fa riferimento all'epoca dell'ingresso dell'Italia nell'euro, manifestando forti dubbi sulle reali possibilità che l'Italia avesse i criteri di convergenza prefissati per aderire da subito alla moneta unica europea.

Sono state inoltre rivelate altre autorevoli fonti tedesche, secondo cui molti sapevano che le operazioni attuate dall'Italia per sistemare i propri conti erano in realtà semplici operazioni di facciata, prive cioè di un reale impatto economico.

Secondo molti esponenti di rilievo citati, si sarebbe quindi trattato di sorvolare sulla reale stabilità finanziaria dell'Italia per superiori interessi di natura meramente politica.

Il caso «Italia» avrebbe fatto quindi da apripista per una compiacenza politica che avrebbe di lì a poco ammesso nell'euro anche la Grecia, sulla veridicità dei cui conti dell'epoca sono state sempre espresse molte perplessità.

Tuttavia la politica non può mascherare all'infinito le carenze economico-finanziarie di un paese e la crisi ha drammaticamente portato alla luce tutto questo, conducendo la Grecia sull'orlo del baratro e mettendo profondamente in crisi anche l'Italia. Probabilmente maggiore rigore e serietà avrebbero reso meno grave la situazione attuale e di questo dovrebbero rendere conto coloro che ne sono stati responsabili.

Alla luce di tutto ciò, può la Commissione approfondire la vicenda per fare luce su dichiarazioni di esponenti così importanti, alcuni dei quali addirittura con ruoli di rilievo nella gestione finanziaria europea?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(29 giugno 2012)

Il 3 maggio 1998 il Consiglio ha deciso, sulla base delle relazioni della Commissione e dell'Istituto monetario europeo, che l'Italia soddisfaceva le condizioni necessarie per l'adozione della moneta unica ([1]). In particolare, ha stabilito che l'Italia ha soddisfatto i criteri di convergenza di cui al primo, secondo e quarto trattino dell'articolo 109 J, paragrafo 1, del trattato che istituisce la Comunità europea ([2]); per quanto riguarda il criterio di cui al terzo trattino dell'articolo 109 J, paragrafo 1, la lira italiana, pur avendo aderito al meccanismo di cambio (ERM) soltanto nel novembre 1996, aveva dimostrato sufficiente stabilità nei due anni precedenti.

([1]) 98/317/CE: Decisione del Consiglio del 3 maggio 1998 a norma dell'articolo 109 J, paragrafo 4 del trattato.
([2]) Il trattato che istituisce la Comunità europea è disponibile su Internet: http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/decision-making/treaties/index_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004801/12
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD) and Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Entrance of Italy into the euro

In recent days, a number of serious revelations have been made by authoritative political and economic figures, including the current head of the State-saving EFSF Klaus Regling, a former head of department at the German Ministry of Finance, referring to the time when Italy entered the euro and expressing strong doubts about whether Italy ever truly met the pre-established convergence criteria for joining the single European currency immediately.

Other authoritative German sources have also revealed that many people knew that the operations carried out by Italy to put its accounts in order were simple window-dressing and lacked any real economic impact.

According to many of the prominent figures quoted, Italy's real financial stability was glossed over because of overriding interests of a purely political nature.

It therefore seems that Italy was the trailblazer for the political complaisance that was soon to allow Greece to join the euro, despite the doubts that have always been expressed about the accuracy of its accounts at the time.

Politics cannot however mask the economic and financial shortcomings of a country forever, and the crisis has dramatically brought all this to light, leading Greece to the brink of the abyss and plunging Italy into a profound crisis as well. Greater rigour and seriousness would probably have made the current situation less serious, and those responsible for this should be held to account.

In view of the above, can the Commission investigate these events in detail and shed light on the statements made by these prominent figures, some of whom have important positions in European financial management?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

On 3 May 1998, the Council decided on the basis of the reports from the Commission and the European Monetary Institute that Italy fulfilled the necessary conditions for the adoption of the single currency ([1]). In particular, it stipulated that Italy fulfilled the convergence criteria mentioned in the first, second and fourth indents of Article 109j(1) of the Treaty establishing the European Community ([2]) as regards the criterion mentioned in the third indent of Article 109j(1), the Italian Lira, although having rejoined the exchange-rate mechanisme (ERM) only in November 1996, had displayed sufficient stability in the two previous years.

([1]) 98/317/EC : Council Decision of 3 May 1998 in accordance with Article 109j(4) of the Treaty.
([2]) Treaty establishing the European Community to be found at: http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/decision-making/treaties/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004802/12
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Rendicontazione relativa al progetto «Zelkov@zione — Azioni urgenti per salvare la Zelkova sicula dall'estinzione» nell'ambito del Programma Life +

La Zelkova sicula è una specie forestale endemica siciliana, presente sull'isola in 300 esemplari ubicati nei territori dei comuni di Buccheri e Melilli. Per tutelare tale pianta, attualmente a rischio estinzione, la Regione Siciliana ha presentato nel 2010 un progetto denominato «Zelkov@zione — Azioni urgenti per salvare la Zelkova sicula dall'estinzione», nell'ambito del programma di finanziamento europeo Life+. Il progetto, approvato dalla Commissione, avrà una durata di cinquantaquattro mesi e ha ricevuto un contributo da parte della Commissione stessa pari al 45,21 % del costo totale.

Il beneficiario del finanziamento è il Dipartimento per l'Ambiente della Regione Siciliana, il quale ha recentemente pubblicato un bando per il valore di 150 mila euro per una consulenza esterna sul tema.

Considerando gli obiettivi del progetto «Zelkov@zione — Azioni urgenti per salvare la Zelkova sicula dall'estinzione» ed i risultati attesi dall'attuazione dello stesso, pubblicati nella compilazione annuale dei progetti approvati nell'ambito del programma Life+ per l'anno 2010;

può la Commissione far sapere:

— se sta attuando un monitoraggio delle misure poste in essere dalla Regione Siciliana per la tutela della Zelkova sicula nell'ambito del succitato progetto?

— in caso affermativo, quali azioni siano state poste in essere ad oggi per il raggiungimento degli obiettivi e dei risultati perseguiti, descritti, in relazione al progetto della Regione Siciliana, nella compilazione della Commissione per l'anno 2010?

— con particolare riferimento al bando per la consulenza esterna pubblicato dall'Assessorato all'Ambiente della Regione Siciliana, è stato esso valutato preventivamente dalla Commissione e, in caso affermativo, quale valutazione ne è stata data?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

La Commissione effettua controlli regolari sui progetti LIFE tramite un sistema di relazioni che i beneficiari devono trasmettere alla Commissione, secondo un calendario di presentazione previsto nella convenzione di sovvenzione, e con l'aiuto di un gruppo di consulenti esterni che riferisce direttamente alla Commissione.

Il progetto Zelkov@zione è stato avviato nell'ottobre 2011 e, a metà febbraio 2012, ha ricevuto la visita del consulente esterno volta a verificare l'avanzamento del progetto; successivamente è stata inviata una lettera alla Regione Siciliana — Dipartimento dell'Ambiente (beneficiario incaricato del coordinamento del progetto), contenente osservazioni sull'esito della visita.

La lettera conteneva consigli e suggerimenti intesi a migliorare l'attuazione del progetto, nonché questioni che devono essere chiarite e/o inserite nella prima relazione formale, da comunicare alla Commissione entro fine giugno 2012.

Prima della sua pubblicazione non sono state effettuate valutazioni del bando di gara lanciato recentemente dal dipartimento dell'Ambiente. Tuttavia, la documentazione della gara è sottoposta a verifica, da parte della Commissione e dai suoi consulenti esterni, al più tardi prima di eseguire il pagamento finale al beneficiario incaricato del coordinamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004802/12
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Reporting on project Zelkov@zione — Urgent actions to save *Zelkova sicula* from extinction under the LIFE+ Programme

Zelkova sicula is a woodland species endemic to Sicily. There are 300 specimens on the island, located in the municipalities of Buccheri and Melilli. In an effort to protect this plant, currently under threat of extinction, the Region of Sicily presented a project in 2010 called Zelkov@zione — Urgent actions to save *Zelkova sicula* from extinction, under the European funding programme LIFE+. The Commission-approved project will have a lifespan of 54 months and has received funding from the Commission amounting to 45.21% of the total cost.

The beneficiary, the Sicilian Department of Land and Environment, recently issued an invitation to tender for external consultancy services, the contract value being EUR 150 000.

Considering the objectives of the project and the expected results, published in the annual compilation of projects approved under the LIFE+ programme for the year 2010:

— Can the Commission say whether it is monitoring the measures being taken by the Region of Sicily for the protection of *Zelkova sicula* under the above project?

— If so, what action has been taken to date to achieve the objectives and desired results of the project in the Region of Sicily as described in the Commission's compilation for the year 2010?

— Was the Department of Land and Environment's invitation to tender for external consultancy services evaluated beforehand by the Commission and, if so, what assessment was given?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

The Commission carries out its regular monitoring of the LIFE projects through a system of reports that the beneficiaries have to send to the Commission according to the reporting schedule included in the Grant Agreement, and through the assistance of a group of external consultants, who report directly to the Commission.

The project in Zelkov@zione started in October 2011 and was visited by the external consultant mid-February 2012 to verify the project progress, upon which a letter was sent to the Regione Siciliana — Dipartimento dell' Ambiente (Coordinating Beneficiary of the project) commenting on the outcome of the visit.

The letter contained advice and suggestions on how to improve the implementation of the project, as well as issues that have to be clarified and/or included in the first formal report to be sent to the Commission, due for end June 2012.

No evaluation was made of the invitation to tender recently launched by the Dipartimento dell' Ambiente prior to its publication. However, tendering documentation is verified by the Commission and its external consultants at the latest prior to the execution of the final payment to the Coordinating Beneficiary.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004805/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 mai 2012)

Subiect: Adăugarea de lapte praf în laptele proaspăt pentru consum

Procesatorii de lapte din UE practică adăugarea de lapte praf în laptele proaspăt comercializat, în special iarna și primăvara, când producția este mai scăzută. În multe cazuri, procesatorii nu menționează acest fapt pe eticheta produsului.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze:

1. care sunt obligațiile legale ale procesatorilor în privința adăugării laptelui praf în laptele proaspăt și în privința informării consumatorilor;

2. dacă are intenția de a propune modificări ale legislației în vigoare în această privință?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloş în numele Comisiei
(12 iunie 2012)

Articolul 114 alineatul (2) din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1234/2007 (Regulamentul unic OCP) prevede că laptele destinat consumului uman nu poate fi comercializat în Uniune decât în conformitate cu anexa XIII, în care, printre altele, este definit laptele de consum și sunt menționate modificările permise, orice alte modificări fiind excluse.

Modificările permise includ modificarea conținutului în grăsimi naturale prin îndepărtarea sau adăugarea smântânii sau prin adăugarea laptelui integral, semi-degresat sau degresat, îmbogățirea laptelui cu proteine din lapte, săruri minerale sau vitamine şi reducerea conținutului de lactoză prin conversia în glucoză și galactoză. Adăugarea de lapte praf nu este permisă.

Punctul III subpunctul 2 litera (c) din anexa XIII menționată anterior prevede, de asemenea, că modificările de compoziție ale laptelui trebuie să fie indicate, fără posibilitate de ştergere, pe ambalajul produsului, astfel încât să poată fi văzute și citite cu ușurință.

Comisia nu intenționează să modifice acest aspect al legislației, care prevede norme având scopul de a garanta o calitate înaltă a laptelui de consum, corespunzătoare exigențelor consumatorilor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004805/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Adding powdered milk to fresh milk for consumption

It is current practice among milk processors in the EU to add powdered milk to fresh milk, especially that which is marketed in winter and spring when production is lower. In many cases, they omit to mention this fact on the product label.

1. Can the Commission specify the legal obligations of processors regarding the addition of powdered milk to fresh milk and regarding consumer information?

2. Does the Commission intend to propose amendments to the relevant legislation?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2012)

Article 114(2) of the single CMO Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 provides that milk intended for human consumption may only be marketed within the Union in accordance with Annex XIII which, among others, defines drinking milk and lists the modifications that are allowed, excluding all others.

Authorised modifications include the modification of the natural fat content by removal or addition of cream or the addition of whole milk, semi-skimmed milk or skimmed milk, the enrichment of milk with milk proteins, mineral salts or vitamins, and the reduction of the lactose content by conversion to glucose and galactose. The addition of milk powder is not allowed.

Point III(2)(c) of the abovementioned Annex XIII further provides that modifications in the composition of milk must be indelibly indicated on the packing of the product so that it can be easily seen and read.

The Commission does not intend to change the legislation in this respect which provides for rules aimed at guaranteeing a high quality of drinking milk in line with consumers' demand.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004806/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 mai 2012)

Subiect: Encefalopatie spongiformă bovină în SUA

Uniunea Europeană a anunțat recent că nu va interzice importurile de carne de vită din Statele Unite ale Americii și nu își va schimba modalitățile de control sanitar la vamă, chiar dacă recent a fost descoperit un caz de encefalopatie spongiformă bovină în California. Comisia este rugată să precizeze care sunt considerentele care au stat la baza acestei decizii, precum și dacă are în vedere monitorizarea în continuare a situației și reevaluarea poziției adoptate.

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(29 iunie 2012)

Cazul de ESB anunțat de către Departamentul Agriculturii din SUA la 24 aprilie 2012 constituie cel de-al patrulea caz de ESB diagnosticat în Statele Unite (inclusiv un caz din 2003 privind o vacă importată din Canada) și este primul caz înregistrat după 2006.

Confirmarea acestui nou caz de ESB în Statele Unite nu este surprinzătoare, având în vedere că anumite cazuri indigene de ESB au fost deja confirmate în această țară. În acest context, o depistare ocazională confirmă doar faptul că sistemul de supraveghere local este în măsură să detecteze cazurile de ESB. Nu ar trebui să fie interpretată ca un semn că situația sanitară s-a schimbat.

Statele Unite sunt în prezent clasificate drept țară cu un risc controlat de ESB de către Organizația Mondială pentru Sănătatea Animalelor (OIE), la fel ca si cele mai multe dintre statele membre ale UE (Danemarca, Finlanda și Suedia prezintă un risc neglijabil, iar România și Bulgaria prezintă un risc nedeterminat). Acest nou caz nu va avea niciun impact asupra clasificării Statelor Unite drept țară cu un risc controlat de ESB.

Din aceste motive, Comisia nu consideră oportun, în acest stadiu, să ia măsuri noi în ceea ce privește importul de carne de vită din Statele Unite. Importurile de carne de vită din această țară vor rămâne supuse cerințelor actuale ale UE, inclusiv eliminării materialelor cu riscuri specificate (organele sunt considerate ca fiind focarul de infecție al ESB). Respectarea acestor măsuri este verificată de către Serviciul de inspecție al Comisiei, ale cărui rapoarte sunt publicate la următoarea adresă: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004806/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Bovine spongiform encephalopathy in the United States

The European Union has recently announced that it will not ban imports of beef from the United States and will not change its health inspection procedures at customs, even though a case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy was recently discovered in California. Can the Commission give the reasons for its decision, and say whether it will continue to monitor the situation and possibly review its position?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

The BSE case announced by the US Department of Agriculture on 24 April 2012 is the fourth case of BSE diagnosed in the United States (including one in 2003 on a cow imported from Canada), and the first one since 2006.

The confirmation of this new BSE case in the United States comes as no particular surprise, considering that indigenous BSE cases have already been confirmed in this country. In such a context, an occasional finding only confirms that the local surveillance system is able to detect BSE cases. It should not be interpreted as a sign that the sanitary situation has changed.

The United States is currently listed as a country of controlled BSE risk by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), similar to most of the EU Member States (Denmark, Finland and Sweden are of negligible risk, Romania and Bulgaria of undetermined risk). This new case will have no impact on the classification of the United States as a country of controlled risk for BSE.

For these reasons, the Commission does not consider appropriate, at this stage, to take any new measure as regards the import of beef from the United States. Imports of beef from this country will remain subject to existing EU requirements, including the removal of specified risk material (the organs considered to harbour the BSE infectivity). The compliance with these measures is verified by the Commission's inspection service whose reports are published at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004807/12
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: NER300 funding for carbon capture and storage (CCS)

The NER300 funding mechanism, administered by the European Commission, will be used to fund up to 8 carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects and 34 renewable energy projects across Europe. Projects will be ranked in increasing order of cost-per-unit performance. The European Investment Bank (EIB) has performed the financial and technical due diligence assessment on the proposed projects, including their ranking, and sent this to the Commission in February 2012. The Commission will make award decisions, based on this ranking, in the second half of 2012.

It is unclear if the environmental impacts of CCS projects have been adequately considered in the EIB's due diligence assessment. Furthermore, it is unclear how environmental impacts will be taken into account by the Commission prior to making award decisions. One of the UK CCS projects, at Hunterston in Scotland, would cause direct damage to a nationally designated site, and the Scottish Government's statutory nature conservation adviser has raised serious concerns regarding the potential for impacts on Natura 2000 sites from the Hunterston development.

1. Will the Commission make the results of the EIB's assessment of the potential environmental impact of CCS projects carried out as part of the due diligence assessment performed by the EIB for the NER300 funding competition available to the public?

2. How will the Commission, prior to awards of funding through the NER300 funding competition, take account of the potential environmental impact of CCS projects which have passed the EIB's due diligence assessment?

3. Would the Commission consider an award of funding through the NER300 funding competition to projects which may have an adverse impact on a Natura site?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

The Hunterston CCS project referred to in the question was withdrawn from the NER300 competition on 5 July 2012. It will hence not be awarded any funding under the first call for proposals of the NER300 funding programme.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004809/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Επιπτώσεις στις ευρωπαϊκές επιχειρήσεις από τους περιορισμούς εξαγωγών και τις τεχνητά υψηλές τιμές που επιβάλλει η Κίνα στις σπάνιες γαίες

Τον Μάρτιο, η ΕΕ, οι ΗΠΑ και η Ιαπωνία προσέφυγαν εναντίον της Κίνας ενώπιον του Παγκόσμιου Οργανισμού Εμπορίου για τους κινεζικούς περιορισμούς στις εξαγωγές σπάνιων γαιών που παραβιάζουν κανόνες του διεθνούς εμπορίου. Περιορισμοί που βλάπτουν τους παραγωγούς και τους καταναλωτές στην ΕΕ, ιδίως σε ό,τι έχει να κάνει με εφαρμογές υψηλής τεχνολογίας και ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

— Σε ποια φάση βρίσκεται η υπόθεση ενώπιον του Παγκόσμιου Οργανισμού Εμπορίου;

— Τι στοιχεία διαθέτει για τις δυσκολίες και επιβαρύνσεις που αντιμετωπίζουν οι ευρωπαϊκές βιομηχανίες λόγω των ελλείψεων σπάνιων γαιών και των τεχνητά υψηλών τιμών που επιβάλλει η Κίνα;

— Σε τι ενέργειες θα προβεί η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή προκειμένου να προστατεύσει τα συμφέροντα των ευρωπαϊκών εταιρειών;

— Τι σκοπεύει να κάνει για να ενισχύσει τις δυνατότητες αξιοποίησης πηγών σπάνιων γαιών που διαθέτουμε εντός της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. De Gucht εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουλίου 2012)

Η ΕΕ διεξήγαγε διαβουλεύσεις με την Κίνα σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό στις 25 και 26 Απριλίου 2012. Δυστυχώς, οι διαβουλεύσεις δεν κατάληξαν σε αμοιβαία ικανοποιητική λύση. Επομένως, η Επιτροπή δεν θεωρεί ότι υπάρχει άλλη επιλογή από τη μετάβαση στο επόμενο στάδιο της διαδικασίας ενώπιον του Παγκόσμιου Οργανισμού Εμπορίου, δηλαδή τη σύσταση ειδικής ομάδας.

Ο ποσοτικός προσδιορισμός της οικονομικής επίπτωσης για την ευρωπαϊκή βιομηχανία είναι δύσκολος διότι οι αλυσίδες αξίας που βασίζονται στη χρήση σπάνιων γαιών είναι πολλές, πολύπλοκες και έχουν παγκόσμια διάσταση. Η Επιτροπή έλαβε πολλές καταγγελίες από ενωσιακές επιχειρήσεις σχετικά με τις δυσκολίες που αντιμετωπίζουν όσον αφορά την έλλειψη ασφαλούς και οικονομικά προσιτής πρόσβασης σε εισροές σπάνιων γαιών — συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ανάγκης να αυξήσουν τις τιμές των προϊόντων τους, να μετεγκατασταθούν ή και να διακόψουν ορισμένες από τις δραστηριότητές τους.

Εκτός από τις τρέχουσες δικαστικές διαδικασίες, η Επιτροπή συνεχίζει τις προσπάθειές της για την προστασία των συμφερόντων των ευρωπαϊκών επιχειρήσεων μέσω των διαφόρων αξόνων πολιτικής. Στον εμπορικό τομέα, η ΕΕ επιδιώκει, μεταξύ άλλων, να εξασφαλίσει, μέσω της επενδυτικής πολιτικής της, να απολαμβάνουν οι ενωσιακοί παράγοντες δίκαιους όρους συμμετοχής σε νέα έργα παραγωγής σε χώρες στις οποίες βρίσκονται αποθέματα σπάνιων γαιών και να θεσπίσει ικανοποιητικούς κανόνες για την πρόσβαση σε πρώτες ύλες στις συμφωνίες ελεύθερου εμπορίου για τις οποίες η ΕΕ πραγματοποιεί ή θα πραγματοποιήσει διαπραγματεύσεις.

Στην ΕΕ, στο πλαίσιο του 7ου προγράμματος-πλαισίου για την έρευνα και την τεχνολογική ανάπτυξη, η Επιτροπή επίσης προωθεί και υποστηρίζει την έρευνα με σκοπό την ανάπτυξη νέων τεχνολογιών και εξοπλισμού εξόρυξης, την ενθάρρυνση της ανακύκλωσης και την εξεύρεση υποκατάστατων για τις σπάνιες γαίες για ειδικές εφαρμογές.

Επίσης, η Επιτροπή εκπονεί πρόταση για τη δρομολόγηση εταιρικής σχέσης για την καινοτομία σε σχέση με τις πρώτες ύλες βάσει της εμβληματικής πρωτοβουλίας για την Ένωση Καινοτομίας στο πλαίσιο της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004809/12
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Impacts on European businesses of the export restrictions and artificially inflated prices imposed by China on rare earth metals

In March, the EU, the US and Japan filed a case against China at the World Trade Organisation regarding Chinese restrictions on exports of rare earth metals which breach international trade rules. Such restrictions are harming producers and consumers in the EU, especially as regards high-tech and renewable energy applications.

Given the above, will the Commission say:

— What stage has the case at the World Trade Organisation reached?

— What data is available on the difficulties and charges faced by European industries because of the lack of rare earth metals and the artificially inflated prices imposed by China?

— What action does the Commission intend to take to protect European companies' interests?

— What does it intend to do to increase the possibilities of exploiting the sources of rare earth metals available in the EU?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

The EU held consultations with China on the matter on 25 and 26 April 2012. Unfortunately, the consultations did not lead to a mutual satisfactory solution. In this light, the Commission sees no other option but to move to the next stage in World Trade Organisation proceedings, i.e. the establishment of a panel.

The quantification of the economic impact for European industry is difficult because the value chains relying on rare earths' use are numerous, complex, and of a global dimension. The Commission has received numerous complaints from EU businesses about their difficulties related to the lack of secure and affordable access to rare earths inputs — including the necessity to raise the prices of their products, or to relocate — or even cease — some of their operations.

Besides its current legal action, the Commission continues to make all efforts to protect European companies' interests through its various policy strands. In the trade sphere, the EU is, among others, striving to ensure through its investment policy that EU operators enjoy fair conditions of participation in new production projects in countries where rare earths reserves are located and to enshrine adequate rules on access to raw materials in the free trade agreements the EU is or will be negotiating.

Within the EU, under the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, the Commission also promotes and supports research in order to develop new mining technologies and equipment, to foster recycling and to find substitutes to rare earths for specific applications.

The Commission is also preparing a proposal to launch an Innovation Partnership on raw materials within the Europe 2020 Flagship on Innovation Union.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004811/12
à la Commission
Brice Hortefeux (PPE)
(10 mai 2012)

Objet: Prise en compte du risque incendie dans la réglementation européenne

Nous connaissons les risques liés aux catastrophes naturelles, pour lesquels un fonds spécial d'indemnisation est prévu. En revanche, nous connaissons peu les risques liés aux incendies dans les bâtiments. Pourtant, avec le développement de nouveaux matériaux et de nouvelles technologies, le risque incendie dans les bâtiments s'est considérablement accru et a des conséquences économiques et sociales qui sont sous-estimées. Selon l'Association Geneva, 50 % des entreprises qui ont subi un incendie font faillite dans les trois années qui suivent.

La sécurité incendie n'est pas un sujet mineur, tant du point de vue environnemental qu'économique et social. Il n'existe pourtant pas de réglementation spécifique européenne en la matière, à l'exception d'une recommandation du Conseil adoptée le 22 décembre 1986 concernant la sécurité des hôtels existants contre les risques d'incendie.

Quant aux réglementations nationales, elles diffèrent d'un pays à l'autre, ce qui se traduit par des écarts profonds en matière de normes de prévention des incendies. Enfin, la législation européenne, notamment la directive relative aux performances énergétiques des bâtiments, aura nécessairement des conséquences sur les caractéristiques de réaction et de résistance aux incendies dans les bâtiments.

— Dans ce contexte, la Commission pourrait-elle nous indiquer si elle envisage d'aborder ce sujet? Dans l'affirmative, envisage-t-elle de commander une étude statistique se fondant sur les données nationales en matière d'incendie, qui permettrait de dresser un diagnostique précis des mesures de prévention des incendies dans les États membres?

— Envisage-t-elle de proposer une nouvelle réglementation afin d'actualiser la recommandation de 1986?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission européenne
(11 juillet 2012)

La sécurité des bâtiments est une responsabilité des États membres. La sécurité incendie peut notamment s'appuyer sur la classification européenne harmonisée de la résistance et de la réaction au feu des produits de construction, élaborée au niveau européen dans le cadre de la directive sur les produits de construction [directive 89/106/CEE, abrogée par le règlement (UE) nº 305/2011 sur les produits de construction ([1])]. La Commission n'envisage donc pas de commander une étude visant à recenser les mesures de prévention des incendies en vigueur dans les États membres.

Des travaux techniques ont été engagés dans l'optique d'un éventuel réexamen de la recommandation du Conseil de 1986 sur la sécurité des hôtels existants contre les risques d'incendie.

([1]) JO L 88 du 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004811/12
to the Commission
Brice Hortefeux (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Recognition of fire safety issues in EU rules

We all know about the risks linked to natural disasters, for which there is a special compensation fund set aside. However, not enough is known the risks linked to fires in buildings. Yet, with the development of new materials and technologies, the risk of fire in buildings has increased considerably and has economic and social consequences that are underestimated. According to the Geneva Association, 50% of businesses which have suffered a fire go bankrupt within the following three years.

Fire safety is a major environmental, economic and social issue. However, aside from the Council Recommendation of 22 December 1986 on fire safety in existing hotels (86/666/EEC), there are no specific European rules governing this issue.

National regulations differ from one country to another, which means that there are wide disparities in fire prevention standards. Furthermore, European legislation, in particular the directive on the energy performance of buildings, will necessarily continue to have consequences concerning the reaction to fire performance and fire resistance of materials used in buildings.

— Can the Commission say whether it intends to address this issue? If so, does it plan to commission a statistical study based on national fire statistics, which would enable a precise assessment of fire prevention measures in the Member States?

— Does it plan to propose a new regulation with a view to updating the 1986 Recommendation?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The safety of buildings falls under the responsibility of Member States. Fire safety aspects can rely notably on harmonised European classes for resistance to fire and fire performance for construction products which have been developed at EU level under the framework of the Construction Products Directive (89/106/EEC, now replaced by the Construction Products Regulation 305/2011/EU ([1])). Under these circumstances the Commission does not intend to launch a study identifying the fire prevention measures in the Member States.

Technical work is currently ongoing for a possible review the Council Recommendation of 1986 on fire safety in existing hotels.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004812/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Accountability in the new Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II)

According to a UK Government briefing paper published on 23 April 2012, there is no mention of evaluating the progress of candidate countries using a 'three-tier system' even though consultations included with the proposed IPA Regulation recommended assessing progress relative to the path to accession, national strategies and achieving results at the level of programmes, sectors and measures.

Can the Commission please explain why an important accountability measure such as this was not included in the proposed IPA Regulation?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2012)

The Commission proposal for a regulation on the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) ([1]) was submitted to Parliament and Council in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure. Relevant committees in both branches of the legislature are currently considering the proposal.

As the Explanatory Memorandum of the proposal mentions, one of the results of the stakeholders consultations carried out during the drafting process was the support for the adoption of a 'three-tier approach' to monitoring and evaluation.

In line with this conclusion, the importance given to monitoring and evaluation processes as a major part of the overall accountability principle is indeed reinforced throughout the current Commission proposal. For instance, in Article 2 — Specific Objective, par. 2, it is clearly stipulated that progress of beneficiary countries towards achievement of IPA specific objectives shall be assessed through indicators which shall also be used for monitoring, evaluation and review of performance, as appropriate.

Moreover, for a successful adoption of the 'three-tier approach', further and more detailed provisions concerning monitoring and evaluation are foreseen . Thus, in accordance with Articles 7, 10 and 11 of the IPA II Regulation proposal, the IPA II Implementing Rules will provide for the additional regulatory framework.

([1]) COM(2011) 838 final, 7.12.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004813/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: IPA funding to Turkey and Iceland

According to a UK Government briefing paper published on 23 April 2012, Iceland is due to receive EUR 6.0 million in 2013, whereas Turkey has been allocated EUR 935.5 million.

Can the Commission please detail why there is such an enormous difference between the funding for the two candidate countries, especially because Turkey has been receiving pre-accession funding since before the current IPA system of pre-accession funding was established?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

Under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) ([1]), the envisaged indicative funds allocated to Iceland and Turkey in 2013 are EUR 6 million and EUR 935.5 million respectively. These allocations were presented by the Commission to Parliament and the Council in the revised IPA multi-annual indicative financial framework (MIFF) for 2012-2013 ([2]).

The allocation of IPA funds to beneficiary countries is done on the basis of objective and transparent criteria which include, *inter alia*, needs assessment, absorption capacity, respect of conditionalities and capacity of management.

With regards to needs, the volume and type of assistance that Iceland requires to prepare for the implementation of the *acquis* cannot be compared to that of other enlargement countries. The degree of its alignment with EU legislation achieved through its membership in the European Economic Area as well as its level of economic and social development are notably different from that in other countries. On the other hand, the volume of pre-accession assistance required to help Turkey prepare for the implementation of the *acquis* and meet the Copenhagen criteria is considerable.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.
([2]) COM(2011) 641 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004814/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Private pension regulation

Can the Commission state if there is an EU regulation on private pension schemes? If so, can the Commission please provide details of such a regulation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2012)

There are a number of pieces of EU legislation which can apply to private pension schemes depending on the nature of the particular pension scheme and the circumstances. These include:

— Directive 2003/41/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 June 2003 on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision.

— Directive 2008/94/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2008 on the protection of employees in the event of the insolvency of their employer.

— Council Directive 98/49/EC of 29 June 1998 on safeguarding the supplementary pension rights of employed and self-employed persons moving within the Community.

The Commission Staff Working Document ([1]) published alongside the Pensions Green Paper has full details of the EU legislative framework on pensions.

([1]) SEC(2010) 830 final: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2010:0830:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004816/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Veleno di animali come medicina del futuro

Il loro veleno è altamente tossico e può anche essere letale, ma al tempo stesso può rappresentare la salvezza di molti malati. Da vipere, scorpioni, lumache, cobra, lucertole e anemoni di mare molti scienziati hanno ricavato farmaci per patologie gravi come il cancro, la sclerosi multipla o l'ipertensione. A illustrare il doppio volto di questi animali è una rivista americana. Ad esempio il veleno delle vipere è stato la base dei farmaci per l'ipertensione e contiene un peptide tossico che può inibire selettivamente l'azione dell'enzima di conversione dell'angiotensina che influisce sulla regolazione della pressione sanguigna. Nel 1975 è stato ricavato un farmaco sintetico simile al peptide del veleno di vipera, capostipite dei farmaci ace-inibitori.

Il veleno dello scorpione giallo, nativo del Nord Africa e Medio Oriente, è utile invece contro il cancro. Nel suo pungiglione c'è la clorotossina, che si attacca alle cellule tumorali, ignorando quelle sane, e su cui si può caricare un radioisotopo da rilasciare dentro il tumore. Dal cobra invece si ricava la cobratossina, utile per fermare l'avanzata di sclerosi multipla e HIV, mentre nei mari caraibici c'è un anemone di mare, Stichodactyla helianthus, le cui tossine sono studiate per trattare la sclerosi multipla e altre malattie autoimmuni, come l'artrite reumatoide e il diabete di tipo I.

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

1. Se ci sono ricerche recenti sui veleni degli animali utilizzati come medicine finanziate nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ)?

2. Se ci sono medicinali ricavati dal veleno di animali, distribuiti in Stati membri, che hanno ricevuto l'autorizzazione dell'Agenzia europea per i medicinali (EMA) che coordina la valutazione scientifica della qualità, sicurezza ed efficacia dei prodotti farmaceutici?

3. Se non intende approfondire la ricerca summenzionata al fine di migliorare la salute e la sicurezza dei cittadini?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è consapevole degli attuali sforzi intrapresi per utilizzare i composti bioattivi ottenuti da veleni come potenziale diagnostico o approccio terapeutico nella lotta contro il cancro e altre malattie ([1]). La clorotossina ha dimostrato efficacia sul cancro, nei modelli animali e nella fase iniziale delle prove cliniche.

1. Nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ; 2007-2013 ([2])) la Commissione sostiene il progetto VENOMICS — Venoms per la salute ([3]) (6 milioni di EUR), destinato a utilizzare i composti del veleno degli animali per sviluppo di nuove sostanze terapeutiche. Analogamente, il progetto CONOTOX ([4]) si occupa del potenziale della tossina del veleno della chiocciola di mare del genere *Conus*, per il trattamento dei disturbi neurologici.

2. Non vi è alcuna autorizzazione per l'immissione in commercio di un medicinale derivante da un veleno animale concessa dalla Commissione tramite la procedura centralizzata.

3. La proposta della Commissione per Orizzonte 2020 — il programma quadro per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-1220) ([5]), individua in «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere» una delle sei sfide da affrontare e che offrirà probabilmente opportunità per la ricerca sulla terapia del cancro e di altre gravi malattie croniche. È ancora troppo presto per stabilire quali potrebbero essere i temi di ricerca specifici.

([1]) http://www.newscientist.com/special/venom.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([3]) Transcriptomica e peptidomica ad alta prestazione del veleno animale per la scoperta di nuovi peptidi terapeutici e lo sviluppo di farmaci innovativi; http://www.venomics.eu/.
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/102615_en.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004816/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Animal venom as a medicine of the future

The venom of certain animals is highly toxic and can even be lethal, but may also be the salvation of many sick people. Scientists have extracted medicines for serious diseases such as cancer, multiple sclerosis or hypertension from the venom of snakes, scorpions, snails, cobras, lizards and sea anemones. An American magazine has illustrated the dual nature of these animals: snake venom, for example, has been used in hypertension drugs and contains a toxic peptide that may selectively inhibit the action of the angiotensin-converting enzyme that affects blood pressure regulation. In 1975, a synthetic drug was created that was similar to the snake venom peptide and was the first ACE-inhibitor drug.

The venom of the yellow scorpion, a native of North Africa and the Middle East, may be used against cancer. The scorpion's sting contains chlorotoxin, which attaches to tumour cells, ignoring the healthy cells, and may be loaded with a radioisotope to be released into the tumour. Cobras produce cobratoxin, which is useful in arresting the progress of multiple sclerosis and HIV, while in the Caribbean seas, the *Stichodactyla helianthus* sea anemone contains toxins which are being studied for the treatment of multiple sclerosis and other auto-immune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and type I diabetes.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether studies on animal venoms used as medicine have been carried out recently as part of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7)?

2. Whether any medicines derived from animal venom and distributed in Member States have received authorisation from the European Medicines Agency, the body that coordinates the scientific evaluation of the quality, safety and efficacy of pharmaceutical products?

3. Whether it intends to further the above research with a view to improving public health and safety?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of current efforts undertaken on bioactive compounds obtained from venom as a potential diagnostic and/or therapeutic approach for the alleviation of cancer and other diseases ([1]). In cancer, chlorotoxin has demonstrated efficacy in animal models and early phase clinical trials.

1. As part of the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7; 2007-2013 ([2])) the Commission is supporting the project Venomics — Venoms for Health ([3]) (EUR 6 million), aimed at exploiting animal venom compounds for the development of novel therapeutics. Similarly, the project Conotox ([4]) investigates the potential of venom toxin of the marine cone snail, genus Conus, for the treatment of neurological disorders.

2. There is no marketing authorisation for a medicinal product derived from an animal venom granted by the Commission via the centralised procedure.

3. The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-1220) ([5]) identifies 'Health, demographic change and well-being' as one of the six societal challenges to be tackled, likely to provide opportunities for research on the treatment of cancer and other major chronic diseases. It is yet too premature to ascertain which could be the specific research issues addressed.

([1]) http://www.newscientist.com/special/venom.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([3]) High-throughput peptidomics and transcriptomics of animal venoms for discovery of novel therapeutic peptides and innovative drug development; http://www.venomics.eu/.
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/102615_en.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004817/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Sequestro di alimenti

Le forze dell'ordine di Venezia, Vicenza e Padova hanno sequestrato oltre 130 tonnellate di alimenti avariati. Dopo specifiche attività d'intelligence, hanno individuato grandi quantità di prodotti di origine animale (carne e pesce) freschi, surgelati e congelati non più idonei all'alimentazione umana perché scaduti, ossidati, disidratati e con etichettatura contraffatta destinabili esclusivamente come sottoprodotto per mangime animale, ma che alcuni operatori senza scrupoli immettevano fraudolentemente in commercio con grave rischio per la salute dei consumatori.

Otto responsabili sono stati denunciati per commercio di alimentari contraffatti e frode in commercio; sette lavoratori in nero sono stati trovati in uno stabilimento che operava senza autorizzazione. Nei confronti dei responsabili sono state avviate anche indagini fiscali per quantificare i proventi delle attività illecite e colpirli anche sul piano patrimoniale.

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

1. Se è a conoscenza del blitz delle forze dell'ordine dell'Italia settentrionale?

2. Ci sono casi simili a quelli riscontrati in Italia per i quali è stata contattata la rete dei Centri europei dei consumatori (ECC-Net)?

3. Se l'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario, che controlla i singoli impianti di produzione alimentare, ha riscontrato incoerenze tra gli strumenti utilizzati dai governi degli Stati membri per controllare i rispettivi produttori di alimenti e le norme di sicurezza alimentare volute dall'UE?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(4 luglio 2012)

1. No, la Commissione non è stata informata delle incursioni cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato.

2. Tutti i casi simili aventi implicazioni per la sicurezza alimentare a livello dell'UE dovrebbero essere notificati dagli Stati membri per il tramite del sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi (RASFF) piuttosto che di ECC-NET.

3. L'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario (UAV) ha effettuato audit regolari negli Stati membri, anche negli ambiti dei sottoprodotti animali e dell'igiene alimentare. Questi audit valutano le prestazioni delle autorità competenti in relazione alla loro capacità di realizzare controlli, e non tanto singoli impianti di produzione alimentare. I risultati degli audit mettono in luce le incoerenze e le differenze di approccio tra gli Stati membri aventi in certi casi implicazioni per la sicurezza alimentare. Questi casi sono all'occorrenza oggetto di un follow-up per assicurare che gli Stati membri interessati attuino interventi correttivi per affrontare i rischi identificati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004817/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Seizure of food

Law-enforcement agencies in Venice, Vicenza and Padua have seized more than 130 tonnes of spoiled food. Targeted investigations have uncovered large quantities of fresh, deep-frozen and frozen animal products (meat and fish) which were no longer suitable for human consumption because they had passed their sell-by date, had oxidised, had become dehydrated or bore counterfeit labelling. Although they were marketable only as by-products for use in animal feed, they were being fraudulently sold by unscrupulous traders, creating a serious health risk for consumers.

Eight of those responsible have been charged with trading in counterfeit food and fraud; in the course of the raids, seven illegal workers were discovered in a plant operating without a licence. Tax investigations have also been launched against those responsible in order to quantify the proceeds of their illegal activities and hold them financially accountable.

In view of the above, could the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of the raids carried out by law-enforcement agencies in northern Italy?

2. Whether the network of European Consumer Centres (ECC-Net) has been contacted about other cases similar to those brought to light in Italy?

3. Whether the Food and Veterinary Office, which is responsible for scrutinising individual food production plants, has identified inconsistencies between the national instruments used by Member State governments to monitor food producers and EU food safety standards?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2012)

1. No, the Commission has not been informed of the raids referred to by the Honourable Member.

2. Any similar cases which have implications for food safety at EU level should be notified by Member States through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) rather than the ECC-NET.

3. The Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) carried out regular audits in the Member States, including in the areas of animal by-products and food hygiene. These audits target the performance of the Competent Authorities in relation to their implementation of controls, rather than individual food production establishments. The outcomes of the audits highlight inconsistencies and differences in approach between Member States which in certain cases has implications for food safety. These are followed up where necessary in order to ensure that corrective actions are taken by the Member States concerned to address the risks involved.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004818/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Conflitto per la terra mette in pericolo la pace in Uganda

Solo pochi mesi dopo che la pace è stata restaurata nell'Uganda del Nord in seguito agli scontri fra l'Esercito di Resistenza del Signore (LRA) e le Forze di Difesa del Popolo dell'Uganda (UPDF), conflitti sulla terra all'interno delle comunità e la ripartizione della terra per la coltivazione fra investitori privati potrebbero minacciare la pace. Finora nel 2012 almeno cinque persone sono state uccise in conflitti violenti per la terra nei villaggi di Lakang, Apar e Pabbo nel distretto del nord di Amuru. Altre due persone sono state uccise alla fine del 2011 nel vicino distretto di Nwoya. Al momento, le comunità Acholi e Langi del distretto di Pader, nel nord, sono in conflitto per la terra ancestrale nei villaggi di Acwinyo e Lamincwida. Sebbene le due comunità non siano armate, da tempo c'è ostilità tra loro.

Demarcazioni di confine incerte come alberi e sassi di segnalazione, che possono essere andati persi o spostati nel corso degli anni di conflitto, hanno inasprito i conflitti per la terra, cosi come la presenza di una popolazione regionale giovane, dell'età media di quattordici anni per le ragazze e tredici per i ragazzi. La terra nel nord Uganda è posseduta per diritto consuetudinario. La mancanza di documenti ufficiali di proprietà della terra è uno dei motivi per cui le persone temono di perderla. Attualmente il governo sta distribuendo certificati di proprietà consuetudinaria in parti della regione ma questo provoca reazioni differenti.

Alla luce di quanto più sopra esposto, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere:

1. Se l'UE non ritiene di dover coadiuvare l'azione del governo dell'Uganda al fine di prevenire il conflitto?

2. Se è in contatto con la delegazione europea in Uganda per assicurarsi che sia rispettato il diritto internazionale umanitario e continuare a promuovere il rispetto della democrazia, dello Stato di diritto e dei diritti umani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2012)

La promozione del rispetto della democrazia, dello Stato di diritto e dei diritti umani, nonché del diritto umanitario internazionale e la prevenzione di conflitti rappresentano il fulcro della politica estera dell'Unione. Attraverso la sua delegazione in Uganda, l'UE mantiene un dialogo politico costante con il governo del paese al fine di promuovere tali obiettivi.

Per quanto riguarda l'Uganda settentrionale, tutti i partner dello sviluppo nel paese, compresa l'Unione europea, hanno deciso di coordinare la loro strategia di intervento attraverso il piano di pace, ripresa e sviluppo per l'Uganda del Nord (PRDP). La prima fase del PRDP è stata attuata nel periodo 2009-2012, mentre la seconda sarà realizzata nel 2012-2015. Considerando che la revisione intermedia di tale programma ha identificato le dispute territoriali come una delle due cause principali dei conflitti, il PRDP2 ha introdotto un nuovo settore del programma in materia di «amministrazione della proprietà fondiaria», che si concentra sui meccanismi alla base delle dispute territoriali e sulla sensibilizzazione al diritto fondiario e di proprietà. Tale programma sarà in particolare finalizzato a rafforzare la capacità di rilevamento topografico del distretto, fornire sostegno nei meccanismi di risoluzione dei conflitti territoriali e sviluppare la conoscenza dell'attuale diritto fondiario.

Recentemente l'UE ha inoltre fornito sostegno in materia di diritto fondiario agli sfollati all'interno del paese, soprattutto alle donne, ad esempio attraverso il progetto «Consulenza informativa e assistenza legale per gli sfollati interni».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004818/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Land dispute threatens peace in Uganda

Only a few months after peace was restored in northern Uganda following clashes between the Lord's Resistance Army and the Uganda People's Defence Force, that peace could be threatened by land disputes within communities and the allocation of land to private investors for farming. So far in 2012, at least five people have been killed in violent land disputes in the villages of Lakang, Apar and Pabbo in the northern district of Amuru. Two others were killed in late 2011 in the nearby district of Nwoya. The Acholi and Langi communities in the Pader district in the north of the country are currently in dispute over ancestral land in the villages of Acwinyo and Lamincwida. Although the two communities are not armed, there has long been hostility between them.

Unclear border demarcations, such as trees and stone markers, which may have been lost or moved during the years of conflict, have exacerbated land disputes, as has the presence of a youthful regional population with an average age of 14 for females and 13 for males. Land in northern Uganda is held under customary tenure. The lack of official land ownership documents is one of the reasons why people fear losing their land. The government is currently issuing customary ownership certificates in parts of the region, but this is drawing mixed reactions.

In view of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative state:

1. whether the EU should not assist the Ugandan Government in its efforts to head off conflict?

2. whether she is staying in contact with the EU delegation in Uganda with a view to ensuring compliance with international humanitarian law and continuing to promote respect for democracy, the rule of law and human rights?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

Promoting respect for democracy, rule of law and human rights, as well as international humanitarian law and the prevention of conflicts are at the core of the EU's foreign policy. Through its delegation in Uganda, the EU has a regular political dialogue with the government of Uganda to promote these objectives.

As regards northern Uganda, all development partners in Uganda, including the European Union, have agreed to coordinate their strategy of intervention through the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP). The first phase of PRDP was implemented during the period 2009-2012, and the second will take place in 2012-2015. As the mid-term review of this programme identified land disputes as one of the two main conflict drivers, PRDP2 introduced a new Programme Area on 'District Land Administration', focusing on land dispute mechanisms and sensitisation on land laws & ownership. In particular, it will aim to strengthen district capacity for surveying, support land dispute settlement mechanisms, and increase awareness of the current land laws.

In addition, the EU has provided in the recent past direct support to land rights for former Internally Displaced People (IDPs), in particular for women: one example was the project 'Information counselling and legal assistance for IDPs'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004819/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Vernice cattura-luce sui vetri

Non conosce limiti la ricerca sulle potenziali alternative al petrolio per produrre energia e da Boston si fa strada l'ipotesi che si possa produrre energia dai vetri delle finestre di una casa. Alcuni ricercatori hanno effettuato una sperimentazione per mettere a punto e diffondere un sistema per generare energia solare impiegando vetri domestici in sostituzione delle celle fotovoltaiche al silicio.

Ci lavorano dal 2008 ma ora i tempi sono maturi: un team di scienziati, anziché cercare di costruire celle fotovoltaiche migliori, ha pensato a come far arrivare più luce a quelle di cui si dispone.

Si tratta di impiegare su scala minore una tecnica largamente usata in diverse centrali solari termodinamiche che sfruttano la forza del sole raccogliendola attraverso grandi specchi parabolici e trasformandola in calore.

L'équipe ha realizzato una vernice trasparente in materiale organico che, applicata sulle superfici dei vetri, è in grado di catalizzare la luce e integrarla al loro interno. Il vetro ha la funzione di una grande lastra di fibra ottica che convoglia la luce verso l'esterno e la trasforma in energia mediante cellule fotovoltaiche disposte lungo la cornice. Presto ogni finestra di casa potrebbe diventare una fonte di elettricità.

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

1. Se è a conoscenza della nuova ricerca e se non la ritiene una possibilità per raggiungere gli obiettivi di Energia 2020?

2. Quali paesi europei, tra gli Stati candidati e Stati possibili candidati, sono ad oggi in grado di garantire il rispetto dell'acquis comunitario in materia di energia, elemento indispensabile alla conclusione del processo di adesione?

Risposta di Guenther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(2 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è al corrente dell'attività di ricerca alla quale si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare. Il prototipo di celle solari in parola rientra nella categoria delle celle solari organiche le quali impiegano composti del carbonio come strato attivo. Nell'ambito del 7° PQ, la Commissione sostiene progetti di ricerca nel settore fotovoltaico biologico quali il progetto *MOLESOL* (fili molecolari utilizzati per il trasferimento di carica nelle celle solari a film sottili a coloranti organici) e il progetto *PEPDIODE* (diodi a base di peptidi per le celle solari).

Il settore del fotovoltaico «biologico» è un'area promettente della ricerca che potrebbe essere finanziata nell'ambito del programma UE Horizon 2020 (che sostituirà il 7° PQ).

Per quanto riguarda il quesito relativo a quali paesi europei — candidati e possibili candidati — siano ad oggi in grado di garantire il rispetto dell'acquis UE in materia di energia, elemento indispensabile alla conclusione del processo di adesione, solo la Croazia ha concluso in via provvisoria i negoziati sul capitolo energia. Ciò può essere considerato la migliore indicazione di una garanzia di rispetto dell'acquis comunitario in materia di energia. I negoziati sul capitolo energia con l'Islanda sono stati avviati ma la Commissione non può prevedere la data della loro possibile conclusione. I negoziati con tutti gli altri paesi candidati e potenziali candidati non sono ancora iniziati sul capitolo energia (Turchia) o non hanno nemmeno avuto inizio (tutti gli altri).

A prescindere da eventuali negoziati di adesione, la Commissione sta anche aiutando paesi membri della Comunità dell'energia quali i Balcani occidentali, l'Ucraina e la Moldavia a mettere a punto il proprio quadro giuridico e normativo in base all'acquis UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004819/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Light-capturing paint on window panes

Research into potential alternatives to oil for producing energy knows no bounds, and work carried out in Boston is now pointing to the possibility of energy being produced from the glass in house windows. Researchers have carried out an experiment aimed at developing and marketing a system for generating solar energy using domestic glazing in place of silicon photovoltaic cells.

Work has being going on in this area since 2008, but there has now been a breakthrough: instead of trying to build better photovoltaic cells, a team of scientists has been looking at how to channel more light into the cells that are currently available.

This involves using, on a smaller scale, a technique that is widely employed in solar thermal power plants, which use large parabolic mirrors to concentrate sunlight and transform it into heat.

The team has created a transparent paint using organic materials, which, when applied to glass surfaces, is able to collect sunlight. The glass works like a large fibre-optic sheet, directing the light towards its edges, where it is converted into energy by photovoltaic cells installed around the frame. This means that any house window could soon become a source of electricity.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the new research and whether it believes that it might help to achieve the Energy 2020 goals?

2. which of the candidate countries and potential candidate countries are today able to guarantee that they will comply with the EU *acquis* in the energy field, which is an essential requirement for completing the accession process?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the research activity indicated by the Honourable Member. The prototypic solar cell referred to belongs to the organic photovoltaic class of cells, meaning devices using a carbon-based compound as active layer. The Commission supports, under the 7th FP, organic photovoltaic research projects, such as *MOLESOL* (Molecular-wire charge transfer platform for thin film dye-sensitised solar cells) and *PEPDIODE* (Peptide-based diodes for solar cells).

Organic photovoltaic is a promising area of research that could be supported under the EU Horizon 2020 programme (the successor of the 7th FP).

As to which candidate and potential candidate countries are currently able to guarantee that they will comply with the EU *acquis* in the energy field, which is an essential requirement for completing the accession process, only Croatia has provisionally closed negotiations on the energy chapter. This can be taken as the best indication of a guarantee of compliance with the EU *acquis* in the energy field. Negotiations on the energy chapter with Iceland have opened, but the Commission cannot indicate when they could be closed. Negotiations with all other candidate countries and potential candidates have either not begun on the energy chapter (Turkey) or not opened at all (all the others).

Independently of any accession negotiations, the Commission is also helping members of the Energy Community (such as the western Balkans, Ukraine and Moldova) to develop their legal and regulatory frameworks on the basis of the EU *acquis*.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-004820/12
till kommissionen
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(10 maj 2012)

Angående: Vissa livsmedelstillsatsers negativa effekt på barn

En studie publicerad i *Lancet* 2007 (McCann m.fl 2007; 370:1560-71) visade på hyperaktivitet hos barn efter att de konsumerat färgämnena para-orange (E 110) kinolingult (E 104), azorubin (E 122), allurarött (E 129), tartrazin (E 102), nykockin (E 124) tillsammans med konserveringsämnet E 211

Som föredragande för förordning (EG) nr 1333/2008 i Europaparlamentet föreslog jag därför ett förbud mot dessa färgämnen, ett förbud som ENVI stödde. Kompromissen i trialogförhandlingarna blev till slut en särskild varningstext på varor med dessa färgämnen. Produkter med dessa färgämnen måste idag märkas med ”Färgens (färgernas) namn eller E-nummer: kan ha en negativ effekt på barns beteende och koncentration”

Nu har det gått flera år och jag vill därför fråga kommissionen följande:

1. Vilka studier/forskningsprojekt har kommissionen eller EFSA genomfört/initierat för att få en bättre kunskap om de negativa effekter av E 102, E 104, E 110, E 122, E 124 och E 129, i kombination med E 211 som ovan nämnda studie visade på?

2. Vilka studier känner kommissionen till som gått vidare med de allvarliga misstankar som framkom i ovan nämnda studie?

3. Vad har dessa studier indikerat?

4. Om det inte finns några studier som går vidare med misstankarna från McCann m.fl. studie, och/eller om vidare studier inte kunnat kullkasta det samband som påvisades i McCann m.fl. Hur anser kommissionen att den sköter sitt uppdrag att värna en hög konsumentsäkerhet, även för barn, vad gäller livsmedel?

5. Vilken kunskap har kommissionen om konsumtionsmönstren av E 102, E 104, E 110, E 122, E 124 och E 129, i och utan kombination med E 211?

Svar från John Dalli på kommissionens vägnar
(18 juni 2012)

Kommissionen bad Efsa utvärdera resultaten av McCanns undersökning, med hänsyn till annan tillgänglig vetenskaplig litteratur. Efsa drog slutsatsen ([1]) att undersökningen endast i begränsad omfattning visar att de två olika blandningarna av syntetiska färgämnen och natriumbensoat som testades hade en liten men statistiskt signifikant effekt på beteendet och koncentrationen hos vissa av barnen i den undersökta barngruppen. Efsa drog vidare slutsatsen att resultaten inte kan användas som grund för att ändra det acceptabla dagliga intaget (ADI) för livsmedelsfärgerna eller natriumbensoat.

Som nästa steg bad kommissionen Efsa att med högsta prioritet utvärdera färgerna individuellt. Utvärderingarna slutfördes 2009 ([2]). Något orsakssamband mellan de olika färgerna och möjliga beteendemässiga effekter kunde inte underbyggas av någon data. Av denna anledning anser kommissionen att varningsmärkningen är tillräcklig.

Som ett resultat av utvärderingarna har dock värdena för acceptabelt dagligt intag (ADI) sänkts för kinolingult (E 104), para-orange (E 110) och nykockin (röd) (E 124). För att minska exponeringen till under de nya värdena för acceptabelt dagligt intag har riskhanteringsåtgärder vidtagits vad gäller villkoren för användning och användningsmängd ([3]).

Kommissionen har vidare fått indikationer på att livsmedelsindustrin och medlemsländerna frivilligt har gjort stora framsteg vad gäller avlägsnandet av alla sex färger från livsmedelsprodukter.

([1]) *The EFSA Journal*, nr 660, s. 1-54, 2008.

([2]) E 102 – *EFSA Journal* 2009; 7(11):1331; E 104 – *EFSA Journal* 2009; 7(11):1329; E 110 – *EFSA Journal* 2009; 7(11):1330; E 122 – *EFSA Journal* 2009; 7(11):1332; E 124 – *EFSA Journal* 2009; 7(11):1328; E 129 – *EFSA Journal* 2009; 7(11):1327.

([3]) Kommissionens förordning (EU) nr 232/2012 av den 16 mars 2012 om ändring av bilaga II till Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning (EG) nr 1333/2008 vad gäller villkoren för användning av kinolingult (E 104), para-orange (E 110) och nykockin (E 124) och de mängder som får användas – EUT L 78 17.3.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004820/12
to the Commission
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: The adverse effects of some food additives on children

A study published in *The Lancet* in 2007 (McCann et al., 2007; 370:1560-71) demonstrated hyperactivity in children after they had consumed the food colours Sunset Yellow FCF (E110), Quinoline Yellow (E104), Azorubine (E122), Allura Red AC (E129), Tartrazine (E102), Ponceau 4R (E124) together with the preservative E211.

As rapporteur for Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 in the European Parliament, I therefore proposed a ban on these colours; a ban that the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety supported. The compromise ultimately reached in the trialogue negotiations was a special warning text on products containing these colours. Products containing these colours must currently be labelled: 'The name (names) or E number(s) of the colours: can have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children'.

Several years have now passed and therefore I would like to ask the Commission the following:

1. Which studies or research projects have the Commission or the European Food Safety Authority carried out or initiated to increase our knowledge of the adverse effects of E102, E104, E110, E122, E124 and E129 in combination with E211 which were demonstrated by the study referred to above?

2. Which studies is the Commission aware of that develop further the serious suspicions highlighted by the study referred to above?

3. What have these studies indicated?

4. If there are no studies that develop further the suspicions raised in the study by McCann et al., and/or if further studies have not been able to discredit the connection demonstrated in the study by McCann et al., how does the Commission consider it is fulfilling its obligation to ensure a high level of consumer safety, also for children, with regard to food?

5. Does the Commission have any information about the consumption patterns of E102, E104, E110, E122, E124 and E129 in combination with and without E211?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2012)

The Commission asked EFSA to assess the results of the McCann's study (2007) taking into account other available scientific literature. EFSA concluded ([1]) that the study provides limited evidence that the two different mixtures of synthetic colours and sodium benzoate tested had a small and statistically significant effect on activity and attention in some children selected from the general population. Furthermore, EFSA concluded that the findings cannot be used as a basis for altering the Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) of the respective food colours or sodium benzoate.

As the next step the Commission asked EFSA to assess these colours individually as a matter of priority. All assessments were completed in 2009 ([2]). A causal link between the individual colours and possible behavioural effects was not substantiated by any data. Due to this reason the Commission considers that the warning labelling is sufficient.

However, as the outcome of these assessments the ADI values were lowered for Quinoline Yellow (E 104), Sunset Yellow FCF/Orange Yellow S (E 110) and Ponceau 4R, Cochineal Red A (E 124). In order to reduce the exposure below new ADIs the risk management measures were taken as regards the conditions of use and the use levels ([3]).

Furthermore, the Commission has the indication from the food industry and the Member States that a substantial progress has been made with regard to the voluntary withdrawal of all six colours from food products.

([1]) The EFSA Journal (2008) 660, 1-54.

([2]) E 102 — EFSA Journal 2009; 7(11):1331; E 104 — EFSA Journal 2009; 7(11):1329; E 110 — EFSA Journal 2009; 7(11):1330; E 122 — EFSA Journal 2009; 7(11):1332; E 124 — EFSA Journal 2009; 7(11):1328; E 129 — EFSA Journal 2009; 7(11):1327.

([3]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 232/2012 of 16 March 2012 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the conditions of use and the use levels for Quinoline Yellow (E 104), Sunset Yellow FCF/Orange Yellow S (E 110) and Ponceau 4R, Cochineal Red A (E 124) — OJ L 78 of 17.3.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004821/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Operation of the single market

Is it permitted under EC law for a Member State to allow only its own nationals to use a publicly available service, product or facility and to exclude all other EU citizens from such use? If so, is this compatible with the concept of a single market?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

In this question, the Honourable Member does not specify the services or products to which the query refers in particular.

Directive 123/2006/EC on Services in the internal market (the 'Services Directive') applies to all those services that are not explicitly excluded from its scope. For services falling under the Services Directive, any discrimination by public authorities that is based on grounds of nationality or the place of residence is generally forbidden by its Article 20, paragraph 1. For services falling outside the scope of the Services Directive, discrimination on such grounds by Member States is, as a general rule, not acceptable under internal market rules, in particular Article 56 TFEU.

In the absence of further details on the specific issue at hand, it can only be indicated that, in principle, the fact that a Member State excludes citizens from other Member States from the use of a given service cannot be considered compatible with internal market rules.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004824/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Στοιχεία της Eurostat για την ανεργία

Σύμφωνα με τελευταία στοιχεία της Eurostat, η ανεργία στην Ελλάδα φτάνει το 21,7 % φέροντας την Ελλάδα στη δεύτερη θέση στην ΕΕ.

Ανησυχητικές διαστάσεις έχει προσλάβει και η ανεργία των νέων κάτω των 25 ετών στην Ελλάδα, αφού εκτοξεύθηκε στο 51,2 %, φέρνοντας την Ελλάδα πλέον την πρώτη θέση στην Ευρώπη.

Ταυτόχρονα, σύμφωνα με τις εκτιμήσεις, η ανεργία θα αυξηθεί σε επίπεδα υψηλότερα μέσα στο 2012, δημιουργώντας ένα τεράστιο κοινωνικό πρόβλημα.

Ακόμα, η παρατεταμένη ύφεση δημιουργεί κύμα μετανάστευσης νέου επιστημονικού προσωπικού, με επιπτώσεις στην ανάπτυξη και την παραγωγικότητα.

Δεδομένου ότι η κρισιμότητα της κατάστασης επιβάλλει την άμεση λήψη δραστικών μέτρων σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, καθώς το θέμα της ανεργίας δεν αφορά μόνο την Ελλάδα, αλλά όλες της χώρες της ΕΕ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή;

Με ποιους συγκεκριμένους τρόπους προτίθεται να δράσει και ποια μέτρα έχει υιοθετήσει για την πρόσβαση των νέων στην αγορά εργασίας;

Έχει εξετάσει κάποιο ενιαίο ευρωπαϊκό σχέδιο για την αντιστοίχιση των ειδικεύσεων και προσόντων των πτυχιούχων με αυτά που ζητά η αγορά εργασίας σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο;

Προτίθεται να ενισχύσει τις συνέργειες μεταξύ των πανεπιστημίων και της αγοράς εργασίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Ιουλίου 2012)

1. Όσον αφορά τις ειδικές δράσεις στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας «Ευκαιρίες για τους νέους» ([1]), η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στις απαντήσεις της σε προηγούμενες γραπτές ερωτήσεις ([2]). Περίπου 7,3 δισ. ευρώ από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία έχουν ανακατανεμηθεί για προγράμματα που αφορούν τους νέους στα οκτώ κράτη μέλη με τα υψηλότερα ποσοστά ανεργίας στους νέους, από τα οποία αναμένεται να επωφεληθούν τουλάχιστον 450 000 νέοι. Το πιλοτικό σχέδιο της Επιτροπής «Η πρώτη σας θέση εργασίας μέσω του EURES» αποσκοπεί στην υποστήριξη των νέων από κάθε κράτος μέλος που αναζητούν εργασία σε άλλο κράτος μέλος.

2. Η Επιτροπή αναπτύσσει μια πολύγλωσση ταξινόμηση ευρωπαϊκών δεξιοτήτων/ικανοτήτων, τυπικών προσόντων και επαγγελμάτων που εστιάζεται στα μαθησιακά αποτελέσματα και στις δεξιότητες/ικανότητες που απαιτούνται για την εξεύρεση απασχόλησης και, έτσι, φέρνει σε στενότερη επαφή τα πανεπιστήμια και άλλα εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα με την αγορά εργασίας. Το «πανόραμα δεξιοτήτων στην ΕΕ» θα συμβάλει στην αντιστοίχιση της προσφοράς και της ζήτησης, παρέχοντας επικαιροποιημένη πρόβλεψη των αναγκών σε δεξιότητες και πληροφορίες για θέσεις εργασίας και επαγγελματικές ελλείψεις.

3. Στην ανακοίνωσή της «Στοχεύοντας σε μια ανάκαμψη με άφθονες θέσεις απασχόλησης» ([3]), η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τη στενότερη συνεργασία της εκπαίδευσης με τον χώρο της εργασίας, η οποία είναι καθοριστική για την αντιμετώπιση των αναγκών σε δεξιότητες και των αναγκών της αγοράς εργασίας. Το θεματολόγιο της Επιτροπής για τον εκσυγχρονισμό της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης υπογραμμίζει τον τρόπο με τον οποίο η συνεργασία ανάμεσα στα ιδρύματα της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης και τις επιχειρήσεις μπορεί να προσφέρει στους αποφοίτους δεξιότητες που βοηθούν στην ανεύρεση απασχόλησης και να αυξήσει την ικανότητα καινοτομίας της Ευρώπης, ενώ προωθεί αυτόν το στόχο, μεταξύ άλλων, μέσω του φόρουμ πανεπιστημίων-επιχειρήσεων, των σχεδίων «συμμαχιών γνώσης» και της ανάπτυξης βιομηχανικών διδακτορικών για την κατάρτιση μελλοντικών ερευνητών.

([1]) COM(2011)933.
([2]) E-0010895/2011, E-001002/2012, E-001371/2012 και E-001812/2012.
([3]) COM(2012)173 τελικό της 18.4.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004824/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Eurostat unemployment data

According to the latest Eurostat data, unemployment in Greece is now running at 21.7%, the second highest rate in the EU.

In addition, unemployment among young people under 25 in Greece has assumed alarming proportions, reaching a massive 51.2%, the highest rate in the EU.

It is also estimated that unemployment will rise even further in 2012, creating a huge social problem.

Furthermore, the prolonged recession is creating a wave of emigration of young scientists, which is impacting on growth and productivity.

This critical situation requires immediate drastic measures to be taken at the European level, since the issue of unemployment concerns not only Greece, but all Member States. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What specific action does it intend to take and what measures has it implemented to give young people access to the labour market?

Has it considered any unified European plan to match graduate specialisations and qualifications with demand in the European labour market?

Does it intend to support cooperation between universities and the labour market?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

1. With regard to specific actions under the Commission's Youth Opportunities Initiative ([1]) the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its replies to earlier written questions ([2]). About EUR7.3bn of the structural funds have been reallocated for youth related programmes in the eight Member States with the highest youth unemployment rates, with at least 450 000 young people likely to benefit. The Commission'sa pilot project 'Your First Eures Job' aims at supporting young people from any Member State that are looking for work in another Member State.

2. The Commission is developing a multilingual classification of European Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupations that focuses on learning outcomes and the skills/competences needed for successful employment and thus bringing universities and other education institutions closer to the labour market. The EU Skills Panorama will help with the matching of supply and demand through updated forecasting of skills needs and information on jobs and occupations mismatches.

3. In its communication ([3]) 'Towards a job-rich recovery', the Commission supports a closer cooperation between the worlds of education and work, which is essential to address skills and labour market needs. The Commission's Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education underlines how cooperation between higher education institutions and business can provide graduates with employable skills and raise Europe's innovation capacity, and facilitates this *inter alia* through its University-Business Forum, through its projects on Knowledge Alliances, and by developing Industrial Doctorates for training future researchers.

([1]) COM(2011) 933.
([2]) E-0010895/2011, E-001002/2012, E-001371/2012 and E-001812/2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 173 final of 18.4.2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004825/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Ακτοπλοϊκή σύνδεση ελληνικών νησιών

Πολλά απομακρυσμένα ελληνικά νησιά που ο πληθυσμός τους δεν ξεπερνά τους 1 000 κατοίκους, όπως η νήσος Γαύδος στα Νότια της Κρήτης, έχουν πρόβλημα σύνδεσης με την υπόλοιπη ηπειρωτική Ελλάδα, με αποτέλεσμα οι συνθήκες διαβίωσης για τους κατοίκους να είναι δύσκολες και να υπάρχουν δυσκολίες στην ανάπτυξη της τοπικής κοινωνίας και του τουρισμού.

Η προμήθεια βασικών αγαθών, αλλά και η μεταφορά για ιατρική περίθαλψη, καθίσταται δύσκολη, ιδιαίτερα τους χειμερινούς μήνες που τα δρομολόγια είναι ελάχιστα.

Τελευταία, λόγω της οικονομικής κρίσης, των υψηλών τιμών των καυσίμων και των οικονομικών προβλημάτων που αντιμετωπίζουν οι ακτοπλοϊκές εταιρείες σε συνδυασμό με την χαμηλή επιβατική κίνηση είναι πλέον ορατός ο κίνδυνος τα ελληνικά νησιά να μείνουν χωρίς ακτοπλοϊκή σύνδεση ακόμα και το καλοκαίρι.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια κονδύλια έχει χορηγήσει στην Ελλάδα για τις ακτοπλοϊκές μεταφορές και ποια στοιχεία διαθέτει σχετικά με τη χρήση και την απορρόφησή τους;

Ποια μέτρα αναπτυξιακής πολιτικής θαλάσσιων μεταφορών έχει λάβει για την ακτοπλοϊκή σύνδεση ιδίως των απομακρυσμένων νησιών που δεν ξεπερνούν τους 1 000 κατοίκους;

Δοθέντος ότι τα πλοία που εκτελούν αυτά τα δρομολόγια κάνουν δημόσιο λειτούργημα προς εξυπηρέτηση των πολιτών (και πολλές φορές η κερδοφορία είναι αδύνατη), ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει για τον εξορθολογισμό του κόστους λειτουργίας των ακτοπλοϊκών εταιρειών, ειδικότερα ως προς την τιμή των καυσίμων;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Ιουνίου 2012)

Όπως αναφέρεται από την Επιτροπή στις απαντήσεις της στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-4158/08, E-4324/2011, E-008677/2011 και E-37/2012 ([1]), ο ζωτικός ρόλος των θαλάσσιων μεταφορών για τους κατοίκους των ευρωπαϊκών νησιών έχει αναγνωριστεί στον κανονισμό (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 3577/92 ([2]) του Συμβουλίου, ο οποίος προβλέπει ένα σύνολο κανόνων για την προστασία των θαλάσσιων συνδέσεων που δεν εξυπηρετούνται επαρκώς από την αγορά. Ειδικότερα, ο εν λόγω κανονισμός επιτρέπει στα κράτη μέλη να επιβάλλουν υποχρεώσεις παροχής δημόσιας υπηρεσίας και να συνάπτουν συμβάσεις παροχής δημόσιας υπηρεσίας στις τακτικές γραμμές από και προς τα νησιά, καθώς και μεταξύ νησιών. Η απόφαση σχετικά με το εύρος της δημόσιας υπηρεσίας αποτελεί αποκλειστική αρμοδιότητα των εθνικών αρχών. Αποτελεί αρμοδιότητα των εν λόγω αρχών να αποφασίσουν κατά πόσο υπάρχει πραγματική ανάγκη παροχής δημόσιας υπηρεσίας, να καθορίσουν τη συχνότητά της, το είδος των πλοίων που πρέπει να χρησιμοποιηθούν, καθώς και τη χρηματοδότηση της εν λόγω υπηρεσίας, όπου χρειάζεται.

Όσον αφορά τα νησιά με πληθυσμό κάτω των 1 000 κατοίκων, η ερμηνευτική ανακοίνωση του κανονισμού ([3]) προβλέπει ότι η διαδικασία σύναψης συμβάσεων παροχής δημόσιας υπηρεσίας όσον αφορά τα «μικρά νησιά» ([4]) υπόκειται σε απλουστευμένους κανόνες και επιτρέπεται η παράταση της διάρκειας της σύμβασης.

Η Λευκή Βίβλος — Χάρτης πορείας για έναν Ενιαίο Ευρωπαϊκό Χώρο Μεταφορών — Για ένα ανταγωνιστικό και ενεργειακά αποδοτικό σύστημα μεταφορών ([5]) αναγνωρίζει την ανάγκη περιορισμού της εξάρτησης των μεταφορών από το πετρέλαιο, μέσω της αύξησης της αποδοτικότητας των οχημάτων και των πλοίων και της χρησιμοποίησης εναλλακτικών καυσίμων. Η Επιτροπή προωθεί σθεναρά την έρευνα με αντικείμενο την καινοτόμο τεχνολογία πλοίων καθώς και την παροχή και χρήση καθαρότερων εναλλακτικών καυσίμων.

([1]) Διαθέσιμη στη διεύθυνση http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 3577/92 του Συμβουλίου, της 7ης Δεκεμβρίου 1992, για την εφαρμογή της αρχής της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας των υπηρεσιών στις θαλάσσιες μεταφορές στο εσωτερικό των κρατών μελών (θαλάσσιες ενδομεταφορές — καμποτάζ) (ΕΕ L 364 της 12.12.1992).

([3]) Ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, το Συμβούλιο, την Ευρωπαϊκή Οικονομική και Κοινωνική Επιτροπή και την Επιτροπή των Περιφερειών σχετικά με την ερμηνεία του κανονισμού του Συμβουλίου (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 3577/92 για την εφαρμογή της αρχής της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας των υπηρεσιών στις θαλάσσιες μεταφορές στο εσωτερικό των κρατών μελών (θαλάσσιες ενδομεταφορές — καμποτάζ) από τις 22/12/2003, COM(2003)595 τελικό, όπως τροποποιήθηκε από την ανακοίνωση στις 11/05/2006, COM(2006)196 τελικό.

([4]) Ως «μικρά νησιά» νοούνται τα νησιά στα οποία ο συνολικός ετήσιος αριθμός επιβατών που μετακινήθηκαν δια θαλάσσης από και προς αυτά κατά τα δύο τελευταία οικονομικά έτη που προηγούνται του έτους ανάθεσης της υπηρεσίας δεν υπερβαίνει τους 300.000 επιβάτες.

([5]) COM(2011)144 τελικό.

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) και το Ταμείο Συνοχής έχουν συγχρηματοδοτήσει έργα υποδομής στους ελληνικούς λιμένες όχι όμως στις υπηρεσίες πορθμείων. Εν προκειμένω, πρέπει να διευκρινιστεί ότι τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία δεν μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν για να παράσχουν άμεση ενίσχυση για το λειτουργικό κόστος των θαλάσσιων μεταφορών, δηλαδή υπό μορφή επιδοτήσεων των εισιτηρίων των πορθμείων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004825/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Greek islands and ferry services

Many remote Greek islands with populations of less than 1 000 inhabitants, such as Gavdos to the south of Crete, have problems with their sea connections to mainland Greece, with the result that living conditions can be difficult for residents and there can be difficulties in developing the local community and tourism.

The supply of basic goods and transport for medical treatment are difficult, especially during the winter months when transport connections are reduced.

Due to the economic crisis, high fuel prices and the economic problems faced by the ferry companies, together with low passenger traffic, there is now an obvious danger that the Greek islands will remain without ferry services, even in summer.

Will the Commission say:

What funding has it granted to Greece for ferry services and what data is available on its use and take-up rate?

What policy measures for the development of maritime transport has it taken regarding shipping links especially for remote islands with a population of under 1 000?

Given that the vessels that ply these routes are providing a public service for the benefit of citizens (and often it is impossible for them to make a profit), what measures does the Commission intend to take to streamline ferry companies' operating costs, especially with regard to fuel prices?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2012)

As mentioned by the Commission in its replies to Written Questions E-4158/08, E-4324/2011, E-008677/2011 and E-37/2012 ([1]) the vital role of maritime transport for the inhabitants of European islands has been recognised in Council Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 ([2]) which provides a set of rules to protect maritime links not adequately served by the market. In particular, it authorises Member States to impose public service obligations and to conclude public service contracts for regular services to, from and between islands. The decision regarding the extent of public service is the sole responsibility of the national authorities. It is the competence of those authorities to determine whether there is a real need for the public service, define its frequency, the type of vessels that should be deployed as well as to finance such service where necessary.

With regard to islands with population of under 1 000, the interpretative communication to the regulation ([3]) provides that the procedure of concluding public service contracts in respect of 'small islands' ([4]) is subject to simplified rules and a longer duration of the contract is allowed.

The White Paper — Road transport to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive ans resource efficient transport system ([5]) recognises the need to reduce the dependency of transport from oil both by increasing efficiency of vehicles and vessels and utilisation of alternative fuels. The Commission actively promotes research into innovative ship technology as well as the provision and use of cleaner alternative fuels.

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund have co-financed infrastructure works in the Greek ports but not the ferry services. In this respect, it is to clarify that the Structural Funds cannot be used to give direct support to the operational cost of maritime transport, i.e. in the form of subsidies for ferryboat tickets.

([1]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

([2]) Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 of 7 December 1992 applying the principle of freedom to provide services to maritime transport within Member States (maritime cabotage), OJ L 364, 12.12.1992.

([3]) Communication from the Commission to the Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the interpretation of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 applying the principle of freedom to provide services to maritime transport within Member States (maritime cabotage) from 22/12/2003, COM(2003)595 final as amended by the communication from 11/05/2006, COM(2006)196 final.

([4]) 'Small islands' mean islands on which the total annual number of passengers carried by sea to and from the island during the two financial years preceding that in which the service was assigned does not exceed 300 000 passengers.

([5]) COM(2011) 144 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004826/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Υψηλές τιμές καυσίμων

Η Ελλάδα βρίσκεται υψηλότερα από το μέσο όρο της τιμής της αμόλυβδης βενζίνης στα 27 κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, λόγω του Ειδικού Φόρου Κατανάλωσης και του Φόρου Προστιθέμενης Αξίας.

Σύμφωνα με το Ινστιτούτο Προστασίας του Καταναλωτή, συνεχώς παρατηρούνται αδικαιολόγητες αυξήσεις των τιμών της βενζίνης στη νησιωτική χώρα.

Ενδεικτικά αναφέρεται ότι τελικά η αμόλυβδη βενζίνη σε πρατήρια σε πολλά νησιά της χώρας (Κρήτη, Δωδεκάνησα, Κυκλάδες και Ιόνιο) διαμορφώνεται σε πάνω από 2 ευρώ το λίτρο.

Δεδομένου ότι οι υψηλές τιμές καυσίμων πλήττουν καίριους τομείς της οικονομίας όπως τις μεταφορές, την αγροτική ανάπτυξη και την αλιεία, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια μέτρα έχει λάβει για τον περιορισμό των υψηλών τιμών των καυσίμων, που υπονομεύουν την ανάπτυξη και την παραγωγικότητα της ευρωπαϊκής οικονομίας;

Προτίθεται να προτείνει μια φορολογική πολιτική για τα καύσιμα που θα θέτει ένα ανώτερο όριο στις φορολογήσεις καυσίμων;

Συγκεκριμένα σε ό,τι αφορά την Ελλάδα, είναι ενήμερη για τις υψηλότατες τιμές της βενζίνης και ποια μέτρα έχει λάβει, ή σκοπεύει να λάβει, για τον περιορισμό τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η οδηγία 2003/96/ΕΚ ([1]) προβλέπει κάποιο βαθμό εναρμόνισης του ειδικού φόρου κατανάλωσης που επιβάλλεται στα ενεργειακά προϊόντα και στην ηλεκτρική ενέργεια καθορίζοντας, μεταξύ άλλων, κατώτατα επίπεδα για τον ειδικό φόρο κατανάλωσης. Τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν να καθορίζουν, άνω των κατώτατων αυτών ορίων, επίπεδα φορολόγησης τα οποία θεωρούν κατάλληλα, συνεκτιμώντας πτυχές της εθνικής πολιτικής.

Οι ειδικοί φόροι κατανάλωσης και άλλοι φόροι αποτελούν μόνο ένα μέρος της τελικής τιμής και η διαφορά στις τιμές μπορεί να οφείλεται στη διαφορά σε άλλα στοιχεία της τιμής, όπως το κόστος διανομής ή τα περιθώρια κέρδους, μεταξύ των κρατών μελών και μεταξύ διαφορετικών περιοχών μέσα σε ένα κράτος μέλος.

Η Επιτροπή δεν προτίθεται να προτείνει την καθιέρωση ανωτάτου ορίου για τους ειδικούς φόρους κατανάλωσης στα καύσιμα διότι αυτό θα ήταν περιττό στην παρούσα κατάσταση για τη διασφάλιση της λειτουργίας της εσωτερικής αγοράς και, επομένως, θα αντέκειτο στην αρχή της αναλογικότητας.

Τέλος, πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι με βάση το άρθρο 18 παράγραφος 8 της οδηγίας 2003/96/ΕΚ η Ελλάδα μπορεί να επιβάλει χαμηλότερα επίπεδα φορολόγησης στο πετρέλαιο που καταναλίσκεται στη Λέσβο, στη Χίο, στη Σάμο, στα Δωδεκάνησα και στις Κυκλάδες καθώς και σε νησιά του Αιγαίου.

([1]) ΕΕ L 283 της 31.10.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004826/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: High fuel prices

The price of unleaded petrol in Greece is higher than the average in the 27 EU Member States, because of excise duties and VAT.

According to the Institute for Consumer Protection, unjustified price increases occur frequently in the Greek islands.

For example, the Institute claims that unleaded petrol in filling stations on many Greek islands (Crete, the Dodecanese, the Cyclades and Ionian islands) costs over EUR 2 per litre.

Given that high fuel prices are damaging vital sectors of the economy such as transport, agricultural development and fisheries, will the Commission say:

What measures has it taken to limit high fuel prices, which are undermining growth and productivity in the economy of the EU?

Does it intend to propose a fiscal policy for fuel that will set an upper limit on fuel taxes?

Specifically with regard to Greece, is it aware of the very high price of petrol? What measures has it taken, or does it intend to take, to limit it?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

Directive 2003/96/EC ([1]) provides for a certain degree of harmonisation of excise duty applicable to energy products and electricity, *inter alia* by setting minimum levels of excise duty. Above these minima, Member States can fix levels of taxation as they see fit, taking into account national policy considerations.

Excise duties and other taxes are only one part of the final price and price differences may also result from differences in other price elements, such as distribution costs or profit margins, between Member States and between different areas within a Member State.

The Commission does not intend to propose introducing a maximum limit on excise duties on fuels as this would go beyond what is currently necessary to ensure the functioning of the internal market and would thus contradict the principle of proportionality.

Finally, it should be observed that Article 18(8) of Directive 2003/96/EC allows Greece to apply lower levels of taxation to petrol consumed in the departments of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, the Dodecanese and the Cyclades and on a number of Islands in the Aegean.

([1]) OJ L 283, 31.10.2003.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004829/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: L'UE garantisca la restituzione dei beni immobili alla Comunità cattolica in Turchia

La Comunità cattolica in Turchia ha chiesto allo Stato turco la restituzione di beni immobili sulla base di una lista di oltre 200 proprietà inclusa in un accordo stipulato nel 1913 tra l'Impero ottomano e la Francia che all'epoca rappresentava la Chiesa di Roma presso la Sublime Porta. La lista include chiese, scuole, orfanotrofi, cimiteri e ospedali ancora in parte esistenti a Istanbul (circa cento immobili), Ankara, Adana, Trebisonda (Trabzon), Amasya, Samsun, Van, Konya e altre città turche.

La Comunità cattolica turca, rappresentata dall'arcivescovo di Smirne nonché presidente della Conferenza episcopale turca, Mon. Ruggero Franceschini, ha presentato la richiesta alla commissione di conciliazione del parlamento turco (organismo parlamentare che sta ascoltando le richieste delle minoranze religiose e sociali in vista della riforma costituzionale); inoltre l'arcivescovo ha ricordato che, sebbene la Chiesa cattolica non sia legalmente riconosciuta in Turchia, chiede lo stesso la restituzione dei beni sulla base dell'accordo del 1913 fra il Gran visir Said Halim Pasa e l'ambasciatore francese Maurice Bompard. Nel 1936 il governo turco chiese alle minoranze di dichiarare le loro proprietà (poi confiscate), ma la Chiesa cattolica fu esclusa perché qualche anno prima le era stato conferito lo status di «straniera» al momento della nascita della Repubblica turca. Le richieste erano state avanzate dopo che, a settembre, il governo aveva autorizzato la restituzione di beni sequestrati a comunità religiose non-islamiche nei decenni passati.

La Commissione non ritiene opportuno sostenere presso il governo di Ankara la richiesta della Comunità cattolica in Turchia in ordine al principio del rispetto della libertà religiosa da parte dell'esecutivo islamico turco nei confronti delle minoranze religiose?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(26 giugno 2012)

La Commissione segue attentamente la questione della restituzione dei beni confiscati alle fondazioni delle comunità non musulmane.

Nell'agosto 2011, la Turchia ha adottato una normativa che modifica la legge sulle fondazioni del 2008. Questo è stato il quarto tentativo dal 2002 compiuto dalle autorità turche per ripristinare i diritti di proprietà delle comunità non musulmane.

Tale normativa prevede che le fondazioni delle comunità non musulmane possano registrare a proprio nome all'ufficio del catasto le proprietà immobili inserite nelle loro dichiarazioni del 1936. Le parti interessate devono presentare una richiesta per la restituzione delle proprietà. Per i beni delle fondazioni attualmente registrati a nome di terzi, verrà pagato il valore di mercato. Ciò vale per le proprietà confiscate e vendute a terzi e che pertanto non possono essere restituite alle fondazioni.

La Commissione è altresì a conoscenza dei problemi dovuti alla mancanza di personalità giuridica delle comunità non musulmane. La relazione della Commissione del 2011 sui progressi realizzati dalla Turchia ([1]) menziona: «le comunità non musulmane, in quanto strutture organizzate di gruppi religiosi, si trovano a dover affrontare i problemi dovuti alla mancanza di una loro personalità giuridica. Ciò ha implicazioni, tra l'altro, sui loro diritti di proprietà, l'accesso alla giustizia e la possibilità di raccogliere fondi. Le raccomandazioni a tal proposito della commissione di Venezia del Consiglio d'Europa del 2010 devono ancora essere attuate».

In qualità di paese candidato all'adesione all'Unione europea, la Turchia deve garantire per tutti i suoi cittadini il rispetto a livello pratico dei diritti fondamentali, come stabilito dalla Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo e dalla giurisprudenza della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo.

([1]) SEC(2011)1201 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004829/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: EU guarantee regarding the return of property to the Catholic community in Turkey

The Catholic community in Turkey has asked the Turkish state to return its assets, referring to over 200 properties listed in an agreement concluded in 1913 between the Ottoman Empire and France, which was representing the Church of Rome at the Sublime Porte at that time. The list includes churches, schools, orphanages, cemeteries and hospitals, some still existing, in Istanbul (about 100 properties), Ankara, Adana, Trabzon, Amasya, Samsun, Van, Konya and other Turkish cities.

The Turkish Catholic Community, represented by the Archbishop of Izmir and president of the Turkish Conference of Bishops Monsignor Ruggero Franceschini, presented the request to the conciliation committee of the Turkish Parliament (a parliamentary body that listens to the requests of religious and social minorities with a view to constitutional reform). The Archbishop also reminded the committee that, although the Catholic church is not legally recognised in Turkey, it was demanding the return of the assets based on the 1913 agreement between Grand Vizier Said Halim Pasha and French Ambassador Maurice Bompard. In 1936, the Turkish Government asked minorities to declare their properties (then confiscated), but the Catholic Church was excluded because, on the birth of the Turkish Republic a few years previously, it had been proclaimed 'foreign'. The requests were put forward after the Government's authorisation in September of the return of assets seized from non-Islamic religious communities in recent decades.

Does the Commission not consider it appropriate to support the request from the Catholic community in Turkey to the Ankara Government based on the principle of respect for religious freedom by the Turkish Islamic Committee in its dealings with minorities?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2012)

The Commission follows closely the issue of return of seized properties to foundations of non-Muslim communities.

Turkey adopted, in August 2011, legislation amending the 2008 Law on foundations. This was the fourth attempt of the Turkish authorities since 2002 to restore the property rights of non-Muslim communities.

This legislation provides that non-Muslim community foundations can register in the Land Registry, under their names, immovable property entered in their 1936 declarations. Interested parties will have to apply for the return of properties. The market value of foundation properties currently registered with third parties will be paid. This covers properties seized and sold to third parties, and which cannot be returned to the foundations.

The Commission is also aware of the problems resulting from the lack of legal personality of non-Muslim communities. The Commission's 2011 Progress Report on Turkey ([1]) mentioned: 'non-Muslim communities — as organised structures of religious groups — still face problems due to their lack of legal personality. This has implications at least for their property rights, their access to justice and their ability to raise funds. The 2010 Council of Europe Venice Commission recommendations in this regard have yet to be implemented'.

Turkey, as a country negotiating its accession to the EU, needs to guarantee in practice, for all its citizens, human rights according to the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

([1]) SEC(2011) 1201 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004830/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Ανάπτυξη στην Ελλάδα

Σε νέα ιστορικά χαμηλά επίπεδα υποχώρησε ο δείκτης καταναλωτικής εμπιστοσύνης στην Ελλάδα, το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2012, σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία της τελευταίας παγκόσμιας έρευνας της Nielsen. Η καταναλωτική εμπιστοσύνη στην Ελλάδα έπεσε πιο χαμηλά από ποτέ, το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2012, με δεύτερη συνεχόμενη πτώση τον δείκτη καταναλωτικής εμπιστοσύνης, πέφτοντας σε νέα ιστορικά χαμηλά επίπεδα, φθάνοντας τις 37 μονάδες.

«Η ραγδαία άνοδος της ανεργίας, σε συνδυασμό με το παρατεταμένο πρόγραμμα λιτότητας, δημιουργούν απαισιοδοξία στους καταναλωτές και περιορισμό των εξόδων τους», όπως τονίζεται στην έρευνα. Επιπλέον οι εργασιακές προοπτικές είναι η μεγαλύτερη ανησυχία των Ελλήνων, σε ποσοστό 48 %, που είναι το υψηλότερο ποσοστό όχι μόνο στην Ευρώπη, αλλά και στον κόσμο. Εξίσου υψηλό είναι και το άγχος των Ελλήνων για την οικονομία (41 %) και τα προσωπικά χρέη (31 %).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή με ποιο τρόπο μπορεί να ενισχυθεί η ανάπτυξη στην Ελλάδα και ποιο είναι το σχέδιο δράσης που μπορεί να εφαρμόσει.

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιουνίου 2012)

Οι τελικοί στόχοι του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας είναι να διορθωθούν οι δημοσιονομικές και εξωτερικές ανισορροπίες της ελληνικής οικονομίας, προκειμένου να αποκατασταθεί η βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη και η δημιουργία θέσεων απασχόλησης μεσοπρόθεσμα. Στο πλαίσιο των περιορισμών ρευστότητας και δεδομένου του μεγέθους της απαιτούμενης δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής, το πρόγραμμα στηρίζεται με πρωτοφανή χρηματοδοτική ενίσχυση την οποία παρέχουν τα κράτη μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ και το ΔΝΤ.

Το πρόγραμμα περιλαμβάνει ευρύ φάσμα πολιτικών για την ενίσχυση της ανάπτυξης που αποβλέπουν στον εκσυγχρονισμό του δημόσιου τομέα, στο να καταστούν αποδοτικότερες και περισσότερο ευέλικτες οι αγορές προϊόντων και εργασίας, και στη δημιουργία ενός φιλικού για τους επενδυτές επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος.

Στην ανακοίνωσή της με τίτλο «Ανάπτυξη για την Ελλάδα» ([1]), που εκδόθηκε στις 18 Απριλίου 2012, η Επιτροπή δίνει λεπτομέρειες για το σχέδιο δράσης που εξασφαλίσει την επιτυχία των οικονομικών πολιτικών και την επιστροφή στην ανάπτυξη σύμφωνα με συγκεκριμένο χρονοδιάγραμμα. Για παράδειγμα, και όπως συζητείται στην ανακοίνωση, «μέσω αναπροσανατολισμού της χρηματοδότησης της ΕΕ, θα μπορούσε να διατεθεί από τα υφιστάμενα κονδύλια των διαρθρωτικών προγραμμάτων της ΕΕ ποσό ύψους περίπου 200-250 εκατ. ευρώ από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο, για την υποστήριξη μέτρων που μπορούν να αποφέρουν άμεσα αποτελέσματα για τους νέους που δεν βρίσκουν εργασία. Πρέπει να ολοκληρωθεί και να τεθεί σε εφαρμογή πριν από το τέλος του 2012 ένα σχέδιο δράσης για την προώθηση της απασχόλησης των νέων, μεταξύ άλλων, μέσω της κατάρτισης και της επιχειρηματικότητας».

([1]) COM(2012)183 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004830/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Growth in Greece

The consumer confidence index fell to historically low levels in Greece during the first quarter of 2012, according to figures from the latest Nielsen Global Consumer survey. Consumer confidence in Greece was lower than ever in the first quarter of 2012, with a second successive fall in the consumer confidence index to an all-time low of 37 points.

The survey stressed that the 'sharp rise in unemployment, together with protracted austerity, fuels pessimism among consumers and limits spending'. Furthermore, employment prospects are the greatest source of anxiety for Greeks, affecting 48% of the population, which is the highest figure not only in Europe but also in the world. Greeks are also very anxious about the economy (41%) and personal debt (31%).

Will the Commission say how it can boost growth in Greece and what action plan could be implemented?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

The ultimate objectives of the economic adjustment programme of Greece is to correct the fiscal and external imbalances of the Greek economy which are necessary to restoring sustainable growth and jobs in a medium-term perspective. In a context of liquidity constraints and given the size of the required fiscal adjustment, the programme is supported by unprecedented financial assistance provided by the euro area Member States and the IMF.

The programme includes a wide-range of growth-enhancing policies which aim at modernising the public sector, rendering product and labour markets more efficient and flexible, and creating a business environment that is friendly to investors.

In its communication 'Growth for Greece' ([1]) issued on 18 April 2012, the Commission elaborates on the action plan that will ensure the success of economic policies and the return to growth according to a specific timetable. For example and as discussed in the communication, 'a re-orientation of EU funding of around EUR 200-250 million from the ESF could be allocated under existing operational programmes to support measures which can deliver immediate results for job-seekers. An action plan to promote youth employment, including training and entrepreneurship, should be finalised and implemented before end-2012'.

([1]) COM(2012)183 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004831/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Χρηματοδότηση ερευνών για τη διευκόλυνση των ατόμων με αναπηρίες

Με πολλά ψυχικά αποθέματα και με τη βοήθεια της τεχνολογίας, η Κλερ Λόμας από το Λέστερσαϊρ, που εξαιτίας ενός ατυχήματος έμεινε παράλυτη, είναι η πρώτη που ολοκλήρωσε τον μαραθώνιο του Λονδίνου φορώντας μια «βιονική» φόρμα. Η συσκευή, που της επιτρέπει να κινείται κανονικά ανιχνεύοντας αλλαγές στην ισορροπία του σώματός της, συνολικά κοστίζει 53 399 ευρώ (43 000 λίρες Αγγλίας) και ο άθλος της ολοκληρώθηκε με σκοπό να συλλέξει χρήματα για έρευνες που αφορούν την αποκατάσταση ασθενών με κινητικά προβλήματα από ατυχήματα. Η 32χρονη Λόμας έχασε τη δυνατότητα να κινεί το σώμα της από το στήθος και κάτω το 2007, όταν, σε μια εκδρομή για ιππασία, έπεσε από το άλογο που ίππευε.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν χρηματοδοτούνται μελέτες σχετικές με την διευκόλυνση της καθημερινότητας των ατόμων που έχουν κινητικά προβλήματα και στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ.

Απάντηση της κας Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή θέσπισε, τον Νοέμβριο 2010, την Ευρωπαϊκή Στρατηγική για την αναπηρία για την περίοδο 2010-2020. Η στρατηγική αυτή έχει στόχο να διευκολύνει την κοινωνική και επαγγελματική ένταξη όλων των ατόμων με αναπηρία, και να διασφαλίσει ότι τα άτομα αυτά μπορούν να ασκούν πλήρως τα δικαιώματά τους όπως προβλέπονται στη Σύμβαση των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τα δικαιώματα των ατόμων με αναπηρία.

Η Στρατηγική περιλαμβάνει επίσης στήριξη για την έρευνα στον τομέα των νέων τεχνολογιών που αφορούν τόσο την υποστηρικτική τεχνολογία όσο και προσβάσιμες διαδεδομένες λύσεις. Ειδικότερα, περιλαμβάνει την προαγωγή της γνώσης και της καινοτομίας στην υποστηρικτική τεχνολογία, καθώς και μελέτη σχετική με την αγορά υποστηρικτικής τεχνολογίας με σκοπό τη βελτίωση της λειτουργίας της και απώτερο στόχο οι καρποί της έρευνας να φθάσουν στους εν δυνάμει χρήστες. Η χρηματοδότηση της έρευνας που αφορά τα άτομα με αναπηρία θα επιτευχθεί με τη βοήθεια διαφόρων μέσων, μεταξύ των οποίων το 7ο Πρόγραμμα-πλαίσιο και το προτεινόμενο διάδοχο πλαίσιο Horizon 2020.

Εξάλλου, η προσβασιμότητα αποτελεί τον πρώτο από τους οκτώ βασικούς τομείς δράσης της Στρατηγικής: η βελτίωση των συνθηκών εντός του δομημένου περιβάλλοντος, των μεταφορών, των επικοινωνιών και κάθε μορφής υπηρεσιών θεωρείται ως καθοριστικός παράγων για την ένταξη ατόμων με αναπηρία και ηλικιωμένων πολιτών. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Πράξη για την προσβασιμότητα είναι μία από τις δράσεις που προβλέπονται στην Στρατηγική. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ετοιμάζει πρόταση για δεσμευτικά από νομική άποψη μέτρα αποσκοπώντας στη δημιουργία ευνοϊκότερων συνθηκών για την ανάπτυξη μιας αγοράς που θα λειτουργεί σωστά για προσβάσιμα αγαθά και υπηρεσίες. Με τον τρόπο αυτό θα διευκολύνεται η συμμετοχή των ατόμων με αναπηρία στο κοινωνικό σύνολο, στην καθημερινή τους ζωή και σε ίσους όρους με τον υπόλοιπο πληθυσμό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004831/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Funding research to assist people with disabilities

With incredible determination and with the help of technology, Claire Lomas from Leicestershire, who was paralysed following an accident, is the first person to have completed the London Marathon wearing a 'bionic' suit. The device enables her to move normally by detecting changes in her bodily equilibrium and costs EUR 53 399 (GBP 43 000) in total. She completed her feat in order to raise money for research on the rehabilitation of patients with reduced mobility resulting from accidents. Lomas, 32, lost the ability to move her body from the chest downwards when she fell from the horse she was riding during an outing in 2007.

Will the Commission say whether funding is also being provided for research on making everyday life easier for people with reduced mobility in the EU Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

The European Commission adopted the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 in November 2010. The strategy aims at facilitating the social and occupational integration of all persons with a disability, and ensuring that they can fully exercise their rights as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The strategy also included support of research on new technologies addressing both assistive technology and accessible mainstream solutions. In particular, it includes the promotion of knowledge and innovation in assistive technology, and a study on the assistive technology market with a view to improve its functioning; the objective will be to make sure that the fruits of research reach their potential users. Funding of research relevant to persons with disabilities will happen through different instruments, including FP7 and its proposed successor, Horizon 2020.

Furthermore, accessibility is the first of the strategy's eight focus areas: the improvement of conditions in the built environment, transport, communications and all forms of services is seen as key for social inclusion of disabled and elderly citizens. The European Accessibility Act is an action foreseen by the strategy; the European Commission is preparing a proposal for legally binding measures, aiming at creating more favourable conditions for the development of a well-functioning market in accessible mainstream goods and services. This will facilitate the participation in society of persons with disabilities in their everyday life on an equal footing with the rest of the population.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004832/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI) en Lucas Hartong (NI)
(10 mei 2012)

Betreft: Vliegtaks miljoenenstrop voor Europese luchtvaartmaatschappijen

Christoph Franz, topman van Lufthansa, heeft onlangs verklaard dat de kosten voor Lufthansa voor de Europese CO_2-emissierechten (vliegtaks) 100 miljoen euro zullen bedragen ([1]). De topman van Lufthansa verwacht dat deze kosten de komende jaren verder oplopen en dat passagiers hiervoor zullen opdraaien. Eerder heeft de vliegmaatschappij KLM al gewaarschuwd voor de consequenties van de vliegtaks ([2]).

1. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat kritiek van grote vliegmaatschappijen als Lufthansa en KLM ter harte moet worden genomen en deze kritiek eens te meer het failliet van de vliegtaks bevestigt? Zo neen, waarom niet?

2. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat de vliegtaks de doodsteek betekent voor de Europese luchtvaartsector, die al in economisch zwaar weer verkeert? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat, gezien de kritiek binnen en buiten Europa van landen, consumenten en vliegmaatschappijen, er geen enkel draagvlak meer bestaat voor de Europese vliegtaks en dat het opheffen daarvan onontkoombaar is? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat zo laag mogelijke heffingen een enorme stimulans voor het economisch herstel in Europa zijn? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(22 juni 2012)

Het is belangrijk te verduidelijken dat de EU-regeling voor de handel in emissierechten (ETS) geen taks of heffing is, maar veeleer een limiet stelt aan broeikasgasemissies — individuele luchtvaartmaatschappijen hoeven in principe niemand iets te betalen zolang zij zich houden aan de beperkingen die voortvloeien uit dit uitstootplafond. Het merendeel van de emissierechten die samen het plafond vormen, wordt kosteloos onder de luchtvaartindustrie verdeeld en hoewel algemeen wordt aangenomen dat de sector gemiddeld genomen aanvullende emissierechten zal moeten kopen, zullen de extra kosten van de EU-ETS per passagier naar verwachting zeer laag zijn. Voorts verwijst de Commissie de geachte Parlementsleden naar haar antwoord op de schriftelijke vraag E-000817/2012 ([3]) van de heer Liam Aylsward.

De Commissie merkt op dat de EU-ETS-wetgeving met overweldigende steun in het Europees Parlement en van de lidstaten is goedgekeurd en niet eenvoudigweg kan worden „opgeheven". De EU blijft zich inzetten voor de ontwikkeling en uitvoering van kosteneffectieve maatregelen en strategieën ter bestrijding van de klimaatverandering teneinde de EU-doelstellingen voor 2020 en daarna te halen, met name met betrekking tot de vermindering van haar broeikasgasemissies, inclusief die van de luchtvaart.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/nieuws_dft/12082394/__Lufthansa__emissiehandel_kost_100_miljoen__.html
([2]) http://managementscope.nl/manager/peter-hartman/emissiehandel-eu; http://www.opreis.nl/vliegtaks-raakt-klm.
([3]) http://europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004832/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI) and Lucas Hartong (NI)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Flight tax costs European airlines millions

Lufthansa CEO Christoph Franz has recently stated that the European emissions trading scheme (flight tax) will cost Lufthansa EUR 100 million ([1]). He expects that these costs will increase further over the coming years and that passengers will have to foot the bill. KLM Airlines had already warned of the consequences of the flight tax ([2]).

1. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that criticism by major airlines such as Lufthansa and KLM should be taken seriously and that this criticism is another confirmation of the failure of the flight tax? If not, why not?

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the flight tax is a fatal blow to the European airline industry, which is already suffering economic difficulties? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that in view of the criticism from countries, consumers and airlines inside and outside Europe, there is no basis for the European flight tax and that scrapping it is unavoidable? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that keeping taxes as low as possible would boost Europe's economic recovery? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(22 June 2012)

It is important to clarify that the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is not a tax or charge but rather places a 'cap' on greenhouse gas emissions — individual airlines are in principle not required to pay anything to anybody as long as they respect the limitiations resulting from this pollution ceiling. The majority of emissions allowances that together constitute the cap will be distributed to the aviation industry free of charge and although the sector is generally expected on average to need to buy additional allowances the extra cost of the EU ETS per passenger is expected to be very low. The Commission would further refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000817/2012 ([3]) by Mr Liam Aylsward.

The Commission notes that the EU ETS legislation was adopted with overwhelming support in the European Parliament and from the Member States and cannot simply be 'scrapped'. The EU remains committed to developing and implementing cost effective climate change policies and strategies in order for the EU to meet its targets for 2020 and beyond, especially with regard to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, including from aviation.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/nieuws_dft/12082394/__Lufthansa__emissiehandel_kost_100_miljoen__.html
([2]) http://managementscope.nl/manager/peter-hartman/emissiehandel-eu; http://www.opreis.nl/vliegtaks-raakt-klm.
([3]) http://europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004833/12
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Proposta dell'emittente televisiva Al Quds Educational

L'emittente palestinese Al Quds Educational Television, che ha collaborato con l'Unione europea per diversi programmi, vorrebbe creare un nuovo canale satellitare indipendente.

Alla luce dell'incursione israeliana che il 29 febbraio 2012 ha colpito la sede dell'emittente televisiva a Ramallah, durante la quale è avvenuto il sequestro di computer e apparecchiature per la trasmissione a causa di supposte interferenze con i sistemi di comunicazione israeliani, fatti dai quali è scaturita la risoluzione P7_TA(2012)0093 del PE, ritiene la Commissione che questo progetto possa essere risolutivo del suddetto problema delle interferenze?

Inoltre, la proposta dell'emittente consiste concretamente nella trasmissione di programmi per bambini altamente educativi sui seguenti temi: ambiente, salute, inclusione sociale. Essi saranno sviluppati in collaborazione con organizzazioni internazionali e ONG come UNICEF e Save the Children. Grazie alla connessione con la rete satellitare egiziana NILESAT, i programmi non saranno visibili solo nei territori palestinesi ma nell'intera regione araba, promuovendo ovunque cultura e benessere. Il budget stimato per tre anni ammonta a 1 053 700 euro.

Alla luce di quanto precede, sarebbe la Commissione interessata a dare un sostegno finanziario al progetto?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(2 agosto 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'incursione citata e l'AR/VP Ashton ha affermato il 3 giugno 2012 che essa viola gli accordi di Oslo.

Il sistema radiotelevisivo e i media non rappresentano un settore primario per l'UE nel quadro della ripartizione dei compiti tra i donatori nei territori palestinesi occupati e la Commissione non prevede di proporre finanziamenti UE per progetti in questo campo. Esiste però la possibilità di avvalersi dei vari inviti a presentare proposte di progetti per strumenti tematici e del programma specifico Euromed Audiovisivo III per i paesi vicini dell'area meridionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004833/12
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Broadcasts by the Al Quds Educational Television station

The Palestinian broadcaster Al Quds Educational Television, which has collaborated with the European Union on various programmes, plans to create a new independent satellite channel.

In view of the Israeli raid on the headquarters of this television station in Ramallah on 29 February 2012, during which computers and broadcasting equipment were seized on the grounds of alleged interference with Israeli communications systems, triggering European Parliament Resolution P7_TA(2012)0093, does the Commission feel that this project might resolve the issue of interference?

Besides this, the services the television station actually provides consist of broadcasting highly educational programmes for children on the following topics: the environment, health and social inclusion. These are to be developed in conjunction with international organisations and NGOs such as Unicef and Save the Children. Thanks to the link-up with the Egyptian satellite network NILESAT, these programmes will be available not only in the Palestinian territories but throughout Arab countries, promoting culture and well-being generally, at an estimated three-year budget of EUR 1 053 700.

In view of the above, would the Commission consider it worthwhile providing financial support for the project?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2012)

The Commission is aware of the raid in question and HR/VP Ashton has stated on 3 June 2012 that such an incursion is a breach of the Oslo Agreements.

Broadcasting and media is not a focal sector for the EU in the framework of the division of labour between donors in occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and the Commission has no plans to propose EU funding of projects in this field. There is however the possibility of submitting project proposals under the different calls for thematic instruments and the specific Euromed Audiovisual III programme for the Neighbourhood South countries.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-004835/12
Komisi
Jan Březina (PPE)
(10. května 2012)

Předmět: Další plánované návštěvy jaderných zařízení nad rámec provedených zátěžových testů

Dne 9. 5. 2012 na slyšení ve výboru ITRE – strukturovaný dialog EP/EK v rámci diskuse o výsledcích zátěžových testů komisař Oettinger zmínil další plánované návštěvy konkrétních jaderných zařízení. Mezi těmito zařízeními byl mimo jiné jmenován Temelín v ČR.

— Jsou důvodem tohoto avizovaného kroku politické souvislosti spojené s existencí a zvažovaným rozšířením tohoto zařízení, nebo je tato návštěva zamýšlena jako pokračování zátěžových testů prováděných ENSREG?

— Ať už by se jednalo o první nebo druhý případ, o jaký právní základ nebo jiný mandát hodlá Komise tyto návštěvy opřít?

— Disponuje Komise pro tyto návštěvy konkrétním zmocněním, a pokud ano, jakým?

— Souhlasí Komise s názorem, že v opačném případě by se nutně jednalo o svévolný postup postrádající oprávnění?

Odpověď G. Oettingera jménem Komise
(22. června 2012)

Zasedání Evropské rady ze dne 25. března 2011, jež vyzvalo k zahájení komplexních posouzení rizik a bezpečnosti (zátěžových testů) u evropských jaderných elektráren, požádalo Skupinu evropských dozorných orgánů pro jadernou bezpečnost (ENSREG) a Komisi o vymezení oblasti působnosti a postupů zátěžových testů. Na základě tohoto pověření schválily ENSREG a Komise dne 26. dubna 2012 zprávu panelu pro vzájemné hodnocení týkající se zátěžových testů a vydaly společné prohlášení ([1]), v němž je stanoveno, že se ENSREG a Komise dohodly na navržení akčního plánu obsahujícího tyto dodatkové prvky k dosavadní práci: provádění doporučení vyplývajících ze zprávy o vzájemném hodnocení; provádění akčního plánu MAAE (Mezinárodní agentura pro atomovou energii) o jaderné bezpečnosti; výsledky druhého mimořádného zasedání Úmluvy o jaderné bezpečnosti, jež se má konat v srpnu 2012, a další návštěvy lokalit. Komise předloží Evropské radě sdělení, které zohlední tyto dodatečné prvky spolu se zprávou o vzájemném hodnocení.

Další návštěvy jaderných zařízení jsou tedy součástí akčního plánu, na jehož navržení se dozorné orgány EU pro jadernou bezpečnost a Komise nedávno dohodly. Podrobnosti týkající se tohoto akčního plánu, včetně výběru jaderných zařízení pro další návštěvy, ještě nebyly dohodnuty.

Je třeba rovněž poznamenat, že zátěžové testy provádějí dobrovolně všechny členské státy EU, které mají jaderné elektrárny, spolu se Švýcarskem a Ukrajinou. Všechny členské státy EU souhlasily, že jaderné elektrárny na svém území podrobí zátěžovým testům na základě specifikací a metodiky schválených všemi dozornými orgány EU pro jadernou bezpečnost a Komisí. Tato metodika vyžaduje, aby byl hodnotícím týmům v případě potřeby umožněn přístup k dokumentaci a zařízením.

([1]) http://www.ensreg.eu/node/389.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004835/12
to the Commission
Jan Březina (PPE)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Further planned visits to nuclear installations beyond the stress tests conducted

At the hearing of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy on 9 May 2012 — a structured European Parliament/European Commission dialogue as part of the discussion on the results of the stress tests — Commissioner Oettinger mentioned further planned visits to specific nuclear installations. One of the installations named was Temelín in the Czech Republic.

— Is this step being taken because of the political factors relating to the existence of this installation and its possible expansion, or is the visit intended to be a continuation of the stress tests carried out by the Nuclear Safety Regulators Group?

— Whichever of the above is the case, on what legal basis or other mandate does the Commission intend to base these visits?

— Does the Commission have specific authorisation for these visits, and if so, of what type?

— Does the Commission agree with the view that, if no such authorisation has been granted, this would necessarily be an arbitrary and unauthorised step?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 June 2012)

The European Council of 25 March 2011, which called for the launch of comprehensive risk and safety assessments (stress tests) on European nuclear power plants, invited the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) and the Commission to define the scope and modalities of the stress tests. On the basis of this mandate, ENSREG and the Commission endorsed on 26 April 2012 the peer review board report on stress tests and issued a joint statement ([1]) where it is stipulated that ENSREG and the Commission agreed to propose an action plan which shall comprise the following additional elements to the work done so far: implementation of the recommendations of the peer review report; implementation of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) action plan on nuclear safety; the outcomes of the 2nd extraordinary meeting of the Convention of Nuclear Safety, which is scheduled to take place in August 2012, and additional site visits. The Commission will present to the European Council a communication which will take into account these additional elements as well as the peer review report.

Thus, additional visits to nuclear facilities form part of the action plan which the EU nuclear safety regulators and the Commission have recently agreed to propose. The details of this action plan, including the choice of nuclear sites for additional visits have not yet been decided upon.

It should also be noted that stress tests are carried out on a voluntary basis by all EU Member States with nuclear facilities, Switzerland and Ukraine. All EU Member States agreed to subject nuclear power plants in their territory to stress tests, based on the specifications and methodology agreed between all EU nuclear safety regulators and the Commission. The methodology requires peer teams to access documents and facilities as needed.

([1]) http://www.ensreg.eu/node/389.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004836/12
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: EU citizens who need incandescent light bulbs for health reasons

The Standing Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCEHNIR) stated in its report of 19 March 2012 on 'Health Effects of Artificial Light' that some EU citizens are exceptionally sensitive to UV/blue light exposure. The report adds that more research is needed to examine the serious concerns raised by patient groups regarding the safety of all currently available forms of low energy lighting. A paper is now about to be published in a peer-reviewed journal refuting a part of the evidence on which the committee relied when claiming that energy saving bulbs are safe to use.

In the UK, the Spectrum Alliance of charities and support groups estimates that the number of citizens affected is 2 million in the UK alone. It believes that the high level of blue light and the spectral distribution of low energy lights may form the main cause of many of the problems. This would make it impossible for any of the current forms of low-energy lighting to meet the health requirements of those affected. There are other potential causes, such as high-frequency flicker and radio frequency emissions, that have not as yet been fully researched. The same source adds that it has often been suggested that envelope CFLs or LEDs may be a suitable substitute. A double envelope only delays the inevitable effects. LED lighting, although an improvement on CFLs, has both an erratic spectral pattern and a high level of blue light. LEDs also have various issues related to radio frequency emission and high frequency flicker. This is true of the latest soft white LEDs experimented with in September 2011.

1. In view of the SCENIHR report published in March 2012 acknowledging that there are major gaps in research on the health effects of low energy lighting, will the Commission work to create an exemption from the ban on incandescent lighting for those with specific medical needs?

2. What representations has the UK Government made to the Commission on obtaining such an exemption?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 June 2012)

1. The Commission does not consider it necessary to update the regulation on household lamps 244/2009 ([1]) to provide an exemption from the ban on incandescent lighting for those with specific medical needs.

According to the recent opinion of the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCEHNIR) ([2]), there already existsuitable alternatives to incandescent bulbs for all light-sensitive patients, including certain halogen bulbs, compact fluorescent lamps and light-emitting diode lamps. SCENIHR recognise that the light spectrum can differ from one lamp model to the other, and recommend that sufficient information is provided to healthcare professionals and their patients to allow them to choose their lighting solutions optimally.

The Commission has forwarded SCENIHR's opinion to the competent authorities of the Member States dealing with product safety under the applicable EU safety legislation ([3]).

2. In a letter dated 17 May 2012, the UK Government urged the Commission services to arrange for research on the relationship between artificial lighting and various health conditions before 2014, and to encourage a voluntary industry initiative which would develop a list of lamp models suitable for light-sensitive individuals along with supporting information. There has been no suggestion from the UK Government for an exemption for those with specific medical needs.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 244/2009 of 18 March 2009 implementing Directive 2005/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to ecodesign requirements for non-directional household lamps, OJ L 76, 24.3.2009.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_o_035.pdf
([3]) The Low Voltage Directive 2006/95/EC (LVD) which, subject to some exceptions, is applicable to electrical equipment designed to operate within the voltage range of between 50 and 1000 V for alternating current and between 75 and 1500 V for direct current, seeks to ensure that electrical equipment within its scope both provide a high level of protection and enjoy free movement within the European Union.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004837/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Violazione della direttiva sul benessere degli animali

Il rapporto «EU Zoo» della fondazione «Born Free», i cui risultati sono stati esposti al Parlamento europeo, rivela che le condizioni di vita degli animali negli zoo europei non sono ottimali.

I giardini zoologici e i bioparchi, a detta dello studio, non si stanno impegnando come dovrebbero per garantire il benessere e la conservazione degli animali.

È palese che tigri, leoni o uccelli tropicali rinchiusi in gabbie che, seppur ampie, di certo non permettono di avere gli spazi che avrebbero nel proprio habitat naturale, crescono in cattività e si comportano in maniera del tutto differente da come si comporterebbero nella savana o nelle foreste. La conferma della sofferenza degli esemplari nati in cattività è stata data recentemente dalla morte prematura dell'orso Knut nello zoo di Berlino.

La fondazione «Born Free» aveva già lanciato l'allarme sul malessere degli animali negli zoo europei nel 2011, a seguito dell'analisi di circa 200 parchi zoologici. I dati hanno rivelato che la maggior parte degli zoo non rispetta la direttiva europea 1999/22/CE per mancanza di personale qualificato, di fondi e di controlli.

Considerato che la direttiva sul benessere degli animali negli zoo non è rispettata da troppi parchi europei, chiedo alla Commissione se intenda monitorare più approfonditamente la situazione per evitare la violazione della direttiva e affinché i milioni di esemplari ospitati nei giardini zoologici europei non soffrano ulteriormente.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(27 giugno 2012)

Compete agli Stati membri adottare le misure necessarie per conformarsi pienamente alle prescrizioni della direttiva 1999/22/CE del Consiglio del 29 marzo 1999 ([1]), incluso lo stanziamento di adeguate risorse. La Commissione sta esaminando attentamente l'indagine «EU Zoos» condotta dalla fondazione Born Free e intrattiene regolari contatti con gli organizzatori dello studio, i quali hanno fatto sapere di essere impegnati in un dialogo costruttivo con vari Stati membri a proposito dei risultati dello studio stesso. La Commissione ha annunciato a Born Free che indagherà su ogni presunta violazione della direttiva sulla base delle prove documentate fornitele.

La Commissione ha già reagito alle carenze constatate nel corso dell'indagine «EU Zoos»; ad esempio, la questione del benessere degli animali selvatici nei giardini zoologici è stata integrata nel programma di formazione, recentemente ultimato, sul benessere animale destinato ai veterinari, nell'ambito del quale sono stati organizzati seminari pratici a Budapest, Barcellona e Riga. Questa problematica è all'esame anche nel contesto della strategia dell'UE per la tutela e il benessere degli animali 2012-2015.

Inoltre, quest'anno la Commissione intraprende uno studio per l'elaborazione di un documento orientativo e di migliori pratiche inteso a incoraggiare l'attuazione della direttiva «zoo». Le autorità degli Stati membri e i principali gruppi di interesse saranno invitati a partecipare a questa iniziativa.

([1]) Direttiva 1999/22/CE del Consiglio, del 29 marzo 1999, relativa alla custodia degli animali selvatici nei giardini zoologici (GU L 94 del 9.4.1999).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004837/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Violation of the Animal Welfare Directive

The 'EU Zoo' report by the Born Free Foundation, the results of which have been presented to the European Parliament, shows that the living conditions of animals in European zoos are not optimal.

According to the study, zoos and wildlife parks are not doing everything they should to ensure the welfare and conservation of the animals.

It is obvious that tigers, lions and tropical birds confined in cages which, although capacious, certainly do not allow them the space they would have in their natural habitats, grow up in captivity and behave in a manner entirely different from that in which they would behave in the savannah or in the forests. Confirmation of the suffering of animals born in captivity was given recently by the premature death of the polar bear Knut at the Berlin Zoo.

The Born Free Foundation had already sounded the alarm in 2011 regarding the plight of animals in European zoos, following a detailed inspection of around 200 zoos. The findings revealed that most zoos do not comply with Council Directive 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos, due to a lack of qualified staff, funds and controls.

Considering that too many European zoos are not complying with the directive on the welfare of animals in zoos, does the Commission propose to monitor the situation more closely in order to prevent the infringement of the directive and ensure that no further suffering is inflicted on the millions of animals kept in European zoos?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

It is up to Member States to take the necessary measures to fully comply with the requirements of Council Directive 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999 ([1]), including the provision of adequate resources. The Commission is carefully following the EU Zoos Inquiry that has been undertaken by the Born Free Foundation. It is in regular contact with the organisers of this study who have indicated that they are actively engaged in dialogue with different Member States about the findings of their study. The Commission has made clear to Born Free that it will investigate any alleged breaches of the directive, on the basis of clear evidence that is provided.

The Commission has already responded to shortcomings identified in the EU Zoos Inquiry. For example, the issue of the welfare of wild animals in Zoos has been included in the recently finalised programme of training for Veterinarians in Animal Welfare for which workshops have taken place in Budapest, Barcelona, and Riga. It is also being considered in the context of the EU Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals, 2012-2015.

The Commission is also undertaking a study this year to produce a guidance and best practice document to support the implementation of the Zoos Directive. Member State authorities and key stakeholder groups will be invited to participate in this initiative.

([1]) Council Directive of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos. 1999/22/EC. (OJ L 94, 9.4.1999).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004838/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Tecnologia del tablet: funzione hotspot bloccata — possibile violazione del gioco della concorrenza

Una nota società informatica di grande successo ha implementato la funzione Hotspot Personale Wi-Fi (c.d. tethering) sul nuovo tablet; tuttavia, gli operatori telefonici italiani hanno «bloccato» questa funzione; fa eccezione un solo operatore che non è partner ufficiale dell'azienda e che è l'unico a consentire il tethering al momento del post. L'unica soluzione praticabile per gli utenti viene da un piccolo hack che non richiede jailbreak da cui si può ottenere l'hotspot, ma prevede l'installazione di un carrier bundlle, o file ipcc, modificato. Il che comporta, evidentemente, il rischio di invalidare la garanzia del software originale. Ad essere colpiti sono tutti gli utenti del tablet con funzioni di rete mobile (UMTS/HSPA); di fatto, il blocco della funzione comporta che l'apparecchio carichi una versione software personalizzata per quei tre operatori con le giuste configurazioni per connettersi, ma senza hotspot. In buona sostanza, i clienti non possono condividere con altri terminali (cellulari, computer) la connessione internet attiva sulle sim dei tre operatori.

La situazione trova conferma nelle numerose segnalazioni che molti utenti hanno formulato da diversi mesi sui vari forum. Emerge, inoltre, che la vicenda è legata ad una precisa scelta contrattuale dell'azienda americana attiva su operatori telefonici anche di altri Paesi europei: far pagare «a parte» il tethering, rispetto al normale canone internet mobile. In particolare, la società informatica avrebbe cercato di contrattare una percentuale di quel costo addizionale e, nel frattempo, ha bloccato il tethering. Si spiega così il motivo per cui gli utenti di un unico operatore telefonico non hanno problemi. Con quest'operatore, infatti, la società statunitense non ha accordi commerciali. È evidente che le denunce degli utenti costituiscono un segnale inequivocabile della volontà degli operatori telefonici coperti dall'accordo di esclusiva con l'azienda in questione di ostacolare un canale distributivo, che potrebbe costituire un efficace volano di concorrenza tra gli operatori sul mercato europeo, con evidenti vantaggi per gli utenti finali.

Alla luce del principio della libera circolazione dei servizi all'interno dell'UE e dell'interpretazione data dai giudici comunitari dell'articolo 101 TFUE, la normativa europea a tutela della concorrenza e del libero mercato sembrerebbe essere applicabile in questo caso, proprio laddove vieta, in certe condizioni, la collusione fra società che comporti restrizioni della concorrenza.

Chiedo, pertanto, alla Commissione se — indicati i presupposti per l'applicabilità della normativa comunitaria richiamata — intenda svolgere indagini che chiariscano la posizione della società americana e degli operatori telefonici coinvolti sul mercato europeo.

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2012)

L'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento alla funzione «Hotspot Personale» inclusa in alcuni nuovi tablet e smartphone, che sarebbe stata bloccata da alcuni operatori di telefonia mobile italiani. Tale funzione consente all'utente di usare il tablet o lo smartphone come modem per connettere a Internet altri dispositivi quali i laptop («tethering»). Secondo l'onorevole parlamentare, la funzione è stata disattivata da uno o più produttori per ragioni contrattuali, per costringere gli utenti a pagarla separatamente e ricevere una percentuale delle entrate aggiuntive degli operatori mobili.

La questione sollevata dall'onorevole parlamentare richiede una valutazione complessa dei possibili accordi verticali tra il produttore/i produttori e i distributori dei prodotti. Nel valutare tali accordi la Commissione deve prendere conoscenza di tutti gli elementi di fatto pertinenti, in particolare la situazione del mercato, la posizione delle parti sul mercato e le eventuali giustificazioni obiettive delle prassi denunciate. Se confermati, gli accordi in questione potrebbero rientrare nel campo di applicazione dell'articolo 101 del TFUE.

La Commissione è grata all'onorevole parlamentare per aver sollevato il problema della conformità delle prassi in questione con le norme dell'UE in materia di concorrenza e, considerando che tali prassi potrebbero influenzare negativamente i consumatori, intende seguire attentamente gli sviluppi della situazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004838/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Tablet technology: hotspot function blocked — possible infringement of free competition

A well-known and highly successful computer company has implemented the Personal WiFi Hotspot ('tethering') function on its new tablet. However, Italian telecom operators have 'blocked' this function, apart from a single operator which is not an official partner of the company and is the only one allowing tethering at the time of writing. The only practical solution for users comes from a small hack which does not require 'jailbreaking' in order to be able to use the hotspot function, but involves the installation of a modified carrier bundle or ipcc file. Obviously, this solution carries the risk of invalidating the original software warranty. Those affected are all users of tablet devices with mobile network functions (UMTS/HSPA); the blocking of the function involves the device being loaded with a software version personalised for these three operators with the proper configuration for connecting, but that does not have the hotspot function. In essence, the customers cannot share with other terminals (mobile phones, computers) the Internet connection active on the SIMs of the three operators.

This situation is confirmed by the numerous reports made in various forums by large numbers of users over a number of months. It also emerges that this matter is linked to a specific contractual choice by the American company, which also affects telecom operators in other European countries: to make users pay for tethering separately, over and above the normal mobile Internet charge. In particular, the computer company is said to be trying to negotiate a percentage of this additional cost, and meanwhile has blocked the tethering function. This explains why the users of a single telecom operator are not having any problems: the American company does not have any commercial agreement with this operator. It is clear that the users' complaints provide unequivocal evidence of the desire of the telecom operators covered by the exclusivity agreement with the company in question to obstruct a distribution channel that could constitute an effective driver of competition between operators on the European market, with evident benefits for end-users.

In view of the principle of free movement of services within the EU and the interpretation given by the Community judges to Article 101 TFEU, EU rules on the protection of competition and the free market would appear to apply in this case, inasmuch as they prohibit, under certain conditions, any collusion between companies involving restrictions on competition.

Given that the applicability conditions in respect of the Community legislation referred to are fulfilled, will the Commission carry out investigations to clarify the position of the American company and of the telecom operators involved on the European market?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

The Honourable Member refers to the 'Personal Hotspot' function that is included in some new tablets and smartphones and that has allegedly been blocked by some Italian mobile operators. This function allows the user to use the tablet or smartphone as a modem to connect other devices such as laptops to the Internet ('tethering'). The Honourable Member considers that the function has been disabled by the manufacturer(s) for contractual reasons, with a view to making the users pay separately for it and receiving a share of the additional revenues of the mobile operators.

The issue raised by the Honourable Member involves a complex assessment of possible vertical agreements between the manufacturer(s) and the distributors of the products concerned. When assessing such agreements the Commission has to ascertain all relevant facts, in particular the market situation, the position of the parties in the market as well as a possible objective justification for the alleged practices. It cannot be excluded that such agreements, if confirmed, may fall within the scope of Article 101 TFEU.

The Commission appreciates that the Honourable Member has raised the issue of compliance of the said practices with EU competition rules. Given that such practices could adversely affect consumers, the Commission will follow developments closely.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004839/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Medicina rigenerativa — microimpalcature per lesioni dei nervi

Una struttura a nido d'ape — ideata e testata per ora solo in provetta — come microimpalcatura per riparare nervi lesionati, ad esempio in seguito ad un incidente d'auto; si tratta di microscopici sostegni su cui aderiscono e crescono cellule umane, le quali creano un tessuto con una forma ben definita e seguono la conformazione della struttura stessa, fatta di acido polilattico (sostanza da alcuni anni introdotta in medicina estetica contro le rughe). In un lavoro pubblicato sulla rivista Biofabrication, il team di Frederik Claeyssens dell'University of Sheffield (Regno Unito), ha evidenziato il potenziale di questa particolare microimpalcatura, con l'obiettivo di presentarne gli sviluppi scientifici e le condizioni d'impiego. Le applicazioni cliniche dei risultati di questi studi sono ormai una realtà consolidata in medicina rigenerativa, soprattutto per la ricostruzione di vescica e trachea. La medicina rigenerativa offre, di fatto, una nuova filosofia di approccio alla malattia, poiché consente la rigenerazione biologica da parte del corpo del paziente del tessuto/organo deteriorato, anziché la sua sostituzione con una protesi o un trapianto.

Considerato che:

— il graduale processo di armonizzazione dei principi applicabili a tutti i medicinali biotecnologici moderni attualmente disciplinati a livello comunitario merita di essere incoraggiato e promosso fra tutti gli Stati membri;

— da diversi anni l'ingegneria tessutale rappresenta una delle più importanti frontiere in ambito biomedico, con lo scopo specifico di riparare i tessuti e gli organi danneggiati da malattie, traumi o semplice invecchiamento e quindi di ripristinare quelle funzioni perse degli organismi viventi;

— le incognite economiche legate alle incertezze o ai rapidi sviluppi in campo scientifico ed i costi rilevanti degli studi provocano forti ritardi nella realizzazione di investimenti significativi e durevoli nel settore dei medicinali, e più precisamente di quelli per le terapie di bioingegneria cellulare;

chiedo alla Commissione di indicare:

— quali misure intenda promuovere a tutela del paziente, soprattutto nell'utilizzo della medicina rigenerativa, poiché le nuove tecnologie lasciano intravedere grandi speranze di eliminare le sofferenze umane e di rispondere ad attese legittime;

— se intenda aumentare il budget fissato per il cofinanziamento delle ricerche in tale ambito, effettuate mediante test essenziali e studi internazionali, proprio come quello sopra menzionato sulla creazione di microimpalcature per le lesioni del sistema nervoso.

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(29 giugno 2012)

Nell'Unione europea la tutela dei pazienti è garantita in qualsiasi ricerca che coinvolge gli esseri umani. Gli studi che coinvolgono esseri umani possono cominciare solo dopo l'ottenimento delle opportune autorizzazioni legali ed etiche a livello degli Stati membri e la normativa unionale garantisce che ciò avvenga. La direttiva «Sperimentazione clinica» (direttiva 2001/20/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio) ([1]), in corso di revisione, garantisce tra l'altro la sicurezza e i diritti dei pazienti. Il regolamento «Medicinali per terapie avanzate» (regolamento (CE) n. 1394/2007 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio) ([2]) contempla terapie avanzate quali la terapia genica, la terapia cellulare somatica e l'ingegneria tessutale, che offrono nuove opportunità per la cura di malattie.

Per quanto riguarda il bilancio unionale per il finanziamento della medicina rigenerativa, nel corso degli ultimi 5-6 anni la Commissione ha bandito una serie di inviti a presentare proposte riguardanti in modo specifico tale branca della medicina, che hanno portato a finanziare 31 progetti con 215 milioni di EUR.

([1]) GU L 121 dell'1.5.2011.
([2]) GU L 324 del 10.12.2007.

La proposta della Commissione che istituisce Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020), individua in «Salute, evoluzione demografica e benessere» una delle sei sfide che la società si troverà ad affrontare, ed è probabile che tale settore fornisca opportunità alla ricerca sulla medicina rigenerativa. È ancora troppo presto per stabilire quali temi di ricerca specifici possano essere affrontati in tale contesto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004839/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Regenerative medicine — microscaffolds for damaged nerves

Honeycomb structures — existing only in the test-tube for the moment — may be used as microscaffolds for repairing damaged nerves, for example following a car accident. These are microscopic supports made from polylactic acid (a substance introduced some years ago in aesthetic medicine for countering wrinkles) on which human cells adhere and grow, to create a tissue with a well-defined shape, under the guidance of the underlying support. In a study published in the journal Biofabrication, a team led by Frederik Claeyssens of the University of Sheffield (United Kingdom) has highlighted the potential of this particular microscaffold, outlining the ways in which it might be further developed and used. Microscaffolds are already being used in regenerative medicine, particularly for bladder and trachea reconstruction. Regenerative medicine offers a new approach to the treatment of disease, since it allows a damaged tissue/organ to be regenerated biologically by the patient's body, rather than being replaced with a prosthesis or transplant.

Given that

— progressive harmonisation of the principles applicable to all modern biotechnological medicines, which are governed at EU level, should be promoted among all the Member States,

— for some years now, tissue engineering has been one of the most important fields of biomedicine, its specific aim being to repair tissues and organs damaged by disease, trauma or simple ageing, thus restoring lost functions in living organisms,

— the economic uncertainty resulting from the unpredictability and speed of scientific developments, together with the high cost of research, are severely hampering significant long-term investment in the development of treatments, in particular cellular bioengineering therapies,

can the Commission say:

— what steps it intends to take to protect patients, particularly in relation to the use of regenerative medicine, given that these new technologies offer great hope for alleviating human suffering and meeting legitimate expectations;

— whether it intends to increase the budget for the co-financing of research in this field, involving essential tests and international studies along the lines of the above study into the development of microscaffolds for nervous system damage?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

In the EU, the protection of patients is ensured in any research involving human beings. Studies involving humans can only begin after relevant legal and ethical approvals have been received at Member State level, and EU legislation ensures this. The 'Clinical trials directive' 2001/20/EC ([1]), currently under revision, ensures among other the safety and rights of patients. The 'Advanced therapy medicinal products regulation' (EC1394/2007) ([2]) addresses advanced therapies, such as gene therapy, somatic cell therapy and tissue engineering which offer new opportunities for the treatment of diseases of the human body.

Concerning the EU budget for funding of regenerative medicine, during the last 5-6 years, the Commission launched a series of calls for proposals specifically addressing regenerative medicine and resulting in 31 projects funded with EUR 215 million.

([1]) OJ L 121, 1.5.2011.
([2]) OJ L 324, 10.12.2007.

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) identifies 'Health, demographic change and well-being' as one of the six societal challenges to be tackled, likely to provide opportunities for research on regenerative medicine. It is yet too premature to ascertain which could be the specific research issues addressed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004840/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Spazzatura che si trasforma in acqua mediante l'uso dei batteri

Un'azienda asiatica che da nove anni si occupa della trasformazione e della certificazione di macchinari «Green Product» ad oggi sta promuovendo una nuova tecnologia di smaltimento dei rifiuti urbani organici. La decomposizione di questi scarti alimentari si ottiene grazie a un processo biologico che impiega batteri prodotti in laboratorio.

Queste piccole particelle biologiche assorbono i rifiuti alimentari e li trasformano in acqua inodore e cristallina. Il liquido derivante non è assolutamente potabile e di nessun uso domestico, ma sarebbe molto utile alle aziende agricole e alle industrie poiché l'acqua prodotta ha proprietà fertilizzanti.

I vantaggi dell'innovativo sistema di smaltimento sono moltissimi. In primo luogo, esso consente una diminuzione sostanziale dei rifiuti che andrebbero smaltiti con le tecniche tradizionali. Inoltre, il risparmio economico è notevole, visto che da una tonnellata di scarti alimentari si possono ricavare 1 000 litri di acqua da adoperare nel settore agricolo e industriale. Infine, il processo è ecosostenibile e avviene nel totale rispetto dell'ambiente. Secondo le ultime stime di Eurostat, il 30 % dei rifiuti finisce ancora nelle discariche e il 22 % negli inceneritori, mentre soltanto il 25 % viene riciclato e il 15 % è trattato con il compostaggio. Lo smaltimento intelligente dei rifiuti è necessario e urgente per tutelare l'ambiente, in particolare il suolo e le acque.

Considerando che oggi è di importanza vitale il riciclo dei rifiuti urbani per reintegrarli nella vita quotidiana e che tale macchinario potrebbe rappresentare una reale soluzione al problema dei rifiuti e del loro smaltimento, può la Commissione fa sapere se intende approfondire la ricerca e la diffusione d'informazioni sull'apparecchio in questione e sul suo impiego su larga scala?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(28 giugno 2012)

Esiste già un'ampia gamma di tecnologie per trasformare i rifiuti alimentari in prodotti utili, come ad es. ammendanti del suolo o biocarburanti. In generale la Commissione non sostiene alcuna tecnologia specifica, ma i progetti in questi settori possono beneficiare di un sostegno da parte dei pertinenti Fondi e programmi europei, in particolare il Programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico e altri programmi come LIFE+, oppure il Programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP) che finanzia soluzioni prossime al mercato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004840/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Turning waste into water using bacteria

A company in Asia that has been working on the conversion and certification of green products for nine years is currently promoting a new technology for disposing of urban organic waste. Food waste is broken down through a biological process using bacteria produced in the laboratory.

These small biological particles absorb the food waste and convert it into odourless, crystal-clear water. The resulting liquid is definitely not drinkable and has no domestic use but it would be very useful to agricultural companies and to industry since the water produced has fertilising properties.

The advantages of this innovative disposal system are numerous. Firstly, it substantially reduces the amount of waste which would be disposed of using traditional methods. Moreover, the financial savings are significant, given that 1 000 litres of water can be extracted for use in the agricultural and industrial sector from just 1 tonne of food waste. Ultimately, this is an eco-sustainable process and it is environmentally-friendly in every way. According to the latest Eurostat estimates, 30% of refuse still ends up in landfill and 22% is incinerated, while only 25% is recycled and 15% is composted. Intelligent waste disposal is needed urgently to protect the environment, especially soil and water.

Given that it is of vital importance to recycle urban waste and reintegrate it into daily life, and that this method could represent a genuine solution to the problem of waste and its disposal, can the Commission state whether it intends to step up research and the dissemination of information on the equipment in question and on its large-scale use?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

There is already a wide range of technologies turning food waste into valuable products, e.g. soil improvers or biofuels. The Commission generally does not provide support for any specific technology, nevertheless projects in such areas may receive support from relevant European funds and programmes, in particular the framework Programme (FP) for Research and Technological Development and others, such as LIFE+, or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) that fund close-to-the-market solutions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004842/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Demenza senile: un problema globale

L'OMS e l'organizzazione internazionale dei malati di Alzheimer hanno pubblicato uno studio intitolato «Demenza: una priorità di salute pubblica», che intende sensibilizzare i governi ad affrontare il problema della demenza senile in maniera consapevole.

I dati presenti nel report sono allarmanti. Oggi vi sono circa 35 milioni di persone nel mondo affette da una forma di demenza. La più diffusa è l'Alzheimer. Le stime prevedono un aumento del 70 % della sindrome entro il 2050. Le previsioni sono state fatte considerando il continuo allungamento della vita. Oggi, infatti, il rischio di demenze è di 1 a 8 per gli over 65 e di 1 a 2,5 per gli over 85. L'impatto della malattia è sempre maggiore con il passare dei decenni. I sistemi sanitari dei paesi non sono in grado di farsi carico dei pazienti affetti da questa patologia. Infatti, secondo il rapporto, solo 8 dei 194 Stati membri dell'OMS hanno un piano nazionale sulle demenze. L'Italia non rientra in questi pochi paesi virtuosi.

Il Parlamento europeo ha approvato la dichiarazione scritta n. 80/2008 con cui si riconosceva l'Alzheimer come priorità pubblica e si auspicava lo sviluppo di un piano di azione comune. Una buona pratica da evidenziare è quella dell'impiego di cani guida per i malati di demenza. Il progetto pilota è stato ideato dagli studenti della scuola d'arte di Glasgow ed offrirà a quattro coppie scozzesi la possibilità di usare l'animale addestrato come compagno e guida. I cani, in particolare di razza labrador e golden retriever, ricorderanno ai loro padroni di prendere i farmaci o li incoraggeranno a dormire, mangiare, lavarsi, ecc. Lo scopo del progetto è non solo quello di garantire un'assistenza permanente al malato ma anche quello di fornire un supporto di tipo morale in quanto il cane diventa un vero e proprio compagno.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— Intende promuovere il progetto pilota scozzese nei paesi dell'Unione europea?

— Intende incoraggiare gli Stati membri ad adottare piani nazionali per far fronte al problema economico e sociale dei malati di demenza?

— Intende, infine, prevedere misure di ricerca specifiche per trovare soluzioni concrete al progressivo aumento dei casi di Alzheimer proporzionali all'allungamento della vita dell'uomo?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(29 giugno 2012)

Per quanto riguarda la diffusione dei risultati del progetto scozzese in cui si utilizzano cani e scimmie addestrati come compagni e guide per le persone affette da demenza, la Commissione non ha la possibilità di pubblicare, diffondere o presentare i risultati di progetti esterni di questo tipo.

La comunicazione della Commissione relativa a un'iniziativa europea sulla malattia di Alzheimer e le altre forme di demenza ([1]) getta le basi per un'azione europea in questo campo. L'azione intende repertoriare le buone pratiche in fatto di trattamento e di cura e migliorare la diffusione e l'adozione di tali pratiche. L'azione comune «ALzheimer COoperative Valuation in Europe» (ALCOVE) ([2]) si occupa della diffusione e dell'applicazione di queste pratiche.

Anche se non raccoglie informazioni sull'adozione dei piani nazionali per la lotta contro le malattie cerebrali e neurodegenerative, la Commissione investe 320 milioni di EUR per la ricerca sulle malattie neurodegenerative nell'ambito del settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico 2007-2013, di cui una parte è dedicata alla ricerca sulla malattia di Alzheimer. La Commissione sostiene inoltre l'attuazione dell'iniziativa di programmazione congiunta sulle malattie neurodegenerative, un'iniziativa guidata dagli Stati membri per accelerare il progresso nelle diagnosi e nelle cure delle malattie neurodegenerative.

Infine, il programma «Orizzonte 2020» proposto dalla Commissione prevede un settore «sanità, evoluzione demografica e benessere» che potrà offrire altre opportunità di finanziamento della ricerca sulla malattia di Alzheimer.

([1]) COM(2009)380 def. del 22. 7.2009.
([2]) http://www.alcove-project.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004842/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Senile dementia: a global problem

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and Alzheimer's Disease International have published a study entitled 'Dementia: a public health priority' which is designed to raise governments' awareness of the problem of senile dementia, so that they can deal with it in an informed way.

The data in the report are alarming. Today, around 35 million people worldwide are affected by a form of dementia, of which the most common form is Alzheimer's disease. Estimates forecast a 70% increase in the syndrome by 2050, taking into account the continuing rise in life expectancy. Currently the risk of dementia stands at 1 in 8 for those over 65 and 1 in 2.5 for those over 85. The impact of the disease becomes ever greater with the passage of time. Countries' healthcare systems are not capable of caring for patients affected by this condition. According to the report, only 8 out of the 194 WHO Member States have a national plan for dementia. Italy is not among these virtuous few.

Parliament adopted Written Declaration No 80/2008 which recognised Alzheimer's disease as a public health priority and called for the development of a European action plan. A good practice to highlight is the use of assistance dogs for dementia sufferers. The pilot project was devised by students of the Glasgow School of Art and will give four Scottish couples the opportunity to use animals trained as companions and guides. The dogs, mostly Labradors and Golden Retrievers, will remind their owners to take medicines or encourage them to sleep, eat, wash, etc. The aim of the project is not just to guarantee the sufferer permanent help but also to provide support of a moral kind in that the dog becomes a genuine companion.

— Does the Commission intend to promote the Scottish pilot project in the countries of the European Union?

— Will it encourage Member States to adopt national plans to tackle the economic and social problem of dementia sufferers?

— Lastly, will it make provision for specific research to find tangible solutions to the steady rise in cases of Alzheimer's that corresponds to the rise in life expectancy?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

With regards to the dissemination of results of the project in Scotland using trained dogs and monkeys as companions and guides for people with dementia, the Commission does not have the possibility to publish, disseminate, or present results of external projects as such.

The Commission Communication on a European initiative on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias ([1]) established the basis for European action to address Alzheimer and other dementias. Action includes mapping good practices related to treatment and care and to improve the dissemination and application of such practices. The joint Action 'ALzheimer COoperative Valuation in Europe' (ALCOVE) ([2]) is responsible for dissemination and application of such practices.

While the Commission is not collecting information about the adoption of national plans to combat brain and neurodegenerative diseases, the Commission is investing EUR 320 million on Research on neurodegenerative diseases under the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development 2007-2013, part of which is dedicated to research on Alzheimer's.

The Commission also supports the implementation of the Joint Programming Initiative on Neurodegenerative Diseases, a Member States-led initiative to accelerate progress towards diagnosis and cures for neurodegenerative diseases.

Finally, the Commission proposal for Horizon 2020 identifies the 'health, demographic change and well-being' challenge which is likely to provide further opportunities for funding research on Alzheimer's disease.

([1]) COM(2009)380 final of 22. 7.2009.
([2]) http://www.alcove-project.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004843/12
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: Council Directive 91/496/EEC — animal entry control

Does the Commission accept the inflexibility of the animal entry controls laid down in Council Directive 91/496/EEC and the potential damage it has caused to animal research in leading European universities?

Does the Commission intend to consult leading academics with a view to drawing a distinction between dangerous and non-dangerous animals, leading to a revision of the directive so as to aid academic research?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

EU legislation has been put in place in order to ensure that high levels of both human and animal health are safeguarded within the European Union. This legislation encompasses a broad range of hygiene and safety requirements and, in respect of imports, is largely achieved by requiring all consignments of live animals — including those imported for research purposes — to be checked at approved border inspection posts (BIPs) upon entry into the Union. These controls are needed to ensure that animals imported into the Union are as stated in the accompanying documentation and are not animals carrying serious diseases that could carry serious implications for animals and people in the Union.

Under certain conditions, in accordance with Article 5 of Commission Decision 97/794/EC ([1]), some live animals e.g. insects are not subject to individual clinical examination or sampling, but are only required to undergo observation of their state of health as a group. If no anomaly is identified, no further checks are necessary.

The Commission is currently in the process of reviewing its import control legislation, in order to ensure that a high level of protection for the Union is maintained whilst simultaneously ensuring that controls are entirely risk-based. This will ensure that controls are only carried out when necessary.

([1]) Commission Decision 97/794/EC of 12 November 1997 laying down certain detailed rules for the application of Council Directive 91/496/EEC as regards veterinary checks on live animals to be imported from third countries.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004844/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Η ισορροπία μεταξύ λιτότητας και ανάπτυξης στην ευρωπαϊκή οικονομία

Την ισορροπία μεταξύ λιτότητας και ανάπτυξης των ευρωπαϊκών οικονομιών καλούνται να βρουν οι Ευρωπαίοι ηγέτες υπό την πίεση του εκλογικού αποτελέσματος σε Γαλλία και Ελλάδα, αλλά και υπό το ανήσυχο βλέμμα των αγορών. Τα αυστηρά μέτρα λιτότητας συνεχίζουν να δημιουργούν νέους ανέργους και γενικότερα προβλήματα στην κοινωνική συνοχή στο σύνολο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Τα εκλογικά αποτελέσματα τοπικών ή εθνικών εκλογών ανά την Ευρώπη, π.χ. στην Ιταλία, Γερμάνια, Γάλλια και αλλού, σηματοδοτούν μια γενικευμένη αντίδραση στην πολιτική της αυστηρής λιτότητας.

Είναι βέβαιο ότι απαιτείται ελαφρά χαλάρωση του γερμανικού προτύπου της δημοσιονομικής πειθαρχίας και άμεση ανάπτυξη της οικονομίας για εξισορρόπηση των ευρωπαϊκών κοινωνιών και διατήρηση της συνοχής τους. Πρέπει να σεβόμαστε τα ανεκτά επίπεδα ζωής των Ευρωπαίων πολιτών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει λάβει δεόντως υπόψη της την αντίθεση των λαών σε αυτά τα συνεχιζόμενα αυστηρά μετρά και της επίπτωσής τους στο βιοτικό επίπεδο των Ευρωπαίων πολιτών;

2. Πως σκοπεύει να δημιουργήσει οικονομική ανάπτυξη σε συνδυασμό με την συνεχιζόμενη πολιτική αυστηρής λιτότητας, όπως δηλώνει ο Επίτροπος Όλι Ρεν;

3. Σε αυτήν την περίπτωση, βάσει της αρχής της ευρωπαϊκής αλληλεγγύης, μήπως πρέπει να εξεταστεί μια πιο φιλική λύση προς τις χώρες αυτές που δεν μπορούν να ανταποκριθούν σε αυτά τα αυστηρά μετρά λιτότητας; Η έκδοση του ευρωομόλογου, η ενίσχυση της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων και η έκδοση νέου χρήματος από την ΕΚΤ δεν θα μπορούσαν να συμβάλλουν σε μια τροχιά ανάπτυξης στην ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Αυγούστου 2012)

Κατά την άποψη της Επιτροπής η οικονομική ανάπτυξη και η απασχόληση έχουν καίρια σημασία για την επιτυχία της κοινωνικής οικονομίας της αγοράς στην Ευρώπη. Για τον λόγο αυτό, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε το 2010 τη στρατηγική με τίτλο «Ευρώπη 2020» για έξυπνη, διατηρήσιμη και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς ανάπτυξη, την οποία ενέκρινε το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο.

Εξίσου σημαντικά και κοινωνικά υπεύθυνα είναι τα υγιή δημόσια οικονομικά και οι συνετές δημοσιονομικές πολιτικές. Οι χώρες δεν μπορούν να επιβιώνουν καταναλώνοντας περισσότερα από τις δυνάμεις τους, συσσωρεύοντας χρέος και μεταφέροντας το βάρος στις επόμενες γενιές, κλονίζοντας την εμπιστοσύνη στις οικονομίες τους και υποβαθμίζοντας με τον τρόπο αυτό τους όρους χρηματοδότησής τους. Η δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση, η οποία πρέπει να προχωρήσει όσο γίνεται με πιο φιλοαναπτυξιακό τρόπο και οι διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις για την τόνωση της προόδου και της απασχόλησης, αποτελούν τις δύο πλευρές του ίδιου νομίσματος.

Οι συγκεκριμένες δράσεις που απαιτούνται για την τόνωση της ανάπτυξης, οι οποίες καθορίστηκαν από την Επιτροπή στην οικεία Δήλωση του 2012 για τον εορτασμό της Ημέρας της Ευρώπης ([1]) και αναλύθηκαν στην ανακοίνωση με τίτλο «Δράση για τη σταθερότητα, την ανάπτυξη και την απασχόληση» της 30ης Μαΐου, αντικατοπτρίζονται στο «Σύμφωνο για την ανάπτυξη και την απασχόληση» που αποφάσισαν οι αρχηγοί κρατών και κυβερνήσεων στο τελευταίο Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο στις 28-29 Ιουνίου ([2]).

Ωστόσο, η επιτυχής αντιμετώπιση της κρίσης θα απαιτήσει ένα άλμα προς τα εμπρός από πλευράς οικονομικής και νομισματικής ενοποίησης. Οι πρόεδροι του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου, της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, της Ευρωομάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας στην έκθεσή τους με τίτλο «Προς μια ουσιαστική Οικονομική και Νομισματική Ένωση» καθόρισαν τέσσερεις πυλώνες ουσιαστικής σημασίας για το μέλλον της ΟΝΕ: ένα ενοποιημένο χρηματοοικονομικό πλαίσιο, ένα ενοποιημένο δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο, ένα ενοποιημένο πλαίσιο οικονομικής πολιτικής και ενίσχυση της δημοκρατικής νομιμότητας και της λογοδοσίας.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/313&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

([2]) Σε αυτό περιλαμβάνονται μέτρα όπως η αύξηση του κεφαλαίου της ΕΤΕπ, η δρομολόγηση της πιλοτικής φάσης των ομόλογα έργων, και η επαναδιάθεση των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων αλλά και η αξιοποίηση του δυναμικού μεγέθυνσης της Ενιαίας Αγοράς σε σαφώς καθορισμένους τομείς.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004844/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: The balance between austerity and growth in the economy of the EU

Under pressure following the election results in France and Greece, but also facing market unease, European leaders must strike a balance between austerity and growth. Harsh austerity measures are continuing to swell the ranks of the unemployed and are generally threatening social cohesion in the European Union as a whole. The results of local and national elections throughout Europe, for example in Italy, Germany, France and elsewhere, mark a generalised resistance to harsh austerity policies.

It is certain that there is a need for a slight easing of the German model of fiscal discipline and for immediate economic growth to restore equilibrium to European societies and maintain cohesion. We must ensure that European citizens continue to enjoy tolerable living standards.

1. Has the Commission taken due note of people's resistance to these continuing austerity policies and the impact they are having on the living standards of European citizens?

2. How does it plan to generate economic growth in conjunction with an ongoing harsh austerity policy, as outlined by Commissioner Olli Rehn?

3. In this instance, based on the principle of European solidarity, should a friendlier solution not perhaps be considered for those countries that are not able to meet the demands of these harsh austerity measures? Could the issuing of Eurobonds, the strengthening of the European Investment Bank and the issuing of new money by the ECB not contribute to placing the European Union back on the path to growth?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2012)

The Commission thinks that economic growth and employment are of central importance to the success of Europe's social market economy. Therefore the Commission proposed in 2010 its Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth, which the European Council endorsed.

Equally important, and socially responsible, are sound public finances and prudent fiscal policies. Countries cannot live beyond their means, piling up debt and transferring the burden to future generations, while eroding confidence in their economies, thus deteriorating their financing conditions. Fiscal consolidation, which should take place as growth-friendly as possible and structural reform to boost growth and jobs are two sides of the same coin.

The concrete actions needed to boost growth, specified by the Commission in its 2012 Schuman Day Statement ([1]) and elaborated in the communication 'Action for Stability, Growth and Jobs' from 30 May, were reflected in the Compact for Growth and Jobs decided by the Heads of States and Governments at the last European Council of 28-29 June ([2]).

However, overcoming the crisis will require a leap forward in terms of economic and monetary integration. The Presidents of the European Council, the European Commission, the Euro Group, and the European Central Bank set out in their report 'Towards a genuine Economic and Monetary Union' the four essential building blocks for the future EMU: an integrated financial framework, an integrated budgetary framework, an integrated economic policy framework and strengthened democratic legitimacy and accountability.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/313&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.
([2]) This includes measures such as the increase in the capital of the EIB, launching of the Pilot phase of the project bonds, and re-allocation of the structural funds but also tapping into the growth potential of the Single Market in clearly specified areas.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004847/12
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(10 mei 2012)

Betreft: Europese subsidies aan Roemenie

Afgelopen jaar bracht ik een werkbezoek aan Roemenië om te bekijken in hoeverre Europese fondsen daadwerkelijk worden aangewend in Roemenië en of de verstrekte subsidies bij de beoogde ontvangers terecht komen. Tijdens dit werkbezoek sprak ik met diverse officiële vertegenwoordigers in het land en met een non-profit hulpverleningsorganisatie. Hieruit bleek dat de Roemeense overheid niet in staat is om de fondsen adequaat aan te vragen en dat er zeer waarschijnlijk sprake is van „vriendjespolitiek" bij het besteden van de gelden die wel worden aangevraagd. In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Uit recente informatie blijkt dat lidstaat Roemenië slechts 16,51 % van de beschikbare EU-cohesiebeleidfondsen heeft aangevraagd ([1]). Kan de Commissie specifiek en gedetailleerd aangeven hoe dat komt? Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat in geval van structurele lage absorptiepercentages het resterende (niet bestede) percentage terug zou moeten vloeien naar de overige lidstaten of het Cohesiefonds zelfs geheel zou moeten worden opgeheven?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven welk instelling in Roemenië de Europese fondsen aanvraagt, toekent en controleert?

Antwoord van de heer Hahn namens de Commissie
(2 juli 2012)

1. Roemenië heeft het laagste absorptiepercentage van alle lidstaten voor de Structuurfondsen en het Cohesiefonds. Medio juni lag dat percentage voor het Europees Fonds voor Regionale Ontwikkeling, het Europees Sociaal Fonds en het Cohesiefonds op 9 % als wordt uitgegaan van de ingediende betalingsverzoeken, en op 20 % wanneer ook de voorschotten worden meegerekend. De absorptiepercentages variëren naargelang van het programma: voor het regionale operationele programma lag het op 19 % en voor het milieuprogramma op maar 6 %.

De onderliggende redenen voor het lage absorptiepercentage zijn zwak bestuur, ontoereikende beheerscapaciteit, buitensporige en complexe procedures, een veranderende politieke en wettelijke situatie en de economische crisis. Tot dusver hoefden geen middelen voor programma's in Roemenië te worden doorgehaald.

De Commissie gelooft noch dat het Cohesiefonds moet worden opgeheven, noch dat ongebruikte middelen zouden moeten terugvloeien naar de overige lidstaten. Integendeel, zij is van mening dat samen met Roemenië moet worden getracht de uitvoering ervan te versnellen en ervoor te zorgen dat alle Europese burgers in Roemenië de zichtbare voordelen van de Structuurfondsen en het Cohesiefonds kunnen ondervinden.

2. De geachte afgevaardigde kan de volledige lijst van bevoegde autoriteiten in Roemenië raadplegen op website: www.fonduri-ue.ro.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/newsroom/detail.cfm?id=165.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004847/12
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(10 May 2012)

Subject: European subsidies to Romania

Last year, I paid a working visit to Romania to see how European funds were actually being used there and whether the subsidies were reaching the people for whom they were intended. During my visit I talked to various official spokesmen and to a non-profit relief organisation. From these conversations, it became clear that the Romanian authorities s are not in a position to make effective application for funding and that the funds which they do request are very probably spent according to the politics of cronyism. This gives rise to the following questions:

1. Recent information shows that, as a Member State, Romania has applied for only 16.51% of the available EU Cohesion Fund ([1]). Can the Commission specify in detail how this has come about? Furthermore, does the Commission agree with the PVV that, when the absorption rates for structural funds are low, either the remaining (unspent) percentage should flow back to the other Member States, or else the entire Cohesion Fund itself should be abolished?

2. Can the Commission specify what authority in Romania is responsible for applying for, allocating and controlling the European funds?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

1. Romania has the lowest Structural and Cohesion Funds absorption rate of all Member States, standing in Mid June at 9% for the European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund and Cohesion Fund if measured by submitted payment claims, and 20% if measured including advance payments. Absorption varies between programmes: the Regional Operational Programme has absorbed 19%, while the Environment Programme stands at 6%.

The underlying reasons for low absorption are weak governance, insufficient management capacity, excessive and complex procedures (red tape), changing political and legal situation and the economic crisis. So far no de-commitments of funds were necessary for programmes in Romania.

The Commission does not agree that the Cohesion Fund should be abolished, nor that unused funds should 'flow back to the other Member States'. Instead, the Commission considers that it is important to continue working with Romania to accelerate implementation and to ensure that the visible benefits of the Structural and Cohesion Funds are made available to all European citizens in Romania.

2. The Honourable Member is invited to consult the complete list of the competent authorities in Romania at the website: www.fonduri-ue.ro

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/newsroom/detail.cfm?id=165.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004849/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Status of HM Queen Elizabeth II

Could the Commission please advise whether, under the terms of the Treaties, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is considered to be an EU citizen?

If so, could the Commission further advise whether Her Majesty could conceivably be subject to a European arrest warrant?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2012)

According to the law of the European Union, every person holding the nationality of a Member State is also a citizen of the Union. Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union clearly states that citizenship of the Union is additional to national citizenship and does not replace national citizenship.

Moreover, international law lays down the principle of sovereignty of each State in the field of nationality. In line with this principle, which has been confirmed in settled case law of the European Court of Justice, the conditions for obtaining and forfeiting citizenship of the Member States are regulated exclusively under the national law of the individual Member States.

(Eestikeelne versioon)

Kirjalikult vastatav küsimus E-004851/12
komisjonile
Kristiina Ojuland (ALDE)
(11. mai 2012)

Teema: VP/HR — ELi abi kasutamine Pakistanis

Euroopa Liidu suursaadik ja ELi Pakistani delegatsiooni juht Lars-Gunnar Wigemark teatas 2012. aasta jaanuaris 15 miljoni euro suuruse ELi abi andmisest Pakistanile, et toetada terrorismivastast võitlust. Terrorism tuleneb üsna tihti ühiskonnas valitsevast sallimatusest ja äärmuslikkusest, seetõttu on väga oluline tegeleda selle algpõhjustega.

Milliseid meetmeid kavatseb Euroopa välisteenistus võtta, et kõnealuseid rahalisi vahendeid kasutataks:

— shariaadiseaduse kaotamiseks ja selleks, et tagada selle kaotamise rakendamine;

— naiste ja laste õiguste kaitsmiseks;

— Balochistanis ja Gilgit-Baltistanis toimunud inimõiguste rikkumiste lõpetamiseks?

Komisjoni nimel vastanud Euroopa Liidu välisasjade ja julgeolekupoliitika kõrge esindaja ning komisjoni asepresident Ashton
(19. juuli 2012)

Küsimuses osutatud programm kujutab endast osa koostööst, mida tehakse Pakistaniga terrorismivastase võitluse valdkonnas alates 2010. aastast. Pärast Pakistanile suunatud terrorismivastase võitluse ja julgeolekustrateegia vastuvõtmist välisasjade nõukogu 25. juuni istungil pühenduvad EL ja Pakistan koostöö süvendamisele. EL toetab terrorismivastases võitluses rohkem tsiviilelanikkonnale keskenduvat lähenemisviisi ja koondab oma tegevuse õigusriigi põhimõtte edendamisele, õiguskaitse kättesaadavamaks muutmisele ja vägivaldse ekstremismi vastasele võitlusele.

EL ei saa partnerriigi siseasjadesse otseselt sekkuda. Ta võib ainult väljendada oma muret selle üle, missugust kahju tekitavad riigile terrorism, sallimatus ja fundamentalism. EL peab Pakistaniga korrapärast dialoogi ning on kutsunud Pakistani ametiasutusi üles võtma meetmeid riigi kodanike füüsilise julgeoleku tagamiseks ja nende õiguste kaitsmiseks kooskõlas rahvusvaheliste inimõigustealaste standardite ja konventsioonidega. Pärast ELi-Pakistani tegevuskava vastuvõtmist laiendatakse dialoogi, lisades korrapärased dialoogid julgeoleku, sealhulgas terrorismivastase võitluse valdkonnas, ja korraldades inimõigustealaseid erikohtumisi.

Pakistaniga peetava inimõigustealase dialoogi raames käsitletakse järjekindlalt naiste ja laste õigustega seotud küsimusi. EL on õhutanud Pakistani valitsust võtma kiiresti meetmeid naiste õiguste kaitse tagamiseks ning töötama välja sootundlikke õigusakte. Lisaks sellele eraldab EL vahendeid selliste inimõigustealaste projektide elluviimiseks, milles keskendutakse eelkõige naiste, laste ja usuvähemuste olukorra parandamisele.

EL jälgib olukorda Belutšistanis ja Gilgit-Baltistanis ning on väljendanud Pakistani valitsusele oma muret inimõiguste rikkumise üle neis piirkondades ([1]).

([1]) Näiteks võib tuua kohtumise, mis toimus 2012. aasta veebruaris suursaadiku Wigemarki juhitava ELi delegatsiooni ning inimõigusorganisatsioonide ja Belutši natsionalistide vahel ning millel arutati provintsis aset leidnud inimõiguste rikkumisi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004851/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Kristiina Ojuland (ALDE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Use of EU aid to Pakistan

In January 2012 the European Union Ambassador and Head of the EU Delegation to Pakistan, Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, announced EUR 15 million of EU aid to Pakistan to support the fight against terrorism. Terrorism is quite often a result of intolerance and fundamentalism in society, therefore it is vital to address its root causes.

What steps will the European External Action Service take to ensure that these funds are used as leverage to encourage:

— the abolition of Sharia law and ensuring that abolition is implemented;

— the protection of the rights of women and children;

— bringing to a halt human rights abuses in Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

The programme referred to forms part of the cooperation with Pakistan in combating terrorism undertaken since 2010. Following the adoption of the EU Counter Terrorism/Security Strategy for Pakistan at the 25 June Foreign Affairs Council, the EU and Pakistan are committed to intensifying cooperation. EU focus will be on strengthening a civilian approach to countering terror by supporting the rule of law/access to justice and countering violent extremism.

The EU cannot intervene directly in the internal affairs of a partner country. It can however convey its concern at the damage to a country's development by incidents of terrorism, intolerance and fundamentalism. The EU engages in regular dialogue with Pakistan and has called on the authorities to adopt measures to ensure the physical security and protect the rights of all Pakistani citizens in line with international human rights standards and conventions. Following adoption of the EU-Pakistan Engagement Plan, the dialogue will be enhanced by regular sector dialogues on security, including counter-terrorism, as well as ad-hoc human rights meetings.

Issues relating to the rights of women and children are regularly raised in the human rights dialogue with Pakistan. The EU has encouraged the Government of Pakistan to take urgent measures to ensure protection for the rights of women as well as drafting of gender-sensitive legislation and, moreover, provides funding for human rights projects with particular focus on women, children and religious minorities.

The EU is following the situation in Balochistan and Gilgit Baltistan and has raised its concerns about developments affecting human rights with the Government of Pakistan ([1]).

([1]) As an example, in February 2012, an EU delegation led by Ambassador Wigemark held a meeting with human rights organisations and Baloch nationalists to discuss human rights violation in the province.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004852/12
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD) oraz Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(11 maja 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Ogłoszenie przez Komisję Europejską bojkotu EURO 2012 na Ukrainie

Podzielamy niepokój Komisji Europejskiej w sprawie zasadniczych wątpliwości, jakie budzi proces premier Ukrainy Julii Tymoszenko i postępowanie władz ukraińskich w tej sprawie.

Krytycznie oceniamy ewentualne naruszenia praw człowieka na Ukrainie oraz niewystarczające standardy demokratyczne, w szczególności te w zakresie funkcjonowania wymiaru sprawiedliwości w tym kraju. Jednak ogłoszona przez szefa Komisji Europejskiej oraz pozostałych członków Komisji Europejskiej niezwykle radykalna decyzja o bojkocie EURO 2012 rodzi szereg zasadniczych pytań:

1. Czy tak daleko idące kroki zostały skonsultowane z Parlamentem Europejskim?

2. Czy decyzja ta była konsultowana z poszczególnymi rządami państw UE?

3. Na jakiej podstawie i w jakim trybie decyzja ta została podjęta?

4. Czy Komisja wzięła pod uwagę, że skutki tej decyzji mogą doprowadzić do całkowitego fiaska Partnerstwa Wschodniego UE, którego Ukraina jest kluczowym elementem?

5. Czy Komisja wzięła pod uwagę, że izolowanie Ukrainy przez UE wpycha ten kraj w sferę wpływów Rosji i jest zgodne ze strategicznymi interesami Federacji Rosyjskiej?

6. Czy Komisja, podejmując decyzję o tak radykalnych krokach, uwzględniła fakt, że standardy demokratyczne oraz przestrzeganie praw człowieka na Ukrainie – choć pozostawiają jeszcze sporo do życzenia – pozostają na wyraźnie wyższym poziomie niż ma to aktualnie miejsce w Rosji czy na Białorusi?

7. Jedną z podstawowych zasad, które legły u podstaw UE jest równość traktowania państw i obywateli. Czy Komisja będziecie bojkotować olimpiadę zimową w Soczi organizowaną przez Federację Rosyjską z uwagi na liczne przypadki naruszania praw człowieka w Rosji, a w szczególności z powodu okupacji przez ten kraj 1/3 legalnego terytorium Gruzji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(13 lipca 2012 r.)

Komisja Europejska bacznie przygląda się wydarzeniom na Ukrainie. UE nadal ma poważne obawy dotyczące praworządności, w tym przypadków wybiórczej sprawiedliwości i prześladowania politycznego na Ukrainie. Niemniej jednak UE jest gotowa do kontynuowania współpracy z władzami Ukrainy, lecz oczekuje od nich zaangażowania na rzecz wartości demokratycznych i praworządności.

Decyzja o nieuczestniczeniu w meczach rozgrywanych w ramach EURO 2012 na Ukrainie została podjęta wspólnie przez kolegium Komisji. Na tej samej zasadzie Komisja, za pośrednictwem Androulli Vassiliou, komisarz ds. sportu, wyraziła także nadzieję, że mistrzostwa te okażą się sukcesem, przyczynią się do zbliżenia do siebie ludzi z różnych krajów, a także otworzą nowe możliwości gospodarcze zarówno w przypadku Polski, jak i Ukrainy.

Stanowisko Komisji Europejskiej dotyczące uczestnictwa przedstawicieli wysokiego szczebla w meczach EURO 2012 na Ukrainie było zbieżne ze stanowiskiem państw członkowskich UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004852/12
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD) and Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: European Commission's announcement of a Ukraine EURO 2012 boycott

We share the European Commission's concerns over the highly dubious court case being brought against Yulia Tymoshenko, the former Prime Minister of Ukraine, and the actions of the Ukrainian authorities in this matter.

We are critical of any human rights violations and unsatisfactory democratic standards in Ukraine, especially regarding the functioning of the judiciary. However, the unusually radical decision announced by the head and members of the European Commission to boycott EURO 2012 raises many important questions.

1. Were these far-reaching measures discussed with the European Parliament?

2. Was this decision discussed with the governments of individual EU Member States?

3. What was the legal basis for this decision and in what way was this decision reached?

4. Did the Commission take into consideration that the consequences of this decision could be the total collapse of the EU's Eastern Partnership, in which Ukraine plays a key role?

5. Did the Commission consider that the EU's isolation of Ukraine will push that country into Russia's sphere of influence, supporting the Russian Federation's strategic interests?

6. When deciding on such a radical step, did the Commission consider that, although there is much room for improvement as regards democratic standards and respect for human rights in Ukraine, the situation there is currently much better than in Russia or Belarus?

7. One of the EU's basic principles is equality of treatment for both states and individuals. Will the Commission boycott the Russian-organised Winter Olympics in Sochi in view of the numerous instances of human rights violations in Russia, with particular reference to its occupation of one third of the territory of Georgia?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 July 2012)

The Commission is closely following developments in Ukraine. The EU continues to have serious concerns about the rule of law, including cases of selective justice and political persecution, in Ukraine. Nevertheless, the EU remains ready to continue engaging with the Ukrainian authorities — but is requesting from them a commitment towards democratic values and rule of law.

The decision not to attend matches of the EURO 2012 tournament in Ukraine was taken collectively by the College of the Commission. By the same token the Commission, through Commissioner Vassiliou, in charge of Sports, has also stressed its shared wish for a successful tournament which will bring people together and stimulate new economic opportunities for both Poland and Ukraine.

The Commission has shared its view related to high level participation to the EURO 2012 matches in Ukraine with the Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004853/12
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: UK policy on refusal to fly

Is the Commission aware that the United Kingdom is refusing people the right to fly if they refuse to go through a backscatter x-ray security scanner at UK airports, as is the case at Manchester airport?

Can the Commission confirm that since the use of these scanners is part of a trial, such actions by the UK authorities are illegal and in contravention of current EU legislation? Furthermore, when can we expect the Commission to fulfil its duties and responsibilities by calling on the UK authorities to end this practice?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

Security scanners shall be deployed and used in accordance with the conditions set by Regulation 300/2008 ([1]) and implementing acts on aviation security, the Euratom legislation on the use of ionising radiation equipment, if applicable, as well as the rights and principles recognised by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

The Commission is aware of the situation in respect of the deployment of security scanners at a few UK airports and is in close contact with the responsible UK authorities with the objective to reach full compliance with all aspects of EC law.

([1]) OJ L 97, 9.4.2008, pp. 72-84.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004854/12
alla Commissione
Amalia Sartori (PPE)
(11 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Misure della Commissione ai fini dell'applicazione della legislazione dell'UE da parte degli Stati membri

Recentemente è stato pubblicato in Francia un rapporto a cura di Yvon Jacob e Serge Guillon dal titolo «En finir avec la mondialisation déloyale!» (letteralmente: «Farla finita con la globalizzazione sleale!». Tra i vari temi affrontati dal rapporto spicca la carenza di ispezioni ai punti d'ingresso nel mercato unico europeo che ha permesso ai fabbricanti di paesi terzi di evitare i costi relativi all'applicazione della legislazione europea sulla sicurezza. Secondo alcuni esempi citati, il 15 % dei pneumatici importati nell'UE non sono conformi alle norme di sicurezza dell'UE e il 76 % degli accendini, per la maggior parte importati dalla Cina, non sono conformi alla norma di sicurezza ISO 9994.

Il rispetto di queste specifiche comporta un costo necessario. Tuttavia, ciò impone ai fabbricanti europei adempienti uno svantaggio concorrenziale, oltre ad esporre i cittadini d'Europa ai pericoli che dovevano essere evitati proprio grazie a quei precisi regolamenti.

L'8 maggio 2012 il commissario Dalli ha presentato la relazione annuale 2011 sul funzionamento del sistema di allarme rapido per i prodotti pericolosi non alimentari (RAPEX). Stando alla relazione il numero di prodotti non alimentari pericolosi notificati nell'UE nell'ambito del programma sono diminuiti per la prima volta dall'introduzione del monitoraggio. Tuttavia, non vi è modo di sapere se ciò significhi che un numero minore di prodotti è immesso nell'UE o se il fenomeno sia conseguenza di un approccio meno rigoroso. Secondo l'*European Voice* il Commissario Dalli, nel suo discorso alla stampa in occasione della presentazione della relazione, ha dichiarato di non poter escludere la possibilità che il cambiamento sia dovuto a riduzioni delle notifiche o dei controlli operate dagli Stati membri e ha ammesso di sperare che ciò non sia il risultato di una diminuzione della sorveglianza.

La libera circolazione delle merci nell'Unione europea impone agli Stati membri la responsabilità di garantire che i regolamenti e le decisioni dell'Unione europea siano correttamente applicati. La Commissione non dovrebbe esitare a sanzionare le autorità nazionali che mettono a rischio l'ambiente o la sicurezza dei consumatori.

Basandosi sull'esempio del porto di Rotterdam, il più importante porto d'ingresso per le merci europee e il più vasto centro logistico e industriale in Europa, la Commissione è invitata a rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Tiene la Commissione sotto attivo monitoraggio la situazione per verificare che i prodotti al consumo siano sottoposti ad adeguati livelli d'ispezione presso il più importante porto d'ingresso in Europa, e in qual modo essa assicura che le sue norme di sicurezza siano applicate in questi importanti porti?

2. Ha la Commissione recentemente adottato eventuali provvedimenti contro gli Stati membri che non hanno adempiuto il proprio dovere di assicurare l'applicazione dei regolamenti e delle decisioni dell'Unione europea?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(29 giugno 2012)

Controllare i prodotti che entrano nel mercato dell'Unione europea spetta in primo luogo agli Stati membri. Il regolamento (CE) n. 765/2008 ([1]) prescrive che siano effettuati controlli appropriati delle caratteristiche dei prodotti su una scala adeguata prima dell'immissione in libera pratica. Le autorità responsabili del controllo dei prodotti che entrano nel mercato dell'UE sono autorizzate ad eseguire verifiche documentali, fisiche e di laboratorio in base a campioni adeguati. Benché il regolamento non preveda un monitoraggio attivo da parte della Commissione, per aiutare le autorità competenti a svolgere i loro compiti la Commissione ha redatto delle linee guida per i controlli sulle importazioni in tema di sicurezza e conformità dei prodotti ([2]). Tali linee guida, approvate nel 2011, sono al momento in fase di attuazione negli Stati membri.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 765/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 9 luglio 2008 che pone norme in materia di accreditamento e vigilanza del mercato per quanto riguarda la commercializzazione dei prodotti e che abroga il regolamento (CEE) n. 339/93, GU L 218 del 13.8.2008.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/publications/info_docs/customs/index_en.htm

Fino ad oggi la Commissione non ha ricevuto alcuna informazione o indicazione relativa a Stati membri che non adempiano agli obblighi prescritti dagli articoli 27, 28 e 29 del regolamento 765/2008. La Commissione proporrà comunque entro la fine di quest'anno un nuovo regolamento sulla vigilanza dei prodotti immessi sul mercato. Tale proposta intende rivedere le disposizioni esistenti in tema di vigilanza del mercato, attualmente distribuite in numerosi strumenti giuridici, fra cui il regolamento (CE) n. 765/2008. Il controllo dei prodotti che entrano nel mercato dell'UE secondo le modalità attualmente definite dagli articoli 27, 28 e 29 del regolamento costituirà parte di questa proposta, che sarà esaminata dal Parlamento europeo e dal Consiglio con procedura legislativa ordinaria. La proposta sarà accompagnata da un piano d'azione pluriennale sulla vigilanza del mercato contenente una serie di provvedimenti non legislativi attuabili in tempi brevi.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004854/12
to the Commission
Amalia Sartori (PPE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Commission measures for the enforcement of EU legislation by Member States

A report entitled 'Ending Unfair Globalisation' by Yvon Jacob and Serge Guillon was published in France recently. Amongst a number of issues, the report highlighted the fact that a lack of inspections at points of entry to the European single market was allowing third-country manufacturers to avoid the costs of complying with European safety legislation. Examples include 15% of imported tyres entering the EU falling below European safety standards, and as many as 76% of imported pocket lighter models — the majority from China — failing to meet the ISO 9994 safety standard.

Meeting these standards is a necessary cost. However, this places compliant European manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage and has also exposed Europe's citizens to the dangers these very regulations were designed to avoid.

On 8 May 2012, Commissioner Dalli presented the 2011 Annual Report on the operation of the Rapid Alert System for non-food dangerous products (RAPEX). The report suggests that the number of non-food dangerous products reported in the EU under the scheme has fallen for the first time since monitoring began. However, there is no way of knowing whether this means that fewer products are entering the EU, or whether it is a consequence of a less rigorous approach. Speaking at the press conference to launch the report, Commissioner Dalli was quoted in the *European Voice* as saying that he could not rule out the possibility that the change was a result of Member States' cutbacks reducing reporting or checks, stating, 'I hope it's not because of decreased vigilance'.

Given the free movement of goods within the EU, it is the responsibility of all Member States to ensure that EU regulations and decisions are properly enforced. The Commission should not hesitate to sanction those national authorities that put at risk the environment or safety of consumers.

Using the example of the port of Rotterdam, the major entry port for European goods and the largest logistical and industrial hub in Europe, can the Commission tell Parliament whether:

1. It is actively monitoring the situation to determine whether adequate levels of inspections of consumer goods are taking place at the most important entry port in Europe, and how it ensures that its own safety standards are being implemented at these major ports?

2. It has recently moved to pursue any action against a Member State which has not met its responsibilities in ensuring the enforcement of EU regulations and decisions?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

Checking products entering the EU market is, in the first place, the responsibility of the Member States. Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 ([1]) requires appropriate checks to be carried out on the characteristics of products on an adequate scale before the products are released for free circulation. The authorities in charge of checking products entering the EU market are empowered to perform documentary, physical and laboratory checks on the basis of adequate samples. Although the regulation does not provide for active monitoring by the Commission, to help competent authorities to perform their task, Guidelines for import controls in the area of product safety and compliance ([2]) have been drawn up by the Commission. These Guidelines have been endorsed in 2011 and are now implementing in Member States.

Until now, the Commission has not received any information or indication that Member States are not fulfilling their tasks under Articles 27 to 29 of Regulation 765/2008. However, the Commission will propose a new Regulation on market surveillance of products by the end of this year. This proposal will review the existing provisions on market surveillance which are now scattered over several legal instruments, such as Regulation (EC) No 765/2008. The control of products entering the EU market currently set out in Articles 27 to 29 of the regulation will be part of this proposal which will be examined by the European Parliament and the Council through the ordinary legislative procedure. This proposal will be accompanied by a multi-annual action plan on market surveillance that will contain a number of non-legislative measures which can be implemented at short notice.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 339/93, OJ L 218, 13.8.2008.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/publications/info_docs/customs/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004855/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(11 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: Víctimas de la Talidomida

A finales de la década de los 50 del siglo pasado se recetaba en muchos países del mundo (entre ellos el Estado español) la Talidomida, como remedio para paliar las nauseas que las embarazadas sufrían durante la gestación. Se prohibió hacia 1961 porque se descubrió que producía malformaciones en recién nacidos. Sin embargo en el Estado español se retiró «oficialmente» en 1963.

La Asociación AVITE (http://www.avite.org/) es un colectivo de personas afectadas de malformaciones congénitas, debido a que sus madres tomaron este medicamento durante la gestación.

El Estado español reconoció a este colectivo en 2009 y mediante un Real Decreto que los afectados pudieron cobrar una indemnización del Estado y se les reconocieron algunos derechos, como el de la prejubilación (RD 1851/2009 y RD 1006/2010). En cambio, en otros países europeos, los ciudadanos afectados por la Talidomida gozan, por ejemplo, de pensiones vitalicias, en función del porcentaje de minusvalía.

Además, el RD 1006/2010 solo reconoce a los afectados nacidos entre 1960-1965, pero, según AVITE, el primer afectado español nació en 1956 y hay otros afectados nacidos después de 1965, ya que hubo fármacos que contenían Talidomida que se comercializaron hasta 1973.

A la vista de lo anterior,

¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de la situación en que se encuentran los ciudadanos europeos afectados por la Talidomida en los distintos Estados miembros?

Debido a que la Talidomida se recetó en varios países europeos, ¿no cree la Comisión que debería haber un protocolo marco a nivel europeo, para que todos los ciudadanos europeos afectados por la Talidomida tuviesen compensaciones similares, independientemente del Estado Miembro al que pertenezcan?

¿Tiene previsto la Comisión elaborar un «libro verde» sobre las enfermedades poco frecuentes, llamadas «enfermedades raras», donde se pongan en común protocolos de actuación y se establezcan unas directrices de acción comunes en todos los Estados miembros?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de julio de 2012)

La Comisión es consciente de las consecuencias de la utilización de la talidomida durante el embarazo, y de que algunos Estados miembros han adoptado sistemas de indemnizaciones para los ciudadanos afectados.

La política en materia de salud, así como la organización y prestación de asistencia sanitaria, son responsabilidad de los Estados miembros, de conformidad con el artículo 168 del Tratado. Los sistemas de indemnización por daños no están, por lo tanto, incluidos en el ámbito de competencias de la UE, y la Comisión no puede establecer un protocolo marco de indemnizaciones a nivel europeo.

La Comisión no tiene la intención de elaborar un Libro Verde sobre enfermedades raras. La política de la UE en esta materia se basa en la Comunicación de la Comisión «Las enfermedades raras: un reto para Europa» ([1]) y en la Recomendación del Consejo, relativa a una acción en el ámbito de las enfermedades raras ([2]). En dicha Recomendación se insta a los Estados miembros, entre otras cosas, a que elaboren y adopten planes o estrategias nacionales sobre enfermedades raras.

([1]) COM(2008) 679 final de 11 de noviembre de 2008.
([2]) DO C 151 de 3.7.2009, p. 7.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004855/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Victims of thalidomide

In the late 1950s, thalidomide was prescribed in many countries (including Spain) to alleviate morning sickness in pregnant women. It was banned around 1961 because it was discovered that it caused deformities in newborns. However, thalidomide was only 'officially' withdrawn in Spain in 1963.

AVITE (*Asociación de Víctimas de la Talidomida en España y otras inhabilidades*, http://www.avite.org/) is a group of people affected by birth defects caused by their mothers' use of this drug during pregnancy.

The Spanish State recognised this group in 2009 and issued a Royal Decree entitling those affected to state compensation, as well as granting them certain other rights, such as early retirement (RD 1851/2009 and RD 1006/2010). In other European countries, however, citizens affected by thalidomide have, for example, been awarded lifetime pensions, depending on their level of disability.

In addition, RD 1006/2010 only recognises thalidomide victims born between 1960 and 1965, although according to AVITE the first Spanish baby affected was born in 1956 and others were born after 1965, because drugs containing thalidomide were marketed until 1973.

Is the Commission aware of the situation of European citizens affected by thalidomide in different Member States?

As thalidomide was prescribed in several European countries, does the Commission not believe that there should be a framework protocol at European level, so that all European citizens affected by thalidomide receive similar compensation regardless of which Member State they are from?

Does the Commission have any plans to draw up a Green Paper on less common diseases, known as 'rare diseases', allowing protocols for action to be shared and common guidelines for action established for all Member States?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the impact of the use of thalidomide during pregnancy and that some Member States have established compensation schemes for their citizens that have been affected by the use of thalidomide during pregnancy.

Health policy, as well as the organisation and delivery of healthcare, is a Member State competence under Article 168 of the Treaty. As such, injury compensation schemes are not a matter of EU competence. Therefore, the Commission is not in a position to establish a framework protocol for compensation at the European level.

The Commission does not have plans to draw up a Green paper on rare diseases. The EU policy on rare diseases is based on the Commission Communication 'Rare diseases: a Europe challenge' ([1]) and the Council Recommendation on an action in the field of rare diseases ([2]). The recommendation calls on the Member States *inter alia* to elaborate and adopt a national plan or strategy on rare diseases.

([1]) COM(2008) 679 final of 11 November 2008.
([2]) OJ C 151, 3.7.2009, p. 7.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004856/12
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) y Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(11 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: Origen de la propuesta de reforma de los consejos reguladores en España

Hemos tenido conocimiento de la preocupación que ha producido en la asociación europea de operadores independientes de telecomunicaciones, ECTA, el anuncio del Gobierno de España de que prevé fusionar en una sola comisión todos los consejos reguladores. Según ha podido saber esta diputada, la ECTA tiene claros indicios de que la reforma está inspirada, entre otras fuentes, en un informe realizado por una consultora para «Telefónica S.A.», una empresa nacida de la privatización de la sociedad pública que ostentaba el monopolio del mercado en España y quedó privatizada en 1997.

A la vista de esta preocupación, hemos comprobado que en efecto algunas de las propuestas de la reforma son idénticas a las que figuran en el informe citado. Además la ECTA denuncia que esta tendencia acríticamente cercana a las posiciones de «Telefónica» se percibe también en el Decreto ley 13/2012, de 30 de marzo, que acaba de aprobar el Gobierno español alterando la ley que regulaba en este Estado el funcionamiento de las operadoras y especialmente las condiciones de acceso a las redes de telecomunicaciones.

A la vista de estos hechos:

¿Puede decir la Comisión si mantiene relaciones con la ECTA?

¿Tiene la Comisión noticia de la preocupación con que dicha asociación observa la propuesta de reforma de los organismos reguladores en España?

¿Ha mantenido ya la Comisión algún tipo de contacto en torno a estos temas con el Gobierno español y el resto de los operadores?

¿Cree la Comisión que las reformas emprendidas pueden perjudicar a la libre competencia en el sector?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de julio de 2012)

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de estas novedades legislativas en España. Las partes interesadas, incluida la ECTA, se han puesto en contacto con ella al respecto.

En lo que se refiere a la reforma de las autoridades de reglamentación, la Comisión está al tanto de que el Gobierno español ha anunciado planes para el establecimiento de una sola entidad reguladora, la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC), en la que quedará integrada la actual Comisión del Mercado de las Telecomunicaciones (CMT). La Comisión ha iniciado contactos preliminares con las autoridades españolas sobre este asunto. También ha recibido una notificación relativa al programa nacional de reforma adoptado por el Gobierno español el pasado 27 de abril, que prevé la aprobación de esta disposición y su entrada en vigor dentro del primer semestre de 2012. No obstante, hasta el momento no se ha remitido a las Cortes el anteproyecto definitivo.

En lo que se refiere al Real Decreto-ley 13/2012 ([1]), de 30 de marzo de 2012, convalidado por el Congreso de los Diputados el 25 de abril de 2012, se ha notificado a la Comisión la aprobación de esta legislación nacional por la que se transponen las Directivas de la UE en el sector de las telecomunicaciones.

La Comisión está examinando si la legislación relativa al sector de las telecomunicaciones recientemente aprobada se ajusta a la legislación de la UE y analizando las propuestas finales que se van a adoptar para crear una única entidad reguladora en España.

([1]) Real Decreto-ley 13/2012, de 30 de marzo, por el que se transponen directivas en materia de mercados interiores de electricidad y gas en materia de comunicaciones electrónicas, y por el que se adoptan medidas para la corrección de las desviaciones por desajustes entre los costes e ingresos de los sectores eléctrico y gasista.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004856/12
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) and Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Origin of the proposal to reform regulatory bodies in Spain

We have been made aware of the concern felt by the European Competitive Telecommunications Association, ECTA, following the Spanish Government's announcement that it plans to merge all regulatory bodies into a single authority. According to information gathered by Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, MEP, ECTA has clear evidence that this reform is inspired, among other sources, by a report produced by a consultant for Telefónica S.A., a company created as a result of the privatisation of the state-owned company that had a monopoly of the Spanish market and was privatised in 1997.

Pursuant to these concerns, we have established that some of the proposals for reform are indeed identical to those contained in the aforementioned report. Furthermore, ECTA claims that this trend, which is uncritically close to the positions of Telefónica, is also evident in Decree Law 13/2012 of 30 March which has just been passed by the Spanish Government, amending the law regulating the work of operators in this State, and, in particular, the conditions of access to telecommunications networks.

In view of these events:

Can the Commission state whether it has contact with ECTA?

Does the Commission have any information regarding the concerns felt by that association in relation to the proposed reform of regulatory bodies in Spain?

Has the Commission made any kind of contact concerning these matters with the Spanish Government and the other operators?

Does the Commission believe that the reforms undertaken could harm free competition in the sector?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of these legislative developments in Spain and has been contacted by stakeholders, including ECTA, regarding these issues.

With regard to the reform of the regulatory authorities, the Commission is aware of the Spanish Government's announced plans for the establishment of a single regulator, the National Commission for Markets and Competition (CNMC), which will encompass the current Telecommunications Market Commission (CMT). The Commission has been in preliminary contacts with the Spanish authorities on this issue. The Commission has received notification of the Spanish National Reform Programme adopted by the Government last 27 April which foresees the adoption of this law and its entry into force during the first semester of 2012. However, the final draft law project has so far not been submitted to the Spanish Parliament.

Regarding Royal Decree-law 13/2012 ([1]), adopted on 30 March 2012 and validated by the Spanish Parliament on 25 April 2012, the adoption of this national legislation transposing the EU Directives in the telecommunications sector has been notified to the Commission.

The Commission is in the process of analysing the compliance with EC law of the recently adopted legislation in the telecommunications sector and the final proposals to be adopted regarding the establishment of a single regulator in Spain.

([1]) Real Decreto-ley 13/2012, de 30 de marzo, por el que se transponen directivas en materia de mercados interiores de electricidad y gas y en materia de comunicaciones electrónicas, y por el que se adoptan medidas para la corrección de las desviaciones por desajustes entre los costes e ingresos de los sectores eléctrico y gasista.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004857/12
an den Rat
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11. Mai 2012)

Betrifft: Weinkeller und Lagerraum für andere Alkoholgetränke

1. Besitzt der Rat einen Weinkeller und/oder einen entsprechenden Raum, wo Alkoholgetränke gelagert werden? Wenn ja, seit wann?

2. Welche Weinsorten von welchem Jahrgang werden in dem Weinkeller gelagert? Welche anderen Alkoholgetränke werden in diesem Raum gelagert?

3. Wie viele Flaschen Wein jeweils nach der Weinsorte und nach dem Jahrgang der Herstellung des Weins werden im Weinkeller gelagert?

4. Wie viele Flaschen anderer Alkoholgetränke jeweils nach der Sorte des Getränks werden in diesem Raum gelagert?

5. Was ist der teuerste und der billigste Wein, die im Keller gelagert werden? Was ist das teuerste und das billigste Alkoholgetränk, das in diesem Raum gelagert wird?

6. Wie viel Geld wird jährlich für den Einkauf des Weins ausgegeben? Wie hoch war diese Summe jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012?

7. Wie viel Geld wird jährlich für den Einkauf anderer Alkoholgetränke ausgegeben? Wie hoch war diese Summe jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012?

8. Für welche genauen Anlässe werden die Weine und die anderen Alkoholgetränke ausgeschenkt? Wer darf Weine aus dem Weinvorrat und andere Alkoholgetränke trinken? Werden die Weine und die Alkoholgetränke auch verkauft? Wenn ja, wo?

9. Wie viel ist der Weinkeller wert?

Um Verwaltungslasten zu reduzieren wurden diese Fragen in einer Anfrage zusammengefasst und die einzelnen Fragen mit einer laufenden Nummer versehen. Der Fragesteller ersucht höflich, die einzelnen Fragen unter Anführung der jeweiligen Nummerierung zu beantworten.

Antwort
(12. September 2012)

1. Der Rat besitzt seit Mitte der siebziger Jahre einen Keller für Wein und alkoholische Getränke.

2. Es werden Jahrgänge von 1990 bis 2010 gelagert. Dabei handelt es sich um Rotweine (73 %), Weißweine (24 %) und Schaumweine (3 %) aus allen Wein erzeugenden Ländern der EU. Ferner werden Aperitifs und einige wenige Liköre gelagert.

3.-4. Am 31. Mai 2012 befanden sich 27 223 Flaschen Wein im Keller. Daneben werden 1 035 Flaschen mit anderen alkoholischen Getränken im Keller gelagert.

5. Der Rat kauft normalerweise junge Weine, die im Keller reifen. Er kauft Wein und alkoholische Getränke direkt von Großhändlern oder Erzeugern. Den Ankäufen geht eine öffentliche Aus-schreibung voraus; das bedeutet, dass die Getränke zu einem günstigeren Preis erstanden werden können, der deutlich unter den Preisen der Cateringbranche liegt. Die teuerste Flasche Wein kostete 38 EUR, die billigste 4 EUR. Der Kaufpreis der anderen alkoholischen Getränke liegt zwischen 5 und 25 EUR.

6. Die Beträge, die für den Kauf von Wein ausgegeben werden, nehmen ab. Sie werden nach-folgend aufgeführt und wurden für Käufe ausgegeben, um den Lagerbestand im Keller zu halten:

— 2009 — 90 000 EUR,

— 2010 — 53 000 EUR,

— 2011 — 37 000 EUR,

— 2012 — 5 000 EUR.

7. Der Rat hat seit 2010 keine Spirituosen mehr eingekauft. Folgende Beträge wurden für Spirituosen ausgegeben:

— 2009 — 500 EUR,

— 2010 — 4 500 EUR,

— 2011 — 0 EUR,

— 2012 — 0 EUR.

8. Weine und alkoholische Getränke aus den Lagerbeständen des Rates werden nur an die Teil-nehmer von Arbeitsessen und bei einer sehr geringen Anzahl von Empfängen ausgeschenkt, um die Tradition von Gastfreundschaft und Höflichkeit zu wahren. 2011 wurden 7 109 Flaschen für 33 077 Personen ausgeschenkt, die an Essen und Empfängen teilnahmen. Das entspricht etwa einem Glas Wein (0,15 cl) pro Teilnehmer.

9. Da der Rat seine Weine und alkoholischen Getränke nicht verkauft, wird der Wert des Bestands nicht ermittelt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004857/12
to the Council
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Wine cellar and storage room for other alcoholic beverages

1. Does the Council have a wine cellar and/or a similar room where alcoholic beverages are stored? If so, since when?

2. What types of wine are stored in the wine cellar and from what vintages? What other alcoholic beverages are stored in the cellar?

3. How many bottles of wine are stored in the wine cellar, broken down by wine type and vintage?

4. How many bottles of other alcoholic beverages are stored in the cellar, broken down by beverage type?

5. What are the most expensive and the least expensive wines stored in the cellar? What are the most expensive and the least expensive alcoholic beverages stored in the cellar?

6. How much does the Council spend each year on wine? What amounts were spent in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

7. How much does the Council spend each year on other alcoholic beverages? What amounts were spent in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

8. On what occasions are the wines and other alcoholic beverages served? Who is permitted to drink the wines and other alcoholic beverages in question? Are the wines and alcoholic beverages also offered for sale? If so, where?

9. How much is the wine cellar worth?

In order to reduce administrative costs, I have tabled these questions as one parliamentary question and given each a number. Please answer each question individually, referring to its number.

Reply
(12 September 2012)

1. The Council has had a cellar for wine and alcoholic beverages since the mid-1970s.

2. Vintages from 1990 to 2010 are stored and include red (73%), white (24%) and sparkling (3%) wines, representative of all the EU wine-producing countries. There are also aperitifs and a few liqueurs.

3-4. On 31 May 2012, 27 223 bottles of wine were stored in the cellar. 1 035 bottles of other alcoholic beverages are stored in the cellar.

5. The Council usually buys young wine to let it mature in the cellar and purchases wine and alcoholic beverages directly from wholesalers or producers. Purchases are governed by public procurement procedures; the drinks can therefore be obtained at a better price which is clearly considerably lower than that normally applied in the catering sector. The most expensive bottle of wine cost EUR 38 and the cheapest cost EUR 4. The purchase price of the other alcoholic beverages ranges from EUR 5 to EUR 25.

6. The amounts spent on purchasing wine are decreasing. These amounts correspond to purchases made in order to maintain the stock in the cellar and are as follows:

— In 2009 — EUR 90 000

— In 2010 — EUR 53 000

— In 2011 — EUR 37 000

— In 2012 — EUR 5 000

7. The Council has not purchased any spirits since 2010. The amounts spent on spirits are as follows:

— In 2009 — EUR 500

— In 2010 — EUR 4 500

— In 2011 — EUR 0

— In 2012 — EUR 0

8. Wines and alcoholic beverages from the Council's stocks are served only to the participants of working meals, and at a very limited number of receptions, following a tradition of hospitality and courtesy. In 2011, 7 109 bottles were served to the 33 077 persons attending meals and receptions, which amounts to about one glass of wine (0.15cl) per participant.

9. As the Council does not sell its wines and alcoholic beverages, the stock is not valued.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004859/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(11 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Τιμή υγραερίου (LPG) ως καύσιμο κίνησης στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με την οδηγία του Συμβουλίου 2003/96/ΕΚ της 27ης Οκτωβρίου 2003, περί αναδιάρθρωσης του κοινοτικού πλαισίου φορολογίας των ενεργειακών προϊόντων και της ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας, καθορίζονται ελάχιστοι συντελεστές φορολογίας για τα καύσιμα κινητήρων οχημάτων. Βάσει αυτής, η τιμή του υγραερίου LPG θα μπορεί να παραμένει χαμηλότερη από την μισή σε σύγκριση με την αντίστοιχη τιμή της αμόλυβδης βενζίνης. Καθώς ωστόσο, οι διεθνείς τιμές καυσίμων διαρκώς αλλάζουν, παρατηρούνται ότι αυτές οι αποκλίσεις μερικές φορές δεν τηρούνται.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με ποιον τρόπο διασφαλίζει ότι τα επίπεδα φορολογίας που εφαρμόζονται στα καύσιμα κινητήρων και οι μεταξύ τους διαφοροποιήσεις τηρούνται με ακρίβεια σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη; Ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

2. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή για τον χρονικό ορίζοντα ισχύος των συγκεκριμένων αποκλίσεων στις τιμές και την φορολόγηση μεταξύ των διαφόρων ειδών καυσίμων στα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Ιουλίου 2012)

Επί του παρόντος, η οδηγία 2003/96/ΕΚ ([1]) προβλέπει ως ένα βαθμό εναρμόνιση του ειδικού φόρου κατανάλωσης που επιβάλλεται στα ενεργειακά προϊόντα και στην ηλεκτρική ενέργεια, με τον καθορισμό, μεταξύ άλλων, ελάχιστων συντελεστών ειδικού φόρου κατανάλωσης. Πέραν αυτών των ελάχιστων ορίων, τα κράτη μέλη είναι ελεύθερα να καθορίζουν φορολογικούς συντελεστές κατά την κρίση τους, με βάση την εθνική τους πολιτική.

Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που έχει στη διάθεσή της η Επιτροπή, ο φορολογικός συντελεστής στην Ελλάδα για το υγραέριο κίνησης (LPG) στις 27 Ιουνίου 2011 αυξήθηκε από τα 125 ευρώ ανά 1 000 χγμ., που είναι ο ελάχιστος φορολογικός συντελεστής στην ΕΕ, στα 200 ευρώ ανά 1 000 χγμ.

Εκτός από τον ειδικό φόρο κατανάλωσης, υπάρχουν και πολλοί άλλοι παράγοντες που καθορίζουν την τελική τιμή των καυσίμων για κινητήρες. Όσον αφορά τις διεθνείς τιμές των διάφορων ειδών καυσίμων για κινητήρες, δεν υπάρχει καμία υποχρέωση βάσει της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ να αντανακλώνται οι μεταξύ τους αποκλίσεις στην τελική τιμή των καυσίμων για κινητήρες επί ένα συγκεκριμένο χρονικό διάστημα.

([1]) ΕΕ L 283 της 31.10.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004859/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: The price of liquid petroleum gas (LPG) as a motor fuel in Greece

According to Council Directive 2003/96/EC of 27 October 2003 on restructuring the Community framework for the taxation of energy products and electricity, minimum rates of taxation are laid down for motor fuels. On this basis, the price of LPG could be less than half the corresponding price of unleaded petrol. However, as international fuel prices are constantly changing, it has been observed that these variations are sometimes not respected.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How can it ensure that the rates of taxation imposed on motor fuels and the variations between them are carefully respected in all Member States? What is the situation in Greece?

2. Is it in a position to provide information on the timeframe for the validity of specific variations in price and tax rates between different types of fuel in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2012)

Currently Directive 2003/96/EC ([1]) provides for a certain degree of harmonisation of excise duty applicable to energy products and electricity, *inter alia* by setting minimum levels of excise duty. Above these minima, Member States can fix levels of taxation as they see fit, taking into account national policy considerations.

According to information available to the Commission the tax rate applicable in Greece for LPG used as propellant was increased from EUR 125 per 1 000 kg, which is the EU minimum tax rate, to EUR 200 per 1 000 kg as from 27 June 2011.

Apart from excise duties, many other factors determine the final price of motor fuels. As regards international fuel prices of various motor fuels, there is no obligation under EU legislation to reflect variations between them in the final price of motor fuels within certain time frames.

([1]) OJ L 283, 31.10.2003.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004860/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(11 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος διακοπής της λειτουργίας ελληνικών πανεπιστημίων λόγω των επιπτώσεων του μηχανισμού συμμετοχής ιδιωτικού τομέα (PSI)

Σύμφωνα με τους Πρυτάνεις τους, ορισμένα ελληνικά δημόσια πανεπιστήμια αντιμετωπίζουν σοβαρά προβλήματα που διαταράσσουν την αποτελεσματική λειτουργία τους, διότι δεν διαθέτουν χρήματα ώστε να καλύψουν τις καθημερινές ανάγκες συντήρησής τους, όπως η ηλεκτρική ενέργεια, το νερό ή το τηλέφωνο. Αποτελεί γεγονός ότι οι σοβαρές οικονομικές δυσκολίες που αντιμετωπίζουν τα ελληνικά πανεπιστήμια οφείλονται στο «κούρεμα» που υπέστησαν τα οικονομικά τους λόγω της συνέχισης του PSI και της έλλειψης χρηματοδότησής τους. Για να καλύψουν τα ελληνικά δημόσια πανεπιστήμια τις βασικές λειτουργικές τους ανάγκες, χρειάζονται την άμεση εκταμίευση ποσοστού 25 % της ετήσιας κρατικής χρηματοδότησης που προορίζεται για αυτά, κάτι που δεν έχει συμβεί ακόμα, παρά το γεγονός ότι το Υπουργείο Παιδείας υπέβαλε τροπολογία στο εθνικό Κοινοβούλιο, η οποία εν τέλει αποσύρθηκε.

Με βάση τα ανωτέρω:

1. Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να δημοσιεύσει δεδομένα σχετικά με το ακριβές ύψος των ζημιών που υπέστησαν τα ελληνικά δημόσια πανεπιστήμια εξαιτίας του PSI; Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση έχει ενημερώσει την Επιτροπή σχετικά με το πώς σκοπεύει να αντισταθμίσει τις ζημίες αυτές ώστε να επιτρέψει τη συνέχιση της ομαλής λειτουργίας των ιδρυμάτων;

2. Με δεδομένη τη δέσμευση των κρατών μελών, στο πλαίσιο της στρατηγικής Ευρώπη 2020, για αύξηση του αριθμού των αποφοίτων πανεπιστημίου και βελτίωση της ανώτατης εκπαίδευσης, πώς σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να βοηθήσει στη διασφάλιση της ομαλής λειτουργίας των πανεπιστημίων στην Ελλάδα; Προτίθεται να τα βοηθήσει παρέχοντάς τους χρηματοδότηση από την ΕΕ;

3. Κατά τις διαπραγματεύσεις για τον μηχανισμό PSI, αναφέρθηκε από την Ελλάδα ή την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή το ζήτημα των επιπτώσεων της ανταλλαγής ομολόγων σε ευαίσθητους τομείς, όπως η παιδεία; Για ποιον λόγο δεν εξαιρέθηκαν τα πανεπιστήμια ή δεν τους δόθηκε η δυνατότητα να επωφεληθούν από ειδικά μέτρα για την αποφυγή ή την αντιστάθμιση τυχόν ζημιών;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Ιουλίου 2012)

1. Την τελευταία δεκαετία δημιουργήθηκε ένα μεγάλο χάσμα ανταγωνιστικότητας μεταξύ της Ελλάδας και των άλλων κρατών μελών της ζώνης ευρώ και αυξήθηκε πολύ το δημόσιο χρέος της. Το δεύτερο ελληνικό πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής εξετάζει τις σημαντικές προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει η Ελλάδα ([1]). Η επιτυχημένη ανταλλαγή του χρέους ήταν μια σημαντική προϋπόθεση ώστε να εγκρίνουν οι υπουργοί οικονομικών της ζώνης ευρώ και το ΔΝΤ τη χρηματοδότησή του, καθώς ελπίζεται ότι θα συμβάλει στη βελτίωση της βιωσιμότητας του χρέους.

2. Οι όροι της ανταλλαγής του χρέους καθορίστηκαν από τις ελληνικές αρχές ύστερα από διαβουλεύσεις με εκπροσώπους των ιδιωτών κατόχων ομολόγων, των κρατών μελών της ζώνης ευρώ και την Τρόικα. Για να εξασφαλίσει τη συνολική επιτυχία της, αποφασίστηκε να μην γίνουν διακρίσεις μεταξύ των κατόχων ομολόγων που είναι επιλέξιμα για την ανταλλαγή του χρέους. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει τα δεδομένα για τις ατομικές ζημίες κατά ομάδα ή τύπο κατόχων ομολόγων του Ελληνικού Δημοσίου. Η κυβέρνηση της Ελλάδας επίσης δήλωσε ότι δεν θα αποζημιώσει τους ιδιώτες κατόχους ομολόγων για τις ζημίες που θα προκληθούν από την ανταλλαγή του χρέους. Είναι καθήκον της κυβέρνησης της Ελλάδας να εξασφαλίσει ότι όλες οι υπηρεσίες ζωτικής σημασίας, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των πανεπιστημίων, θα εξακολουθήσουν να χρηματοδοτούνται καταλλήλως στα πλαίσια του συνολικού δημοσιονομικού περιορισμού.

3. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι το 25 % των κεφαλαίων που διατίθενται από την κυβέρνηση της Ελλάδας για τα ελληνικά πανεπιστήμια εκταμιεύθηκε τον Μάρτιο 2012 και ότι ακόμη ένα 25 % πρόκειται να εκταμιευθεί πριν το τέλος του ακαδημαϊκού έτους αλλά αυτό εξαρτάται από την εφαρμογή του αμφισβητούμενου νόμου περί μεταρρύθμισης της ανώτατης εκπαίδευσης. Στο υφιστάμενο πλαίσιο των δημοσιονομικών περιορισμών τα ελληνικά πανεπιστήμια πρέπει να εκμεταλλευτούν πλήρως τις δυνατότητες των Ευρωπαϊκών Διαρθρωτικών Ταμείων τα οποία μπορούν να στηρίξουν τις μεταρρυθμίσεις καθώς και τη χρηματοδότηση των υποδομών της εκπαίδευσης. Τα ελληνικά πανεπιστήμια πρέπει επίσης να εκμεταλλευτούν πλήρως τα κεφάλαια που διατίθενται μέσω του προγράμματος της δια βίου μάθησης.

([1]) Για περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες βλ.: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu_borrower/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004860/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Risk of suspension of operations at Greek universities because of the impact of the PSI mechanism

According to the deans of a number of Greek public universities are facing serious problems in operating effectively as they do not have money to pay for their daily maintenance needs, such as electricity, water or telephone. It is a fact that the severe economic difficulties the Greek universities are facing are due to the 'haircut' their finances have suffered as a result of the continuation of the PSI and their lack of funding. In order for the Greek public universities to meet their basic operational needs they require the immediate release of 25% of the annual state funding reserved for them, something that has not yet happened, despite the fact that the Ministry of Education had tabled an amendment before the National Parliament which was eventually withdrawn.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission release data on the exact amount of losses suffered by the Greek public universities as a result of the PSI? Has the Greek Government informed the Commission as to how it plans to compensate for these losses so as to permit the continuation of the smooth operations of the institutions?

2. Given the commitment of Member States under the Europe 2020 strategy, to an increase in number of university graduates and improved higher education, how does the Commission intend to help to ensure the smooth operation of universities in Greece? Is it willing to assist them with EU funding?

3. In negotiating for the PSI, was the issue of the impact of exchanging bonds in sensitive areas such as education brought up by either Greece or the European Commission? Why were universities not exempted or allowed to benefit from specific measures to avoid or offset any losses?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

1. Greece developed over the last decade a large competitiveness gap vis-à-vis the other euro-area Member States and accumulated a very high public debt stock. The 2nd Greek economic adjustment programme addresses the major challenges which Greece is facing ([1]). A successful debt exchange was an important pre-condition for euro area finance ministers and the IMF to approve its financing, as it contributed to an improvement of the debt sustainability.

2. The terms of the debt exchange were determined by the Greek authorities after consulting representatives of private bondholders, euro area Member States and the Troika. To ensure its overall success, it decided not to discriminate between holders of bonds eligible for the debt exchange. The Commission does not have the data on individual losses by group or type of holders of Greek Government bonds. The Greek Government also stated that it will not compensate any private bondholders for the losses incurred due to the debt exchange. It is the task of the Greek Government to ensure that all critical services, including universities, remain appropriately financed within the overall budgetary constraint.

3. Commission understands that 25% of the funds earmarked by the Greek Government for Greek universities was released in March 2012 and that an additional 25% could be released before the end of the academic year but is conditional to the implementation by Greek universities of the contested higher education reform law. In the current context of budgetary constraints, Greek universities should take full advantage of the possibilities of the European Structural Funds which can underpin reforms and also finance education infrastructure. Greek universities should also take full advantage of funds available through Lifelong Learning Programme.

([1]) see for more details: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu_borrower/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004862/12
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Ferhat Gerçek — Turkey

It has been widely reported that in October 2007, Ferhat Gerçek, then aged 17, was shot in the back in Istanbul, allegedly by Turkish police, in a dispute over the sale of a lawful political magazine. He was left permanently paralysed from the waist down.

Ferhat Gerçek faces a protracted trial for alleged public order offences in connection with this incident (including resisting arrest and insulting a public servant), with the potential of 15 years' imprisonment if found guilty. It appears that since his arrest in 2007, there have been 10 hearings, the most recent on 6 April 2012.

There are numerous issues with the trial that raise concerns, including the reported lack of an investigation of the scene of the crime, missing evidence and potential witness intimidation. It is also of concern that the police officer who was implicated has not faced suspension of duty.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether it is aware of this incident?

2. Can the Commission indicate what action, if any, it will take with the Turkish authorities to ensure that this trial is conducted both fairly and swiftly?

3. Can the Commission state what action it is taking to promote the introduction of an independent body in Turkey that can impartially and effectively investigate human rights violations and any impunity condoned by the state?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the case of Ferhat Gerçek, and has brought up the issue in its regular political monitoring meetings with the Turkish authorities. On 6 April 2012, the latest hearing in the case against seven police officers charged for attempting intentional homicide took place. The case is ongoing and the Commission will continue to follow it closely.

In its 2011 Progress report on Turkey, the Commission has noted that there has been no progress on tackling impunity and that there is a significant backlog in judicial proceedings. Moreover, the Commission notes that there is still no independent police complaints mechanism.

Currently, a draft law establishing a Human Rights Institution of Turkey is pending before the Parliament, and this institution is likely to also take on the role as independent national preventive mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT). However, the draft law in its current state is not in line with the UN Paris principles, in particular as regards the independence and functional autonomy of the future institution.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004864/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Combustibile prodotto dalla raffinazione dei fumi delle acciaierie

La compagnia aerea Virgin Atlantic ha sottoscritto un accordo per l'uso sui propri aerei di un combustibile ricavato dagli scarichi degli impianti di produzione e lavorazione dell'acciaio. Il brevetto è della svedese Swedish Biofuel e realizzato dalla neozelandese LanzaTech, nel cui paese è sito il primo impianto pilota di produzione. Non si hanno notizie specifiche circa il metodo di produzione di tale combustibile: le aziende coinvolte parlano semplicemente di un processo di lavorazione e trasformazione dei fumi prodotti dalle acciaierie; in questo modo, sostengono, si otterrebbe un abbattimento della quantità di fumi immessi nell'atmosfera, e stimano una produzione potenziale annua di circa 50 miliardi di litri di carburante.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questa tecnologia? Ritiene che l'introduzione di questo tipo di carburante sarebbe economicamente appetibile? Ritiene necessario commissionare degli studi sull'impatto ambientale sia degli impianti di produzione sia della combustione di questo carburante?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(27 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della tecnologia sviluppata da Swedish Biofuels e Lanza Tech e analizzata durante i lavori di benchmarking tecnologico nell'ambito dell'iniziativa «Biofuels FlightPath» nel settore dell'aviazione. Tale tecnologia può diventare economicamente interessante in futuro. Il biocarburante prodotto è progettato in maniera tale da essere simile al cherosene o al gasolio, a seconda delle condizioni di lavorazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004864/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Fuel produced from the refining of steelworks emissions

The airline Virgin Atlantic has signed an agreement to use a type of fuel on their aircrafts that is produced from the emissions of steel processing and production plants. The patent is held by Swedish Biofuel and the fuel is produced by LanzaTech, a company based in New Zealand, where the first pilot production plant is located. We have no specific information on the way this fuel is produced: the companies involved simply speak of processing and converting the fumes produced by steelworks; they assure us that this would result in a reduction of emissions released into the atmosphere and they estimate a potential annual production of about 50 000 000 000 litres of fuel.

Is the Commission aware of this technology? Does the Commission consider the introduction of this fuel type to be economically attractive? Does it also consider it necessary to commission studies on the environmental impact of the production plants and the combustion of this fuel?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

The technology developed by Swedish Biofuels and LanzaTech are known to the Commission and these have been analysed during the technology benchmarking work undertaken under the framework of the Biofuels FlightPath in Aviation. This technology may become economically attractive in the future. The resulting biofuel can be designed, subject to the process conditions, to be similar to kerosene or to diesel fuel.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004871/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Mai 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Pressefreiheit im subsaharischen Afrika und Einfluss der Volksrepublik China

In den letzten Monaten berichteten mehrere Medien, dass die Pressefreiheit in einigen subsaharischen afrikanischen Ländern, speziell in Äthiopien und Kenia, bedroht ist. Insbesondere ein Desinteresse europäischer Staaten und ein zunehmender chinesischer Einfluss wurden als Gründe für die Zunahme dieses Problems genannt.

1. Sieht die Hohe Vertreterin die Pressefreiheit im subsaharischen Afrika ebenfalls als bedroht an? Wenn ja, in welchen Staaten geben die Entwicklungen ihrer Ansicht nach besonderen Anlass zur Sorge und welche Gründe sieht sie für die gefährdete Pressefreiheit?

2. Bewertet die Hohe Vertreterin den Einfluss der Volksrepublik China auf die Pressefreiheit in subsaharischen afrikanischen Staaten eher positiv oder eher negativ? Warum?

3. Kann die Hohe Vertreterin einen Überblick darüber geben, welche Programme zur Unterstützung von unabhängiger Presse und journalistischer Freiheit im subsaharischen Afrika durch den Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst koordiniert, finanziert, unterstützt oder durchgeführt werden?

4. Steht die Hohe Vertreterin oder einer ihrer Vertreter bezüglich der Pressefreiheit im subsaharischen Afrika in einem Dialog mit den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, der Volksrepublik China oder anderen Drittstaaten? Wenn ja, in welcher Form findet dieser Dialog statt und haben diese Gespräche bisher zu konkreten Entschlüssen, Resolutionen, Verträgen oder sonstigen Ergebnissen geführt? Wenn nicht, plant die Hohe Vertreterin solche Dialoge einzuleiten?

5. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Hohe Vertreterin künftig koordinieren, finanzieren, unterstützen oder unternehmen, um die Pressefreiheit in den Staaten des subsaharischen Afrika zu unterstützen?

Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(28. Juni 2012)

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin (HR/VP) tritt nachdrücklich für die Achtung der freien Meinungsäußerung ein und verurteilt scharf jede Bedrohung der Pressefreiheit.

Die EU greift die Frage der Informations- und Medienfreiheit im Rahmen bilateraler Gespräche mit subsaharischen afrikanischen Ländern auf, wobei sie ihre Bedenken über die Belästigung und Verfolgung unabhängiger Blogger, Journalisten und anderer Personen, die ihre politischen Ansichten äußern, hervorhebt.

Außerdem führt die EU mit der Afrikanischen Union (AU) einen Dialog über Menschenrechte und erörtert Menschenrechtsfragen im Rahmen der Afrika-EU-Partnerschaft für demokratische Staatsführung und Menschenrechte. Im Dezember 2011 fand in Tunis das erste Treffen der Afrika-EU-Arbeitsgruppe über die Meinungsfreiheit statt.

Weder mit China, den Vereinigten Staaten, noch mit irgend einem anderen Land wird ein besonderer Dialog über die Pressefreiheit in Subsahara-Afrika geführt. Die EU spricht das Thema der Pressefreiheit allerdings im Rahmen der politischen Dialoge mit Drittländern oder in internationalen Foren an.

Darüber hinaus befasst sich die EU mit diesen Fragen in Form öffentlicher Erklärungen und Demarchen. 2011 hat die HR/VP die ernsten Bedenken der EU darüber zum Ausdruck gebracht, dass die schwedischen Journalisten Martin Schibbye und Johan Persson aufgrund der Antiterrorismus-Proklamation Äthiopiens vor Gericht gebracht und verurteilt wurden. Im Januar 2012 überreichte die Delegation der Europäischen Union in Asmara eine auf den Grundsatz „habeas corpus“ gestützte Petition zugunsten des Journalisten Dawit Isaak, dessen Freilassung seit langem gefordert wird, zur Weiterleitung an den Obersten Gerichtshof.

Die EU leistet einer Reihe von zivilgesellschaftlichen Organisationen finanzielle Unterstützung, die sich weltweit, darunter auch in einigen Ländern südlich der Sahara, für die Förderung der freien Meinungsäußerung und der Bekämpfung von Verletzungen der Rechte der Journalisten einsetzen. Die Kommission überprüft derzeit die bisher erfolgte Unterstützung für die Meinungs- und die Medienfreiheit.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004871/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Freedom of the press in Sub-Saharan Africa and the influence of the People's Republic of China

In recent months there have been several media reports indicating a threat to freedom of the press in some Sub-Saharan African countries, particularly Ethiopia and Kenya. The lack of interest among European countries and an increasing Chinese influence have been given as reasons for the increase in this problem.

1. Does the High Representative also see a threat to freedom of the press in Sub-Saharan Africa? If so, in which countries, in her view, do developments give particular cause for concern and what are the reasons for the threat to freedom of the press?

2. Would the High Representative view the influence of the People's Republic of China on freedom of the press in Sub-Saharan African states as tending to the positive or the negative? Why?

3. Can the High Representative offer an overview of which programmes in support of an independent press and journalistic freedom in Sub-Saharan Africa are coordinated, funded, supported or implemented by the European External Action Service?

4. Is the High Representative or one of her representatives engaged in dialogue with the United States, China, or other third countries in relation to freedom of the press in Sub-Saharan Africa? If so, what is the form of this dialogue and have these talks led to specific decisions, resolutions, agreements or other results? If not, does the High Representative intend initiating such a dialogue?

5. What measures will the High Representative coordinate, finance, support and undertake in the future to support freedom of the press in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

The HR/VP is strongly committed to the respect for freedom of expression and firmly condemns any threat to free press.

The EU raises the issue of freedom of information and media bilaterally with Sub-Saharan African countries underlining its concerns about harassment and persecution of independent bloggers, journalists and others who express their political views.

The EU is engaged in a human rights dialogue with the African Union (AU), but also addresses human rights issues in the framework of the AU-EU Partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights. The Africa-EU Working Group on Freedom of Expression was held for the first time December 2011 in Tunis.

There is no specific dialogue in relation to freedom of the press in Sub-Saharan Africa with China or the United States or any other country. However, the EU raises the issue of free press in the framework of the political dialogues it has with third countries, as well as in international fora.

The EU also addresses such matters through public statements or demarches. In 2011 the HR/VP expressed the EU's serious concern about the judgment and sentencing of Swedish journalists Martin Schibbye and Johan Persson under the Ethiopian Anti-Terrorism Proclamation. In January 2012, the EU Delegation in Asmara handed over a petition for habeas corpus regarding journalist Dawit Isaak whose liberation has long been requested, for delivery to Eritrea's Supreme Court.

The EU provides financial support to a number of civil society organisations working to promote freedom of expression and combating violations of journalists' rights worldwide, including in some Sub-Saharan African countries. The Commission is currently undertaking a review of past freedom of expression and media support.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004872/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Mai 2012)

Betrifft: Investitionsmesse USA-EU-China

Einem aktuellen Bericht der Bertelsmann-Stiftung ([1]) zufolge wäre eine jährliche Investitionsmesse zwischen den USA, der EU und China für Unternehmen und Anleger aus den teilnehmenden Ländern höchst profitabel.

1. Betrachtet es die Kommission grundsätzlich als eine ihrer Aufgaben, Investitions- und Handelsmessen zu organisieren oder zu unterstützen?

2. Hält die Kommission eine derartige Investitionsmesse zwischen den USA, der EU und China — mit der Möglichkeit einer Ausweitung auf Indien, Brasilien oder Russland — für ein lohnendes Vorhaben?

3. Beabsichtigt die Kommission angesichts der Tatsache, dass die Region, in der eine solche Messe stattfindet, womöglich am meisten davon profitiert, eine derartige Investitionsmesse oder ein ähnliches Projekt durchzuführen oder zu unterstützen?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juli 2012)

Eine umfassende gemeinsame Auslandsinvestitionspolitik sollte den Belangen der Investoren von der Phase vor der Zulassung bis zur Phase nach der Zulassung Rechnung tragen. Daher verfolgt die Kommission in der Handels- und Investitionspolitik den Ansatz, die Liberalisierung und den Schutz von Investitionen — beides auch Maßnahmen zur Investitionsförderung — miteinander zu verknüpfen.

Fördermaßnahmen wie Handelsmessen ergänzen die Investitionspolitik tatsächlich häufig, so dass Investitionen gezielt gefördert werden können. In der EU werden derartige Maßnahmen von Mitgliedstaaten auf nationaler und regionaler Ebene durchgeführt. So konkurrieren Behörden miteinander, wenn es darum geht, aktive und passive Auslandsinvestitionen, die in ihren Zuständigkeitsbereich fallen, zu fördern, so wie es auch in den Bereichen Handels- oder Exportförderung der Fall ist. Dabei greifen sie in der Regel auf ein breitgefächertes Instrumentarium zurück, das von Investitionsanreizen bis hin zu Förder- und Unterstützungsprogrammen reicht, und es scheint weder praktikabel noch wünschenswert, die Investitionsfördermaßnahmen der Mitgliedstaaten zu ersetzen, solange sie sich in die gemeinsame Handelspolitik einfügen und mit dem EU-Recht vereinbar sind.

([1]) Bertelsmann Foundation: „Cash in Hand: Chinese FDI in the US and Germany".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004872/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: US-EU-China investment fair

A recent report by the Bertelsmann foundation ([1]) suggests that an annual US-EU-China investment fair would prove highly beneficial for businesses and investors from the involved countries.

1. In general, does the Commission see it as part of its role to organise or support investment and trade fairs?

2. Does the Commission see such an US-EU-China investment fair, possibly extended to include India, Brazil or Russia, as a beneficial prospect?

3. Considering that the host region might benefit the most from hosting such a fair, does the Commission intend to implement or support such an investment fair or a similar construct?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

A comprehensive common international investment policy should address investor needs from the pre- to the post-admission stage. Thus, the Commission's approach to trade and investment policy seeks to integrate investment liberalisation and investment protection, both of which also promote investment.

As regards promotion efforts such as trade fairs, these indeed often complement investment policy in order to promote investment in a targeted way. In the EU such promotion efforts are undertaken by Member States, both at national and sub-national levels of government. Authorities engage competitively in promoting both inward and outward investment to and from their jurisdictions, just like in the area of trade or export promotion. Their efforts commonly rely on a variety of instruments, ranging from investment incentives to assistance and support schemes, and it seems neither feasible nor desirable to replace the investment promotion efforts of Member States, as long as they fit with the common commercial policy and remain consistent with EC law.

([1]) Bertelsmann Foundation: 'Cash in Hand: Chinese FDI in the US and Germany'.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004873/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Regulation on private pensions and company mergers

Could the Commission detail if there are plans for an EU regulation covering private pensions, given that Member State citizens may suffer financial losses if, in the case of the merger of two companies from two different Member States, they were not given the same private pension scheme under the new company registered in another Member State?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

Directive 2001/23/EC ([1]) sets out a general rule of automatic transfer of contractual rights and obligations to the transferee. This general principle does not apply to employees' rights to old-age, invalidity or survivors' benefits under supplementary company or intercompany pension schemes outside the statutory social security schemes. However, Article 3.4(b) of the directive states that 'Member States shall protect the interests of employees and persons no longer employed in the transferor's business […] in respect of rights conferring on them immediate or prospective entitlement to old-age benefits, including survivors' benefits, under supplementary schemes referred to in the first subparagraph'. At this stage, the Commission does not intend to revise the relevant provisions of the directive.

([1]) Council Directive 2001/23/EC of 12 March 2001 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of undertakings or businesses.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004874/12
a la Comisión
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL), Pavel Poc (S&D), Dan Jørgensen (S&D) y Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(11 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: Caza furtiva de aves en Ischia y Procida durante la temporada migratoria de primavera: falta de medidas para evitar este fenómeno e infracción de la Directiva 2009/147/CE sobre las aves silvestres

Las islas de Ischia y Procida representan una etapa estratégica para las aves que migran en primavera de sus zonas de hibernación en África a zonas de apareo en Europa.

Las Directivas de la UE sobre conservación de hábitats y flora y fauna silvestre exigen a los Estados miembros que apliquen todas las medidas necesarias para reducir la caza furtiva. Sin embargo, en la isla de Ischia (Nápoles) persiste una situación de ilegalidad extendida.

Cada año en primavera se colocan miles de trampas para capturar pequeñas aves migratorias, asimismo se sitúan señuelos electromagnéticos en zonas de alto tránsito migratorio y los cazadores furtivos utilizan armas de fuego.

Se cazan tórtolas (*Streptopelia turtur*) y codornices (*Coturnix coturnix*), cuya población se encuentra en descenso en la UE, sobre todo con armas de fuego, mientras que pequeñas passeriformes, como la collalba gris (*Oenanthe oenanthe*), el papamoscas cerrojillo (*Ficedula hypoleuca*), la tarabilla norteña (*Saxicola rubetra*), la lavandera boyera (*Motacilla flava*) y muchas otras especies se atrapan mediante el uso de trampas.

La caza furtiva también tiene lugar cerca de una colonia de gaviotas de Audouin (*Larus audouinii*), una especie cuya población mundial se estima en no más de algunas decenas de miles de parejas, lo que pone en grave peligro sus nidos.

Durante muchos años, los guardas de caza voluntarios del WWF y la LIPU ([1]), así como miembros del CABS ([2]) y la LAC ([3]) han venido organizado campamentos de lucha contra la caza furtiva en esas islas ([4]) para informar sobre la gravedad de este fenómeno. Sin embargo, no se ha producido una actividad institucional continua importante para evitar y disuadir de la caza furtiva de aves.

Asimismo, parte del territorio de Ischia ha sido designado LIC ([5]) en virtud de la Directiva 92/43/CEE sobre los hábitats, por lo que la persistencia de actividades de caza ilegal resulta todavía más grave.

¿Es consciente la Comisión de la gravedad y continuidad de la caza furtiva de aves en las islas de Ischia y Procida durante la primavera? ¿No constituye una infracción de la Directiva 2009/147/CE sobre las aves silvestres el hecho de que el Estado miembro no tome iniciativas para limitar el fenómeno de la caza furtiva?

¿Estudia la Comisión la posibilidad de intervenir con carácter urgente y de modo decidido, en vista de la gravedad de la situación, incluso mediante una reclamación a las autoridades nacionales y regionales competentes?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de junio de 2012)

La Comisión tiene conocimiento, por noticias aparecidas en los medios de comunicación, de la situación mencionada por Sus Señorías, pero no ha recibido información específica o detallada al respecto. Este tipo de prácticas de caza furtiva son manifiestamente contrarias a las disposiciones de la Directiva de aves ([6]), que las autoridades italianas tienen la obligación de aplicar.

La Comisión confirma que el hecho de que las autoridades nacionales no adopten las medidas necesarias para poner fin a estas prácticas ilegales puede constituir efectivamente una infracción de la Directiva de aves. Por ello, va a pedir información a las autoridades italianas sobre las medidas adoptadas para hacer frente al problema mencionado.

([1]) LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli, afiliada a Birdlife International.
([2]) CABS: Committee Against Bird Slaughter (Comité contra la matanza de aves).
([3]) LAC: Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia (Liga para la abolición de la caza).
([4]) Véase: http://www.geapress.org/caccia/ischia-maxitrappole-e-colpi-di-fucile/26198.
([5]) LIC: Lugar de importancia comunitaria (IT8030005).
([6]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 20 de 26.1.2010, p. 7), que codifica la Directiva 79/409/CEE del Consejo, de 2 de abril de 1979, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 103 de 25.4.1979).

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-004874/12
Komisi
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL), Pavel Poc (S&D), Dan Jørgensen (S&D) a Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(11. května 2012)

Předmět: Nelegální lov ptáků na ostrovech Ischia a Procida v období jarního stěhování – nečinnost a neschopnost zabránit tomuto jevu a porušování směrnice 2009/147/ES o ochraně ptáků

Pro ptáky, kteří v jarním období táhnou ze svých afrických zimovišť do hnízdišť v Evropě, jsou ostrovy Ischia a Procida strategicky významnou zastávkou na jejich cestě.

Směrnice EU o stanovištích a ochraně volně žijících živočichů od členských států vyžadují, aby provedly veškerá opatření s cílem omezit nelegální lov. Na ostrově Ischia (Neapol) však přetrvává stav všeobecně rozšířeného obcházení zákona.

Každý rok na jaře pytláci za účelem lovu drobných tažných ptáků nastražují pasti, do oblastí s vysokou hustotou táhnoucích druhů instalují elektromagnetické návnady a používají brokovnice.

Hrdličky divoké (Streptopelia turtur) a křepelky polní (Coturnix coturnix), jejichž počet na území EU klesá, jsou loveny převážně za pomoci střelných zbraní, zatímco drobní pěvci, například bělořit šedý (Oenanthe oenanthe), lejsek černohlavý (Ficedula hypoleuca), bramborníček hnědý (Saxicola rubetra), konipas luční (Motacilla flava) a řada dalších druhů, jsou loveni prostřednictvím pastí.

K nelegálnímu lovu dochází také v blízkosti kolonie racků Audouinových (Larus audouinii) – což je druh, jehož celosvětová populace se odhaduje na pouhých několik desítek tisíc párů –, čímž je vážně ohroženo jejich hnízdění.

Dobrovolní strážci přírody z WWF a LIPU ([1]) společně s členy CABS ([2]) a LAC ([3]) na těchto ostrovech již po mnoho let pořádají protipytlácké tábory ([4]), aby tak upozornili na hloubku problému. Přesto není ze strany institucí vyvíjena žádná významná dlouhodobější činnost, jejímž cílem by bylo nelegálnímu lovu ptáků předcházet nebo mu zabraňovat.

Kromě toho byla část území ostrova Ischia na základě směrnice 92/43/EHS o ochraně přírodních stanovišť označena za lokalitu významnou pro Společenství (SCI) ([5]); pokračování nelegálních loveckých aktivit je proto ještě závažnější.

Je si Komise vědoma závažnosti a rozsahu nelegálního lovu ptáků na ostrovech Ischia a Procida v jarním období? Nejedná se v případě neprovedení iniciativ pro omezení nelegálního lovu o porušení směrnice 2009/147/ES o ochraně ptáků ze strany členského státu?

Neuvažuje Komise vzhledem k vážnosti situace o naléhavém a rozhodném zásahu, včetně vznesení námitky k příslušným vnitrostátním a regionálním orgánům?

Odpověď pana Potočnika jménem Komise
(22. června 2012)

Komise si je situace zmiňované pány díky zprávám ve sdělovacích prostředcích vědoma, ačkoliv nedostala k dispozici žádné konkrétní nebo podrobné informace. Tyto pytlácké činnosti jsou jasně v rozporu s ustanoveními směrnice o ochraně ptáků ([6]), kterou jsou italské orgány povinny prosazovat.

Komise může potvrdit, že pokud vnitrostátní orgány nepřijmou opatření nezbytná k zamezení těmto nezákonným činnostem, může se skutečně jednat o porušení směrnice o ochraně ptáků.

Komise proto italské orgány požádá o nahlášení opatření, které jsou za účelem vyřešení výše uvedeného problému prováděna.

([1]) LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli (Italská liga na ochranu ptáků), přidružená k organizaci Birdlife International.
([2]) CABS: Committee Against Bird Slaughter (Výbor proti vybíjení ptáků).
([3]) LAC: Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia (Liga pro zrušení myslivectví).
([4]) Viz: http://www.geapress.org/caccia/ischia-maxitrappole-e-colpi-di-fucile/26198.
([5]) SCI: Site of Community Importance – lokalita významná pro Společenství (IT8030005).
([6]) Směrnice Evropského parlamentu a Rady 2009/147/ES ze dne 30. listopadu 2009 o ochraně volně žijících ptáků (Úř. věst. L 20, 26.1.2010, s. 7), kterou se kodifikuje směrnice Rady ze dne 2. dubna 1979 o ochraně volně žijících ptáků (Úř. věst. L 103, 25.4.1979).

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-004874/12
til Kommissionen
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL), Pavel Poc (S&D), Dan Jørgensen (S&D) og Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(11. maj 2012)

Om: Krybskytteri på fugle i Ischia under forårets trækperiode — manglende indgriben og forhindring af fænomenet i strid med fugledirektivet (2009/147/EF)

Øerne Ischia og Procida udgør et strategisk springbræt for fugle, som trækker om foråret fra overvintringssteder i Afrika mod yngleområder i Europa.

Medlemsstaterne er i henhold til fugle- og habitatdirektivet forpligtet til at gennemføre alle foranstaltninger med henblik på at reducere krybskytteri. På Ischia (Napoli) forekommer der imidlertid fortsat udbredte overtrædelser inden for dette område.

Hvert forår sættes der tusindvis af fælder for at fange små trækfugle, der opsættes elektromagnetiske lokkefugle i travle trækområder, og krybskytterne anvender haglgeværer.

Turtelduer (streptopelia turtur) og vagtler (coturnix coturnix), hvis populationer er faldende i EU, jages oftest med haglgeværer, mens små spurvefugle, såsom stenpikker (oenanthe oenanthe), broget fluesnapper (ficedula hypoleuca), bynkefugl (saxicola rubetra), almindelig gul vipstjert (motacilla flava) og mange andre arter fanges i fælder.

Krybskytteri finder også sted i nærheden af en koloni af audouinsmåger (larus audouinii), hvoraf populationen på verdensplan vurderes til kun at være nogle titusinde par, og er en stor trussel mod deres redebygning.

Frivillige vildtplejere fra WWF og LIPU ([1]), samt medlemmer af CABS ([2]) og LAC ([3]) har i mange går arrangeret lejre til bekæmpelse af krybskytteri på disse øer ([4]) med henblik op at rapportere, hvor alvorligt fænomenet er. Ikke desto mindre er der ikke truffet nogen væsentlige fortsatte institutionelle foranstaltninger med henblik på at forhindre og bremse krybskytteri på fugle.

Endvidere er en del af Ischias territorium udpeget som en lokalitet af fællesskabsbetydning (LAF) ([5]) i henhold til habitatdirektivet (92/43/EØF), og de fortsatte ulovlige jagtaktiviteter er derfor endnu mere alvorlige.

Er Kommissionen bekendt med, hvor alvorligt og udbredt krybskytteri på fugle er på Ischia og Procida om foråret? Udgør medlemsstatens manglende initiativer med henblik på at begrænse omfanget af krybskytteri ikke en overtrædelse af fugledirektivet (2009/147/EF)?

Agter Kommissionen i betragtning af situationens alvor hurtigst muligt at gribe målrettet ind bl.a. ved at henvende sig til de kompetente nationale og regionale myndigheder?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(22. juni 2012)

Kommissionen er via medierne bekendt med den situation, som de ærede medlemmer henviser til, omend den ikke har modtaget konkrete eller detaljerede oplysninger herom. Sådant krybskytteri er åbenlyst i strid med bestemmelserne i fugledirektivet ([6]), som de italienske myndigheder er forpligtede til at håndhæve.

Kommissionen kan bekræfte, at nationale myndigheders manglende initiativ til at tage hånd om denne ulovlige praksis meget vel kan udgøre en overtrædelse af fugledirektivet.

Kommissionen vil derfor udbede sig oplysninger fra de italienske myndigheder om de foranstaltninger, der træffes for at håndtere ovennævnte problem.

([1]) LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli, med tilknytning til Birdlife International.
([2]) CABS: Committee Against Bird Slaughter (kommissionen mod drab af fugle).
([3]) LAC: Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia (foreningen for afskaffelse af jagt).
([4]) See: http://www.geapress.org/caccia/ischia-maxitrappole-e-colpi-di-fucile/26198.
([5]) LAF: Lokalitet af fællesskabsbetydning (IT8030005).
([6]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2009/147/EF af 30. november 2009 om beskyttelse af vilde fugle (EUT L 20 af 26.1.2010, s. 7), der kodificerer Rådets direktiv 79/409/EØF af 2.4.1979 om beskyttelse af vilde fugle (EFT L 103 af 25.4.1979).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004874/12
an die Kommission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL), Pavel Poc (S&D), Dan Jørgensen (S&D) und Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(11. Mai 2012)

Betrifft: Vogelwilderei auf Ischia und Procida während der Vogelflugsaison im Frühjahr — Verletzung der Vogelschutzlinie 2009/147/EG durch Untätigkeit und ausbleibende Maßnahmen zur Unterbindung des Phänomens

Die Inseln Ischia und Procida sind ein wichtiger Zwischenhalt für Vögel, die im Frühjahr von ihren Überwinterungsgebieten in Afrika in die Brutgebiete in Europa ziehen.

Gemäß den EU-Richtlinien zur Erhaltung der natürlichen Lebensräume sowie der wildlebenden Tiere und Pflanzen müssen die Mitgliedstaaten alle notwendigen Maßnahmen ergreifen, um die Wilderei einzudämmen. Auf der Insel Ischia (Neapel) sind jedoch nach wie vor illegale Praktiken weit verbreitet.

Um kleine Zugvögel zu fangen, werden jedes Jahr im Frühjahr Tausende Fallen aufgestellt, elektromagnetische Köder in Zuggebieten mit hohem Vogelaufkommen platziert und durch Wilderer Schrotflinten eingesetzt.

Turteltauben (*Streptopelia turtur*) und Wachteln (*Coturnix coturnix*), deren Bestände in der EU rückläufig sind, werden hauptsächlich mit Schrotflinten gejagt, während kleine Passeriformes wie Steinschmätzer (*Oenanthe oenanthe*), Trauerschnäpper (*Ficedula hypoleuca*), Braunkehlchen (*Saxicola rubetra*), Schafstelzen (*Motacilla flava*) und zahlreiche andere Arten mithilfe von Fallen gefangen werden.

Auch in der Nähe einer Kolonie von Korallenmöwen (*Larus audouinii*), einer Art, deren weltweiter Bestand auf nicht mehr als einige Zehntausend Paare geschätzt wird, wird Wilderei betrieben, was eine erhebliche Gefährdung für ihr Nisten darstellt.

Seit vielen Jahren organisieren freiwillige Jagdaufseher von WWF und der LIPU ([1]) zusammen mit Mitgliedern des CABS ([2]) und der LAC ([3]) auf diesen Inseln ([4]) Anti-Wilderer-Camps, um auf die Ernsthaftigkeit dieses Phänomens aufmerksam zu machen. Dennoch wurden auf institutioneller Ebene bislang keine nennenswerten dauerhaften Maßnahmen ergriffen, um die Vogelwilderei zu verhindern und zu bekämpfen.

Darüber hinaus wurde ein Teil des Territoriums von Ischia gemäß der Habitat-Richtlinie 92/43/EWG als GGB ([5]) ausgewiesen: Das Fortbestehen illegaler Jagdaktivitäten ist somit noch schwerwiegender.

Ist sich die Kommission der Schwere und Beständigkeit der Vogelwilderei auf den Inseln Ischia und Procida im Frühjahr bewusst? Stellt die Tatsache, dass bislang keine Initiativen zur Eindämmung des Phänomens der Wilderei umgesetzt wurden, nicht eine Verletzung der Vogelschutzrichtlinie 2009/147/EG durch den Mitgliedstaat dar?

Erwägt die Kommission, angesichts des Ernsts der Lage rasch und entschieden einzugreifen, auch indem sie Kontakt zu den zuständigen nationalen und regionalen Behörden aufnimmt?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(22. Juni 2012)

Auch wenn ihr keine spezifischen oder ausführlichen Informationen zugeleitet wurden, ist die Kommission durch Berichte in den Medien über die von den Damen und Herren Abgeordneten geschilderte Situation unterrichtet. Es steht außer Frage, dass solche illegalen Jagdpraktiken den Bestimmungen der Vogelschutzrichtlinie ([6]) zuwiderlaufen, zu deren Durchsetzung die italienischen Behörden verpflichtet sind.

([1]) LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli, angeschlossen an Birdlife International.
([2]) CABS: Committee Against Bird Slaughter (Komittee gegen den Vogelmord).
([3]) LAC: Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia (Liga zur Abschaffung der Jagd).
([4]) Siehe: http://www.geapress.org/caccia/ischia-maxitrappole-e-colpi-di-fucile/26198.
([5]) GGB: Gebiet von gemeinschaftlicher Bedeutung (IT8030005).
([6]) Richtlinie 2009/147/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 30. November 2009 über die Erhaltung der wildlebenden Vogelarten (ABl. L 20 vom 26.1.2010, S. 7), mit der die Richtlinie 79/409/EWG des Rates vom 2. April 1979 über die Erhaltung der wildlebenden Vogelarten (ABl. L 103 vom 25.4.1979) kodifiziert wurde.

Die Kommission bestätigt, dass ein Nichttätigwerden der nationalen Behörden mit Blick auf eine Unterbindung dieser illegalen Praktiken tatsächlich einen Verstoß gegen die Vogelschutzrichtlinie darstellt.

Die Kommission wird die italienischen Behörden daher zu den Maßnahmen befragen, die sie getroffen haben, um das oben genannte Problem anzugehen.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004874/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL), Pavel Poc (S&D), Dan Jørgensen (S&D) e Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(11 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Bracconaggio di uccelli a Ischia e Procida nel corso della stagione migratoria primaverile: inadempienze e mancata prevenzione del fenomeno, in violazione della direttiva Uccelli 2009/147/CE

Le isole di Ischia e Procida rappresentano un trampolino di lancio strategico per i volatili che in primavera migrano dalle aree di svernamento in Africa verso le aree di riproduzione in Europa.

Le direttive dell'UE concernenti l'habitat e la conservazione della flora e della fauna selvatiche esigono dagli Stati membri l'attuazione di tutte le misure intese a ridurre il bracconaggio. Sull'isola di Ischia (Napoli) perdura tuttavia una situazione di diffusa illegalità.

Ogni anno, a primavera, si collocano migliaia di trappole, si sistemano richiami elettromagnetici nelle aree di migrazione con un elevato passaggio e i bracconieri fanno uso di fucili da caccia per la cattura dei piccoli uccelli migratori.

Le tortore (*Streptopelia turtur)* e le quaglie comuni (*Coturnix coturnix*), le cui popolazioni nell'UE sono in declino, sono prevalentemente oggetto di caccia con i fucili, mentre i piccoli passeracei come i culbianchi (*Oenanthe oenanthe*), le balie nere (*Ficedula hypoleuca*), gli stiaccini (*Saxicola rubetra*), le cutrettole (*Motacilla flava*) e molte altre specie sono catturati utilizzando le trappole.

Anche nelle vicinanze di una colonia di gabbiani corsi (*Larus audouinii*) — una specie la cui popolazione mondiale è stimata non oltre qualche decina di migliaia di coppie — ha luogo il bracconaggio, che ne pregiudica gravemente la nidificazione.

I sorveglianti venatori volontari del WWF e della LIPU ([1]), unitamente ai membri del CABS ([2]) e della LAC ([3]), hanno organizzato per parecchi anni campi antibracconaggio sulle suddette isole ([4]) al fine di denunciare la gravità del fenomeno. Non è tuttavia stato dato corso ad alcuna attività istituzionale continua e di rilievo per la prevenzione e la deterrenza del bracconaggio degli uccelli.

Una parte del territorio di Ischia è stata inoltre designata come SIC ([5]) ai sensi della direttiva Habitat 92/43/CEE: il perdurare di attività venatorie illegali risulta pertanto ancora più grave.

È la Commissione a conoscenza della gravità e del persistere del bracconaggio degli uccelli sulle isole di Ischia e Procida in primavera? Non costituisce la mancata attuazione di iniziative volte a contenere il fenomeno del bracconaggio una violazione della direttiva Uccelli 2009/147/CE da parte dello Stato membro?

Stante la gravità della situazione, valuta la Commissione un intervento urgente e determinato, che comprenda anche la presentazione di rimostranze alle autorità nazionali e regionali competenti?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza, grazie alla stampa ed altri mezzi di comunicazione, della situazione fatta presente dagli onorevoli parlamentari, ma non ha ricevuto informazioni dettagliate in proposito. È evidente che le descritte pratiche di bracconaggio violano le disposizioni della direttiva Uccelli ([6]), la cui attuazione è obbligatoria per le autorità italiane.

([1]) LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli, affiliata all'organizzazione Birdlife International.
([2]) CABS: Committee Against Bird Slaughter (Comitato contro l'uccellagione).
([3]) LAC: Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia.
([4]) Si veda: http://www.geapress.org/caccia/ischia-maxitrappole-e-colpi-di-fucile/26198.
([5]) SIC: Sito di importanza comunitaria (IT8030005).
([6]) Direttiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 30 novembre 2009, concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici (GU L 20 del 26.1.2010, pag. 7), che ha codificato la direttiva 79/409/CEE del Consiglio, del 2 aprile 1979, concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici (GU L 103 del 25.4.1979).

La Commissione può confermare che la mancata adozione, da parte delle autorità nazionali, dei provvedimenti necessari per lottare contro queste pratiche illegali può effettivamente costituire una violazione della direttiva Uccelli.

La Commissione, pertanto, chiederà conto alle autorità italiane delle misure da esse attuate per porre rimedio a questo problema.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004874/12
aan de Commissie
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL), Pavel Poc (S&D), Dan Jørgensen (S&D) en Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(11 mei 2012)

Betreft: Vogelstroperij op Ischia en Procida tijdens het voorjaarstrekseizoen — Het uitblijven van maatregelen en het niet verhinderen van het fenomeen, waarmee inbreuk wordt gemaakt op de Vogelrichtlijn (2009/147/EG)

De eilanden Ischia en Procida zijn een strategische stapsteen voor vogels die in het voorjaar van overwinteringsgebieden in Afrika naar broedgebieden in Europa trekken.

De EU-richtlijnen inzake de instandhouding van de natuurlijke habitats en de wilde flora en fauna verplichten de lidstaten alle maatregelen uit te voeren die erop gericht zijn de stroperij terug te dringen. Maar op het eiland Ischia (Napels) blijft een situatie van wijdverbreide illegaliteit bestaan.

Stropers zetten elk voorjaar duizenden vallen, plaatsen elektromagnetische lokmiddelen in drukke trekgebieden en gebruiken geweren om kleine trekvogels te vangen.

Op tortelduiven (Streptopelia turtur) en kwartels (Coturnix coturnix), waarvan de populatie in de EU terugloopt, wordt meestal met geweren gejaagd, terwijl kleine zangvogels, zoals tapuiten (Oenanthe oenanthe), bonte vliegenvangers (Ficedula hypoleuca), paapjes (Saxicola rubetra), gele kwikstaarten (Motacilla flava) en vele andere soorten met vallen worden gevangen.

Er wordt ook gestroopt in de nabijheid van een kolonie Auduoin-meeuwen (Larus audouinii), een soort waarvan de wereldpopulatie naar schatting niet meer dan enkele tienduizenden paren telt, waardoor hun nestplaatsen in groot gevaar komen.

Al jarenlang hebben vrijwillige jachtopzieners van het WWF en de LIPU ([1]) naast leden van het CABS ([2]) en de LAC ([3]) op deze eilanden kampen tegen het stropen gehouden ([4]) om de ernst van het fenomeen aan te geven. Toch hebben er geen belangrijke ononderbroken institutionele activiteiten ter verhindering en ontmoediging van de vogelstroperij plaatsgevonden.

Bovendien is een deel van het grondgebied van Ischia uit hoofde van de Habitatrichtlijn (92/43/EEG) als GCB ([5]) aangewezen: de voortdurende illegale jacht maakt de zaak daarom des te ernstiger.

Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de ernst en bestendigheid van de vogelstroperij op de eilanden Ischia en Procida in de lente? Wordt er door de lidstaat met de niet-uitvoering van initiatieven ter beperking van het fenomeen stroperij niet een schending van de Vogelrichtlijn (2009/147/EG) begaan?

Is de Commissie gezien de ernst van de situatie voornemens dringende en vastberaden maatregelen te treffen, onder meer door stappen te ondernemen bij de bevoegde nationale en regionale overheden?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(22 juni 2012)

Hoewel aan de Commissie geen specifieke of gedetailleerde informatie is verstrekt, is zij via verslagen in de media op de hoogte van de situatie waarnaar de geachte Parlementsleden verwijzen. Dergelijk stroopppraktijken zijn openlijk in strijd met de bepalingen van de vogelrichtlijn ([6]), waarvan de handhaving een duidelijke verplichting van de Italiaanse autoriteiten is.

Indien de nationale autoriteiten niet de nodige maatregelen nemen om deze illegale praktijken tegen te gaan, is er volgens de Commissie mogelijk inderdaad sprake van een inbreuk op de vogelrichtlijn.

De Commissie zal daarom bij de Italiaanse autoriteiten naavraag doen naar de maatregelen die zijn genomen om het bovengenoemde probleem aan te pakken.

([1]) LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli (Italiaanse Liga voor de bescherming van de vogels), verbonden met BirdLife International.
([2]) CABS: Committee Against Bird Slaughter (Comité tegen vogelmoord).
([3]) LAC: Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia (Liga voor afschaffing van de jacht).
([4]) Zie: http://www.geapress.org/caccia/ischia-maxitrappole-e-colpi-di-fucile/26198.
([5]) GCB: gebied van communautair belang (IT8030005).
([6]) Richtlijn 2009/147/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 30 november 2009 inzake het behoud van de vogelstand, PB L 20 van 26.1.2010, die de codificering vormt van Richtlijn 79/409/EEG van de Raad van 2 april 1979 inzake het behoud van de vogelstand, PB L 103 van 25.4.1979.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004874/12
till kommissionen
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL), Pavel Poc (S&D), Dan Jørgensen (S&D) och Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(11 maj 2012)

Angående: Olaglig fågeljakt på Ischia och Procida under vårens flyttningsperiod – brist på åtgärder för att förhindra detta fenomen som bryter mot fågeldirektivet 2009/147/EG

Öarna Ischia och Procida utgör ett strategiskt språngbräde för fåglar som på våren flyttar från sina övervintringsområden i Afrika till sina häckningsområden i Europa.

EU-direktiven som berör bevarandet av livsmiljöer och djur- och växtliv kräver att medlemsstaterna ska genomföra alla de åtgärder som syftar till att minska den olagliga jakten. Trots det kvarstår det på ön Ischia nära Neapel en omfattande olaglig jakt.

Varje vår sätts tusentals fällor ut för att fånga små flyttfåglar, elektromagnetiska vettar placeras på områden med hög flyttfågeltrafik, och hagelgevär används av tjuvskyttarna.

Turturduvor (Streptopelia turtur) och vaktlar (Coturnix coturnix), vars bestånd håller på att minska i EU, jagas mest med hjälp av hagelgevär, medan små tättingar som t.ex. stenskvättor (Oenanthe oenanthe), svartvita flugsnappare (Ficedula hypoleuca), buskskvättor (Saxicola rubetra), gulärlor (Motacilla flava) och många andra arter fångas med hjälp av fällor.

Olaglig jakt äger också rum i närheten av en koloni av rödnäbbade trutar (Larus audouinii), en art vars världspopulation uppskattas bestå av bara några tiotals tusen par, och detta utgör en allvarlig risk för fåglarnas häckning.

I många års tid har frivilliga jaktkontrollanter från Världsnaturfonden WWF och LIPU ([1]), tillsammans med medlemmar av CABS ([2]) och LAC ([3]) organiserat anti-tjuvjaktsläger på dessa öar ([4]) för att rapportera om allvaret i situationen. Trots allt detta har det inte funnits någon anmärkningsvärd, kontinuerlig institutionell verksamhet för att förebygga och motverka den olagliga fågeljakten.

Dessutom har delar av Ischias territorium utsetts som ett område av gemenskapsintresse ([5]) enligt livsmiljödirektivet 92/43/EEG: den fortsatta olagliga jakten är därför ännu allvarligare.

Är kommissionen medveten om allvaret av den fortsatta olagliga fågeljakten på öarna Ischia och Procida som äger rum under våren? Är inte medlemsstatens underlåtelse att genomföra initiativen för att begränsa den olagliga jakten en överträdelse av fågeldirektivet 2009/147/EG?

Överväger kommissionen, med tanke på situationens allvar, att ingripa omgående och med beslutsamhet, inbegripet att göra framställningar till de behöriga nationella och regionala myndigheterna?

Svar från Janez Potočnik på kommissionens vägnar
(22 juni 2012)

Kommissionen har genom rapporter i medierna fått kännedom om den situation som ledamoten beskriver, men har inte tillgång till några specifika eller detaljerade uppgifter. Den här typen av olaglig jakt strider klart mot bestämmelserna i fågeldirektivet ([6]), som de italienska myndigheterna är otvetydigt skyldiga att tillämpa.

Kommissionen kan bekräfta att om de nationella myndigheterna inte vidtar de åtgärder som är nödvändiga för att stoppa dessa olagliga jaktmetoder så kan det strida mot fågeldirektivet.

Kommissionen kommer därför att fråga de italienska myndigheterna om de åtgärder som de har vidtagit för att lösa problemet.

([1]) LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli, som samarbetar med Birdlife International.
([2]) CABS: Committee Against Bird Slaughter.
([3]) LAC: Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia (italienska förbundet mot jakt).
([4]) Se: http://www.geapress.org/caccia/ischia-maxitrappole-e-colpi-di-fucile/26198.
([5]) IT8030005.
([6]) Europaparlamentets och rådets direktiv 2009/147/EG av den 30 november 2009 om bevarande av vilda fåglar (EUT L 20/7, 26.1.2010) som kodifierar rådets direktiv 79/409/EEG av den 2 april 1979 om bevarande av vilda fåglar (EGT L 103, 25.4.1979).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004874/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL), Pavel Poc (S&D), Dan Jørgensen (S&D) and Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: Bird poaching in Ischia and Procida during migratory spring season — failure to take action and prevent the phenomenon, violating the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC

The islands of Ischia and Procida represent a strategic stepping-stone for birds migrating in spring from wintering areas in Africa to breeding areas in Europe.

The EU directives on habitat and wildlife conservation require Member States to implement all measures aimed at reducing poaching. However, on the island of Ischia (Naples) a situation of widespread illegality persists.

Every year in spring, in order to catch small migratory birds thousands of traps are set, electromagnetic decoys are placed in high-traffic migration areas, and shotguns are used by poachers.

Turtle doves (Streptopelia turtur) and common quails (Coturnix coturnix), whose populations are declining in the EU, are mostly hunted by means of shotguns, whereas small Passeriformes such as wheatears (Oenanthe oenanthe), pied flycatchers (Ficedula hypoleuca), whinchats (Saxicola rubetra), yellow wagtails (Motacilla flava) and many other species are caught using traps.

Poaching also takes place in proximity to a colony of Audouin's Gulls (Larus audouinii), a species whose world population is estimated to be no more than some tens of thousands of couples, seriously jeopardising their nesting.

For many years volunteer game wardens from WWF and LIPU ([1]), in addition to CABS ([2]) and LAC ([3]) members, have been organising anti-poaching camps on these islands ([4]) to report the gravity of the phenomenon. Nonetheless, there has been no important continuous institutional activity to prevent and deter bird poaching.

In addition, part of the territory of Ischia has been designated as an SCI ([5]) under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC: the persistence of illegal hunting activities, therefore, is even more serious.

Is the Commission aware of the severity and consistency of bird poaching on the islands of Ischia and Procida during spring? Is not the failure to implement initiatives to limit the phenomenon of poaching a violation of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC by the Member State?

Is the Commission considering intervening urgently and with determination, given the severity of the situation, including making representations to the competent national and regional authorities?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 June 2012)

The Commission is aware, through media reports, of the situation mentioned by the Honourable Members, though it has not been provided with any specific or detailed information. Such poaching practices are openly contrary to the provisions of the Birds Directive ([6]), which the Italian authorities have a clear obligation to enforce.

The Commission can confirm that a failure by the national authorities to take the necessary actions to address these illegal practices may indeed constitute a breach of the Birds Directive.

The Commission will therefore ask the Italian authorities about the measures implemented to deal with the abovementioned problem.

([1]) LIPU: Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli, affiliated with Birdlife International.
([2]) CABS: Committee Against Bird Slaughter.
([3]) LAC: Lega per l'Abolizione della Caccia (League for the Abolition of Hunting).
([4]) See: http://www.geapress.org/caccia/ischia-maxitrappole-e-colpi-di-fucile/26198.
([5]) SCI: site of Community importance (IT8030005).
([6]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010) that codifies the Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 103, 25.4.1979).

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004875/12
till kommissionen
Christofer Fjellner (PPE)
(11 maj 2012)

Angående: Frankrikes anmälan om hasardspel

Frankrike anmälde sitt lagförslag om reglering av hasardspel på internet till kommissionen i mars 2009. Kommissionen utfärdade ett detaljerat yttrande om lagförslaget i juni 2009 som tog upp frågor gällande vissa av dess bestämmelsers förenlighet med fördragets bestämmelser, i synnerhet vad gäller friheten att tillhandahålla tjänster. Sommaren 2009 skickade kommissionen en skrivelse till de franska myndigheterna i vilken den gjorde ett antal kritiska anmärkningar om lagförslaget, och uppmanade dem att tillhandahålla fler bevis gällande vissa begränsningar ([1]).

För det första uttryckte kommissionen oro över hur begränsningen av procenten som återbetalas till spelare påverkar den fria rörligheten av tjänster i EU. Kommissionen bad de franska myndigheterna att tillhandahålla bevis på att detta krav är nödvändigt och proportionerligt, och förväntade sig att Frankrike skulle åta sig att genomföra en utredning över hur åtgärden påverkar den allmänna ordningen senast två år efter att lagen trädde i kraft (12 maj 2010).

För det andra bad kommissionen de franska myndigheterna att utarbeta en rapport om tillämpningen av den så kallade rättigheten för sportvadhållning, i synnerhet vad gäller dess påverkan på friheten att tillhandahålla tjänster, samt dess inverkan på främjandet av sportverksamheter och beskyddandet av sportens integritet.

1. Eftersom den tvååriga tidsfristen under vilken de franska myndigheterna skulle översända bevisen som visar att de två ovannämnda kraven är berättigade utgick den 12 maj 2012, kan kommissionen bekräfta att den har mottagit dessa utredningar?

2. Om så är fallet, kan kommissionen bekräfta om den kommer att offentliggöra dem, och om utredningarna bevisar åtgärdernas lämplighet och proportionalitet för de uppgivna målen i allmänhetens intresse?

3. Om så inte är fallet, kan kommissionen bekräfta att den kommer att vidta åtgärder för att säkerställa att dessa omotiverade begränsningar avlägsnas?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(6 juli 2012)

1. Enligt anmälningsförfarandet och med anledning av dialog med kommissionen har de franska myndigheterna på nytt anmält förslag till lagstiftningen om hasardspel på internet som trädde i kraft i maj 2010. Den franska lagstiftningen föreskriver en utvärderingsrapport om öppnandet av marknaden i Frankrike som regeringen ska lämna in till det nationella parlamentet, inbegripet eventuellt nödvändiga anpassningar, bland annat utbetalningsförhållanden och rättigheten för sportvadhållning.

2. Kommissionen känner till diskussionerna som pågår i Frankrike om 2010 års lagstiftning om hasardspel på internet. Kommissionen är medveten om att slutresultatet av utvärderingen och de slutsatser som dras vid översynen av lagstiftningen kommer att vara offentligt tillgängliga. Kommissionen kommer att fortsätta att övervaka denna process.

3. Kommissionen erinrar om det omfattande offentliga samrådet som inleddes i mars 2011 om de utmaningar som den snabba utvecklingen av hasardspel på internet medför, vilket mottogs väl av både rådet och parlamentet ([2]). Svaren som kom in under samrådet gav kommissionen mer djupgående faktakunskaper inom olika aspekter av ärendet, inklusive relevanta mål av allmänintresse som eftersträvas av medlemsstaterna. Kommissionen kommer att beakta denna information i samband med utvärderingen av nationell lagstiftning och utarbetandet av ett meddelande om spel om pengar online på den inre marknaden, som planeras antas i höst.

([1]) http://www.lefigaro.fr/assets/pdf/ATT742488.pdf
([2]) Grönbok om onlinespel på den inre marknaden, KOM(2011) 128 slutlig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004875/12
to the Commission
Christofer Fjellner (PPE)
(11 May 2012)

Subject: French gambling notification

France notified its draft law on the regulation of online gambling to the Commission in March 2009. The draft law received a detailed opinion from the Commission in June 2009 raising issues of compatibility of some of its provisions with the rules of the Treaty, in particular the freedom to provide services. In the summer of 2009 the Commission sent a letter to the French authorities in which it made a number of critical observations on the draft law and requested them to provide more evidence in relation to certain restrictions ([1]).

Firstly, the Commission expressed concerns regarding the effects of the capping of the payout ratio to players on the free movement of services in the EU. It asked the French authorities for evidence that this requirement is necessary and proportionate, expecting France to commit itself to producing a study assessing the effect of the measure on public and social order within two years of the entry into force of the law (12 May 2010).

Secondly, the Commission asked the French authorities to produce a report on the application of the so-called 'sports betting right', in relation, in particular, to its effect on the freedom to provide services and its impact on the development of sport and the protection of the integrity of sports.

1. As the two-year deadline for the French authorities to send the evidence to justify the two abovementioned restrictions expired on 12 May 2012, can the Commission confirm that it has received these studies?

2. If so, can the Commission confirm whether it will make them publicly available and whether the studies provide evidence as to the suitability and proportionality of the measures to the claimed public interest objectives?

3. If this is not the case, can the Commission confirm that it will take action to ensure that these unjustified restrictions are removed?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

1. Under the notification procedure and further to dialogue with the Commission, the French authorities re-notified draft legislation on online gambling which came into force in May 2010. The French law provides for an evaluation report of the market opening in France, including adaptations that may be necessary, *inter alia* the pay-out ratio and the 'sports-betting right', to be submitted by government to the national parliament.

2. The Commission is aware of the ongoing discussions in France on the online gambling legislation of 2010. The Commission understands that the final outcome of the evaluation and conclusions reached on any reviews to the legislation will be publicly available. The Commission will continue monitoring this process.

3. The Commission recalls the wide public consultation it launched in March 2011 on the challenges posed by the fast development of online gambling in Europe, which was well received by both the Council and the Parliament ([2]). The responses to the consultation provided the Commission with more in-depth factual knowledge on various aspects of this file, including on the relevant public interest objectives pursued by Member States. This information will be taken into account by the Commission in assessing national legislation and in the preparation of a communication on online gambling in the internal market, which is envisaged to be adopted this Autumn.

([1]) http://www.lefigaro.fr/assets/pdf/ATT742488.pdf
([2]) Green Paper on online gambling in the internal market COM(2011) 128 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004876/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(14 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: Bankia

El Gobierno español ha tomado la decisión de nacionalizar Bankia, después de que ésta entidad haya hecho una distribución de dividendos por valor de 152 millones de euros, y sabiendo que España se encuentra bajo el procedimiento de déficit excesivo y por tanto bajo estricta supervisión de la Comisión. Sin embargo, en el Plan Nacional de Reformas 2012 y en el Plan de Estabilidad, presentados hace un mes, no figura la necesidad de sanear el sistema financiero ni la de inyectar entre 7 000 y 10 000 millones de euros a Bankia. Al mismo tiempo el Estado ha anunciado recortes en salud y educación en los presupuestos de 2012 por un total de 10 000 millones de euros.

Considerando que los objetivos de déficit están fijados y, como menciona la respuesta n° E-002353/2012, «la Comisión no desea especular sobre sus posibles medidas futuras a este respecto», pero que la Comisión ha anunciado que ve posible la modificación de los objetivos de déficit, y teniendo en cuenta asimismo los artículos 87 y 89 del Tratado de la Unión Europea relativos al carácter excepcional con que se permiten las ayudas públicas a empresas privadas,

— ¿Preveía la Comisión esta intervención estatal?

— ¿Considera la Comisión que sanear una entidad que basó su actividad en la especulación del sector de la construcción respeta el espíritu de los artículos mencionados?

— ¿Qué piensa la Comisión de la distribución de dividendos?

— ¿Considera la Comisión la posibilidad de abrir un expediente de investigación a los responsables de la entidad para determinar un posible tráfico de influencias?

— ¿Informó el BCE a la Comisión sobre la salubridad del sistema financiero español?

— ¿Por qué no se previó esta intervención al fijar los objetivos de déficit y deuda pública?

— ¿Aprueba la Comisión las prioridades del Estado español de recortar en salud, derecho fundamental de los ciudadanos de la Unión, y salvar una entidad privada?

— ¿No cree la Comisión que esta acción puede dañar notablemente las cuentas públicas españolas, como sucedió en Irlanda, lo que podría precipitar la petición de ayuda de España en el Fondo Europeo de Estabilidad Financiera y/o el Fondo Monetario Internacional?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de julio de 2012)

La Comisión sigue de cerca la evolución de los mercados financieros en España y se mantiene en estrecho contacto con el Banco Central Europeo. La Comisión acoge favorablemente las nuevas medidas de apoyo a la reestructuración del sector bancario anunciadas recientemente por el Gobierno español. La decisión del FROB (Fondo de Reestructuración Ordenada Bancaria) de asumir el control de BFA-Bankia es un importante paso para disipar la incertidumbre del mercado.

Aún no se han anunciado los planes concretos relativos a la reestructuración de BFA-Bankia. Una vez recibida toda la información necesaria, la Comisión evaluará estos planes, y en particular sus efectos potenciales sobre la hacienda pública y su conformidad con la normativa de ayudas estatales. En lo que se refiere a la posibilidad de abrir un expediente de investigación a los responsables de la entidad, incumbe al supervisor nacional, esto es, al Banco de España, determinar si está justificada dicha acción.

La Comisión está al corriente de las medidas adoptadas en las áreas de sanidad y educación para respaldar el necesario saneamiento fiscal de las Comunidades Autónomas. Alrededor de dos terceras partes del desvío presupuestario en 2011 es imputable a estas. Ello subraya la importancia de una estricta disciplina presupuestaria a todos los niveles de la Administración. Teniendo en cuenta la gran parte que representan la sanidad y la educación en los gastos de las Comunidades Autónomas, las medidas anunciadas constituyen un importante elemento que favorecerá el control de su déficit presupuestario.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004876/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Bankia

The Spanish Government decided to nationalise Bankia after the bank distributed dividends worth EUR 152 million, in the knowledge that Spain is currently undergoing an excessive deficit procedure and is therefore subject to strict supervision by the Commission. However, neither Spain's National Reform Plan 2012 nor its Stability Plan, which were presented a month ago, made any mention of the need to restore the financial system to health and to inject between EUR 7 and10 billion into Bankia. At the same time, the Spanish Government announced cuts in the 2012 health and education budgets totalling EUR 10 billion.

Given that the deficit reduction targets have been set and, as stated in its answer to written question E-002353/2012, the Commission does 'not wish to speculate on its possible future action in this regard', although it has announced that changing the deficit reduction targets is a possibility; and taking into account Articles 87 and 89 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, which outline the exceptional circumstances under which public funds may be used to assist private companies:

— Did the Commission anticipate this state intervention?

— Does the Commission believe that shoring up an entity whose activity was based on speculation in the construction sector respects the spirit of the abovementioned articles?

— What does the Commission think of the dividend distribution?

— Is the Commission considering opening an investigation into those in charge of the bank to determine whether influence peddling took place?

— Did the European Central Bank provide the Commission with information on the health of the Spanish financial system?

— Why was this intervention not foreseen when the deficit reduction and public debt targets were set?

— Does the Commission approve of the Spanish Government giving priority to saving a private company while cutting health spending, when health is a fundamental right of the people of the European Union?

— Does the Commission not believe that this action may significantly damage Spanish public finances, as happened in Ireland, and that this may hasten an appeal from Spain for help from the European Financial Stability Fund and/or the International Monetary Fund?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2012)

The Commission closely monitors the financial markets developments in Spain and it is in close contact with the European Central Bank. The Commission welcomes the recent announcement by the Spanish Government of additional measures to support the restructuring of the banking sector. The decision by FROB (Fondo de Reestructuración Ordenada Bancaria) to take over the control of BFA-Bankia is an important further step to dispel market uncertainty.

Concrete plans regarding the actual restructuring of BFA-Bankia still need to be announced. After receiving all necessary details, the Commission will assess these plans, including their potential impact on public finances and their compliance with state aid rules. Regarding possible investigation of those in charge of the entity, it is up to the national supervisor, i.e. Banco de España, to determine whether such action is warranted.

The Commission is aware of the measures adopted in the areas of health and education to underpin the necessary fiscal consolidation by Autonomous Communities. Around two thirds of the budgetary deviation in 2011 had been due to budget overruns at regional levels. This underscores the importance of strict budgetary discipline at all levels of government. Given the large share of health and education in the expenditure of Autonomous Communities, the announced measures are an important element in supporting Autonomous Communities to rein in their budget deficits.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004878/12
aan de Commissie
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(14 mei 2012)

Betreft: Solvency II — Invoeren van een collectieve sectoriële verantwoordelijkheid voor de verzekeringssector

Europese verzekeringsmaatschappijen zijn onderworpen aan strenge en afdoende solvabiliteitsvoorwaarden. Op de naleving van deze regels wordt streng toegezien. Toch blijken de Solvency II-regels, althans volgens de verzekeringssector zelf, een aantal restrictieve maatregelen te bevatten die aanzienlijke tariefverhogingen bij de Europese verzekeringsmaatschappijen zouden kunnen veroorzaken, wat nefast zou zijn voor het economisch groeipotentieel. Zo blijkt uit de huidige Solvency II-regels een grote terughoudendheid tegenover bedrijfsaandelen, die voor verzekeringsmaatschappijen nochtans een probaat middel zijn om het financiële rendement op peil te houden in tijden waar obligatieleningen minder rendabel zijn.

Ofschoon de strikte regels ingegeven zijn vanuit de bekommernis om faillissementen binnen de verzekeringssector zoveel mogelijk te vermijden, zijn er misschien andere oplossingen mogelijk om hetzelfde doel te bereiken zonder potentieel negatieve effecten op het financiële rendement van verzekeringsmaatschappijen.

Zo zijn er voorstellen om de gehele Europese verzekeringssector de verplichting op te leggen om naar draagkracht een falende verzekeraar over te nemen. Door het invoeren van deze „collectieve sectoriële verantwoordelijkheid" kan worden bewerkstelligd dat minder restrictieve regels nodig zijn, dat de noodzaak vermeden wordt om onverantwoorde premieverhogingen door te voeren en dat de kans op een faillissement wordt uitgesloten. Er mag immers worden aangenomen dat de Europese verzekeringssector als zodanig wel nooit failliet zal gaan.

Kan de Commissie mij meedelen of zij ooit overwogen heeft om een dergelijke collectieve sectoriële verantwoordelijkheid in te voeren?

Zo ja, wanneer en onder welke voorwaarden?

Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(15 juni 2012)

Solvabiliteit II is een diepgaande en noodzakelijke herziening van het EU-toezichtsysteem en -reguleringsregime voor verzekerings- en herverzekeringsmaatschappijen. Hoofddoel ervan is te zorgen voor bescherming van verzekeringnemers en begunstigden. Om dit doel te bereiken, moeten ondernemingen effectieve risicobeheersystemen invoeren. De richtlijn bepaalt ook dat berekeningen van het solvabiliteitskapitaal op het specifieke risicoprofiel van de onderneming moeten worden afgestemd.

Het solvabiliteitskapitaalvereiste beoogt alle kwantificeerbare risico's uit te drukken waarmee een onderneming kan worden geconfronteerd. Het is zo ingesteld dat verzekeraars en herverzekeraars niet vaker dan eenmaal per 200 gevallen failliet gaan of, anders geformuleerd, dat die ondernemingen met een waarschijnlijkheid van ten minste 99,5 % nog steeds in staat zullen zijn de volgende 12 maanden hun verplichtingen ten aanzien van verzekeringnemers en begunstigden na te komen. Dit is absoluut essentieel en een grote verbetering vergeleken met het huidige reguleringsregime voor verzekeraars en herverzekeraars.

Terwijl alle reguleringshervormingen bepaalde kosten voor de betrokken maatschappijen inhouden, gelooft de Commissie ten stelligste dat verbeterde financiële stabiliteit, verminderd systeemrisico en een verhoogd niveau van consumentenbescherming de kosten van strengere kapitaalvereisten verreweg compenseren.

Wat de mogelijke invoering van een geharmoniseerd regime van op EU-niveau betreft, heeft de Commissie in juli 2010 een witboek over verzekeringsgarantieregelingen gepubliceerd waarin de invoering van een geharmoniseerd regime op dit gebied werd voorgesteld. De reacties op het witboek waren veeleer gemengd, niet het minst vanwege het relatief kleine aantal insolventies in de EU-verzekeringssector. De Commissie voert momenteel een kostenbatenanalyse over deze kwestie uit, die de basis voor mogelijke verdere actie zal vormen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004878/12
to the Commission
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Solvency II — Introducing collective sectoral responsibility for the insurance sector

European insurance companies are subject to strict and effective solvency conditions. Compliance with these regulations is rigorously enforced. However, the Solvency II regulations, at least in the opinion of the insurance sector itself, comprise a number of restrictive measures which may cause European insurance companies to increase their rates considerably, with pernicious consequences for economic growth. In their present form, these Solvency II regulations evince a great wariness regarding company shares, which insurance companies find a reliable source of steady revenue at times when bonds are less profitable.

Although the stringent regulations are intended to minimise the likelihood of bankruptcies in the insurance sector, there may be other means to the same end which will avoid possible detrimental effects on the financial returns of insurance companies.

For example, proposals have been made that the entire European insurance sector should be obligated to buy out a failing insurer according to ability to pay. This introduction of collective sectoral responsibility may reduce the need for restrictive regulations and avoid excessive rises in premiums, as well as ruling out the possibility of bankruptcy. After all, it may be assumed that the European insurance sector itself will never go bankrupt.

Can the Commission inform me whether it has ever considered introducing collective sectoral responsibility of this kind?

If so, when and on what terms?

If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(15 June 2012)

Solvency II is a profound and necessary revision of the EU supervisory system and regulatory regime for insurance and reinsurance companies. Its main objective is to ensure protection of policyholders and beneficiaries. In order to achieve this objective, undertakings need to put in place effective risk management systems. The directive also stipulates that solvency capital calculations should be aligned to the specific risk profile of the undertaking.

The Solvency Capital Requirement (SCR) is intended to reflect all quantifiable risks that an undertaking might face. It is calibrated to ensure that insurers and reinsurers do not fail more often than once in every 200 cases, or alternatively, that those undertakings will still be in a position, with a probability of at least 99.5% to meet their obligations to policyholders and beneficiaries over the following 12 months. This is absolutely essential and a big improvement compared to the current regulatory regime for insurers and reinsurers.

Whilst all regulatory reforms imply certain costs for the companies concerned, the Commission strongly believes that improved financial stability, reduced systemic risk and an increased level of consumer protection by far outweigh the cost of higher capital requirements.

As far as the possible introduction of a harmonised regime of insurance guarantee schemes (IGS) at EU level is concerned, the Commission published in July 2010 a White Paper on IGS which suggested introducing a harmonised regime in this field. Reactions to the White Paper were rather mixed, not at least because of the relatively small number of insolvencies in the EU insurance sector. The Commission is currently undertaking a cost-benefit analysis on this issue, which will form the basis for possible further action.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004879/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(14 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: Eurovegas

El gobierno de la Generalitat de Cataluña está negociando con «Las Vegas Sand Corporation» con el objetivo de localizar y realizar un proyecto llamado «Eurovegas» donde se construirían 6 megacasinos, 12 hoteles, 3 campos de golf, un estadio y zonas comerciales. Este proyecto sería localizado en los territorios del Delta del Llobregat y ocuparía 800 hectáreas, la mayoría de las cuales pertenecen a la zona agrícola protegida del Parque Agrario del Baix Llobregat (situado entre las planas aluviales del delta y del valle del río Llobregat). Este parque agrario ha sido desarrollado con el compromiso de muchos agentes y es gestionado a través del Consocio del Parque Agrario del Baix Llobregat.

Los territorios donde se pretende construir el proyecto Eurovegas también podrían afectar a una zona de especial protección de aves (ZEPA).

Considerando la Directiva 85/337/CEE relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente,

— ¿Conoce la Comisión Europea este proyecto?

— ¿Ha recibido el preceptivo estudio de impacto ambiental del proyecto como obliga la Directiva de Evaluación de Impacto Ambiental 85/337/EEC?

— ¿Piensa tomar alguna medida ante la posible vulneración de una zona ZEPA o de una zona agrícola protegida?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de junio de 2012)

La Comisión no conoce los detalles del proyecto Eurovegas, que se podría llevar a cabo en el área metropolitana de Barcelona o en la de Madrid.

Las decisiones relativas a la ordenación del territorio entran en el ámbito de competencia de los Estados miembros. En cualquier caso, la Comisión recuerda que este proyecto de ocio y entretenimiento debe ajustarse a todos los requisitos del Derecho medioambiental de la UE, en el caso de ser aprobado por las autoridades competentes españolas.

Parece ser que el proyecto en cuestión se está aún estudiando, encontrándose en una fase muy preliminar. Por lo tanto, la Comisión no ve por el momento indicios de incumplimiento del Derecho medioambiental de la UE ni puede tomar medidas al respecto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004879/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Eurovegas

The Autonomous Government of Catalonia is negotiating with the Las Vegas Sands Corporation with the goal of identifying a site for, and implementing, a project called 'Eurovegas', which would involve building 6 mega-casinos, 12 hotels, 3 golf courses, a stadium and shopping centres. This project would be located on land in the Llobregat Delta and would occupy 800 hectares, most of which belong to the protected agricultural area of the Baix Llobregat Agricultural Park (located between the alluvial plains of the delta and the Llobregat river valley). This agricultural park was developed with the involvement of multiple stakeholders and is managed through the Baix Llobregat Agricultural Park Consortium.

If the Eurovegas project is built on this land, it could also affect a Special Protection Area for birds (SPA).

In light of Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment:

— Is the Commission aware of this project?

— Has it received the mandatory environmental impact assessment for the project, as required by the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive 85/337/EEC?

— Does it intend to adopt any measure in view of a possible infringement with regard to an SPA or a protected agricultural area?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

The Commission does not know the details of the Eurovegas project possibly to be developed in Spain, either in the metropolitan areas of Barcelona or Madrid.

Decisions related to land use fall within the competence of the Member States. In any case, the Commission would like to stress that this leisure and entertainment project, if authorised by the competent Spanish authorities, must comply with all the requirements under EU environmental law.

It appears that the project in question is still under discussion and at a very preliminary stage. Therefore, the Commission can find no evidence of a breach of EU environmental law at this moment and no further action can be taken.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004881/12
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(14 maj 2012)

Angående: Verkställandet av rådets förordning (EG) nr 1/2005 om skydd av djur under transport

Enligt rådets förordning (EG) 1/2005 bilaga I kapitel V punkt 1.4 b angående intervaller för vattning och utfordring under långväga transporter får svin transporteras under en period av maximalt 24 timmar, på villkor att de under befordran hela tiden har tillgång till vatten.

Det har i praktiken visat sig att detta villkor vanligen inte uppfylls. Det finns många orsaker för denna vanliga överträdelse.

— Svin leker ofta med vattenbehållarens munstycke under transporten, vilket kan orsaka vattnet att rinna in och bilda pölar i djurens utrymmen. Detta kan påverka svinens hälsa negativt. Dessutom blir golvet halt och mängden ammoniakgas kan öka, speciellt i höga temperaturer.

— Om lastbilens vattensystem hela tiden är påslaget måste föraren fylla på vattentankarna oftare, och det är ofta svårt att hitta en servicestation eller liknande där det går att fylla vattentankar i lastbilar som transporterar djur.

— I kallt väder fryser ofta lastbilars vattensystem, vilket avbryter vattentillförseln.

1. Vilka åtgärder har kommissionen vidtagit för att säkerställa en tillräcklig vattentillförsel för svin under långväga transporter?

2. På vilka uppgifter bygger kommissionens åsikt att det är möjligt att driva igenom reglerna om tillräcklig vattentillförsel för svin under långväga transporter, trots de problem som regelbundet dokumenterats i detta sammanhang?

3. På vilka grunder anser kommissionen att långväga transport av levande svin följer artikel 13 i fördraget om Europeiska unionens funktionssätt om en tillräcklig vattentillförsel inte kan garanteras?

4. Är kommissionen villig att föreslå en översyn av rådets förordning (EG) nr 1/2005 för att förbjuda transporten av levande svin under perioder då temperaturerna är så låga att lastbilarnas vattensystem sannolikt kommer att frysa?

Svar från John Dalli på kommissionens vägnar
(29 juni 2012)

EU har haft regler om kontinuerlig tillgång till vatten för svin sedan 1995. ([1]) Ansvaret för att förordningen efterlevs ligger huvudsakligen på medlemsstaterna. Kommissionen granskar medlemsstaternas efterlevnad av EU:s djurskyddslagstiftning genom kommissionens egen inspektionstjänst (FVO, kontoret för livsmedels- och veterinärfrågor).

Kommissionen har kännedom om enskilda fall där djur inte får tillräckligt med vatten vid transporter men har inte fått någon information från medlemsstaternas behöriga myndigheter som pekar på allvarliga svårigheter med att driva igenom den här delen av lagstiftningen.

Kommissionen anser inte att det råder någon konflikt mellan transportförordningen och artikel 13 i fördraget om Europeiska unionens funktionssätt.

Kommissionen överväger för tillfället inte några ändringar av förordning 1/2005. ([2])

([1]) Regeln gäller sedan rådets direktiv 95/29/EG av den 29 juni 1995 antogs, vilket utgjorde en ändring av direktiv 91/628/EEG om skydd av djur vid transport (EUT L 148, 30.6.1995, s. 52).

([2]) Rådets förordning (EG) nr 1/2005 av den 22 december 2004 om skydd av djur under transport och därmed sammanhängande förfaranden och om ändring av direktiven 64/432/EEG och 93/119/EG och förordning (EG) nr 1255/97 (EUT L 3, 5.1.2005, s. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004881/12
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Enforcement of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 stipulates, in Annex I, Chapter V, point 1(4)(b) concerning watering and feeding intervals during long-distance journeys, that pigs may be transported for a maximum of 24 hours, on condition that they have continuous access to water during the journey.

Practice has shown that this condition is usually not complied with. There are numerous reasons for this common infringement.

— Pigs very often play with the 'water nipples' during transport and this can cause water to run into the animals' compartments, turning them into 'pools'. This can have a negative effect on the pigs' health. Furthermore, the floor becomes slippery and ammonia gases may increase, especially during high temperatures.

— If the trucks' water systems are continuously turned on, the drivers have to refill the water tanks more often, and it is often difficult to find a service station or other facilities where the water tanks of trucks transporting animals can be refilled.

— In cold weather the trucks' water systems regularly freeze, stopping the supply of water.

1. What measures is the Commission currently taking to ensure an adequate water supply for pigs during long-distance transport?

2. Based on what data does the Commission consider it possible to enforce the rules on adequate and sufficient water supply for pigs during long-distance journeys, despite the problems regularly documented in this respect?

3. On what basis does the Commission consider the long-distance transport of live pigs to be in compliance with Article 13 TFEU if proper water supply cannot be ensured?

4. Is the Commission willing to propose a review of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 to prohibit the transport of live pigs in periods when temperatures are likely to lead to the trucks' water systems freezing?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

The rules on continuous water supply for pigs have been in place in the EU since 1995 ([1]). The primary responsibility to enforce the regulation rests on the Member States. The Commission audits Member States' compliance with the requirements of EU animal welfare legislation via its inspection service (FVO, Food and Veterinary Office) of the Commission.

The Commission is indeed aware of individual cases where animals are not receiving enough water during transport but has not received any information from the competent authorities of the Member States pointing to major difficulties in enforcing this part of the legislation.

The Commission does not see any conflict within the transport Regulation and Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

The Commission is at present not considering proposing any changes to Regulation 1/2005 ([2]).

([1]) The rule is in force since the adoption of Council Directive 95/29/EC of 29 June 1995 amending Directive 91/628/EEC concerning the protection of animals during transport; OJ L 148, 30.6.1995, p. 52.

([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation No 1255/97; OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004884/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Celiachia: forse una cura

A Verona dal 2 al 5 Maggio si è tenuto il terzo congresso nazionale della Federazione delle Società Italiane di Immunologia, Allergologia ed Immunologia Clinica (IFIACI), in occasione del quale sono stati presentati i risultati di uno studio condotto su 100 pazienti affetti da celiachia, col quale sono stati testati gli effetti di una molecola di recente scoperta, la Zonulina.

I risultati dello studio condotto sono incoraggianti: il 75 % dei pazienti sottoposti a placebo ha sviluppato i sintomi classici della celiachia, mentre solo il 14 % dei pazienti cui è stata somministrata la cura farmacologica a base di Zonulina ne ha sviluppato i sintomi. Un cittadino su 100 dell'Unione europea soffre di celiachia e questa rappresenterebbe la prima cura concreta, dato che finora l'unica terapia consisteva nell'eliminazione del glutine dalla dieta.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questo studio? Ritiene sarebbe necessario approfondirlo su ampia scala?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2012)

Conformemente alla legislazione farmaceutica ([1]), prima che un medicinale sia immesso sul mercato dell'UE, la Commissione o uno Stato membro devono rilasciare un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione in seguito a una valutazione della qualità, della sicurezza e dell'efficacia del medicinale in questione. Un'industria farmaceutica deve presentare, assieme alla richiesta di autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio, una documentazione contenente dati pertinenti ricavati dalla ricerca farmaceutica, non clinica e clinica. La ricerca e lo sviluppo di un potenziale prodotto medicinale richiedono spesso diversi anni.

A tutt'oggi non esiste un'autorizzazione UE all'immissione in commercio di un medicinale per il trattamento della celiachia contenente una sostanza attiva fondata sulla zonulina.

Il Clinical Trials Register (Registro delle prove cliniche) ([2]) che consente di cercare informazioni sulle prove cliniche negli Stati membri e nello Spazio economico europeo, non cita nessuna ricerca clinica sulla zonulina. Esso contiene però un riferimento a diverse prove cliniche imperniate sul trattamento della celiachia.

Sebbene il ruolo della zonulina quale terapia potenziale per la celiachia non sia stato affrontato specificamente, sette progetti di ricerca (per un valore di 18,3 milioni di euro) concernenti la ricerca sulla diagnosi e la terapia della celiachia hanno ricevuto un sostegno nell'ambito del settimo Programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (FP7, 2007-2013). Essi interessano la piattaforma tecnologica per la diagnosi ambulatoriale della celiachia, studi sul ruolo degli anticorpi nello sviluppo della celiachia e il ruolo delle transglutraminasi nella patogenesi della malattia nonché la formulazione e la commercializzazione dei prodotti da forno alternativi esenti da glutine.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 726/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 31 marzo 2004, che istituisce procedure comunitarie per l'autorizzazione e la sorveglianza dei medicinali per uso umano e veterinario, e che istituisce l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali, e successive modifiche, nonché la direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano, e successive modifiche.

([2]) https://www.clinicaltrialsregister.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004884/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Coeliac disease: a possible cure

From 2 to 5 May 2012, the third national congress of the Federation of Italian Immunology, Allergology and Clinical Immunology Societies (IFIACI) was held in Verona, where the results of a study conducted on 100 patients affected by coeliac disease were presented. The study detailed the effects on the test subjects of a recently discovered molecule called Zonulin.

The results of the study conducted are encouraging: 75% of patients given the placebo developed classic symptoms of coeliac disease, while only 14% of patients who were administered the Zonulin-based drug developed symptoms. One out of 100 citizens in the European Union suffers from coeliac disease and this represents the first real treatment, given that until now the only therapy consisted of eliminating gluten from the diet.

Is the Commission aware of this study? Does it consider it necessary to extend its scope substantially?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

According to the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]), before a medicinal product is put on the EU market, a marketing authorisation has to be granted by the Commission or a Member State, after an evaluation of quality, safety and efficacy of the medicinal product. Documentation containing relevant data from pharmaceutical, non-clinical and clinical research is submitted with a marketing authorisation application by a pharmaceutical company. The research and development of a potential medicinal product takes usually several years.

So far there is no EU marketing authorisation for a medicinal product for treatment of celiac disease, containing an active substance related to zonulin pathway.

The EU Clinical Trials Register ([2]), which allows to search for information on clinical trials in Member States and the European Economic Area, does not indicate any clinical trial research on zonulin. However, it contains a reference to several clinical trials focusing on treatment of celiac disease.

Although the role of zonulin as a potential therapy for coeliac disease has not specifically been addressed, seven research projects (representing EUR 18.3 million) covering research on diagnostics and therapeutic strategies for celiac disease have been supported within the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). They cover technology platform for point-of-care diagnostics of celiac disease, investigation about the role of autoantibodies in the development of celiac disease and the role of transglutaminases in the pathogenesis of the disease, as well as the formulation and commercialisation of the alternative gluten-free bakery products.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 laying down community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency as amended and Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community Code relating to medicinal products for human use as amended.

([2]) https://www.clinicaltrialsregister.eu/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004885/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Ostacoli alla partecipazione al programma europeo LLP — Erasmus

Secondo gli studi DG EAC 01/05 e IP/B/CULT/IC/2009_053 la partecipazione di migliaia di studenti universitari europei al programma Erasmus è condizionata da ostacoli di natura principalmente economica, che si interpongono all'effettiva possibilità di candidarsi a questo programma dell'UE. Di conseguenza, a causa dell'esiguo importo della borsa di studio Erasmus previsto in molti Stati membri, la maggior parte degli studenti provenienti da famiglie con redditi medio-bassi rinuncia a questa esperienza altamente formativa.

Con la decisione n. 1720/2006/CE, all'articolo 1, lettere c) e f), le istituzioni europee s'impegnano a garantire una maggiore accessibilità ai programmi di apprendimento permanente, di cui l'Erasmus fa parte.

1. Può la Commissione rendere noti i criteri di distribuzione delle borse di studio Erasmus in base al paese di destinazione?

2. La Commissione è a conoscenza delle principali motivazioni, oltre a quelle legate alle difficoltà economiche, che portano molti studenti a non partecipare al programma Erasmus?

3. Quali azioni intende la Commissione avviare al fine di permettere a un numero sempre maggiore di studenti di poter vivere questa eccellente esperienza di studio e formazione?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2012)

Il programma Erasmus è gestito dalla Commissione in cooperazione con le agenzie nazionali (AN). La Commissione stabilisce il tasso massimo della borsa mensile relativa ai singoli paesi ospitanti ([1]), ma la strategia di assegnazione delle borse compete alle agenzie nazionali e alle istituzioni di istruzione superiore.

Nell'indagine Flash Eurobarometro «Gioventù in movimento» (2011) si è chiesto a giovani adulti di citare due motivi per non trascorrere un periodo all'estero a fini di istruzione, formazione, lavoro o volontariato. Il 37 % di coloro che non sono mai andati all'estero con queste finalità ha affermato di non essere interessato a farlo. Un terzo ha risposto di non aver accesso a finanziamenti o che il periodo all'estero sarebbe stato troppo costoso, mentre un quarto aveva impegni di famiglia che gli impedivano di assentarsi.

La mancanza di competenze in lingue straniere e la mancanza di informazioni in merito alle opportunità di mobilità sono state addotte rispettivamente dal 14 % e dal 13 %. Una piccola percentuale (3 %-4 %) ha indicato altri motivi, come ad esempio ostacoli giuridici e preoccupazioni quanto alla qualità della formazione.

La domanda attuale supera di gran lunga i finanziamenti disponibili. La Commissione propone di investire più di 19 miliardi di euro nel nuovo programma quadro di istruzione e formazione «Erasmus per tutti» (2014-2020) che includerà tra l'altro le attuali attività di Erasmus. Ciò rappresenta un aumento di più del 70 % rispetto al livello di finanziamento attuale. Il nuovo programma offrirà opportunità di mobilità a quasi 5 milioni di persone nel periodo 2014-2020 (2,2 milioni di studenti dell'istruzione superiore). Esso assicurerà un più ampio accesso ai gruppi di discenti sottorappresentati provenienti da un contesto socioeconomico svantaggiato. Si propone inoltre un meccanismo di garanzia dei prestiti per aiutare coloro che desiderano seguire un corso di laurea magistrale e che attualmente non hanno accesso a prestiti.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/official-documents-on-the-llp_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004885/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Barriers to participation in the European Lifelong Learning Programme (Erasmus)

According to studies DG EAC 01/05 and IP/B/CULT/IC/2009_053, thousands of European university students are encountering obstacles to participation in the Erasmus programme. These are primarily financial in nature and effectively deter these students from applying for this EU programme. Consequently, due to the meagreness of the Erasmus grant provided in many Member States, the majority of students from lower- and middle-income families forego this highly formative experience.

In Article 1(c) and (f) of Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, the European institutions state their commitment to ensuring greater access to lifelong learning programmes, which includes the Erasmus programme.

1. Can the Commission detail the criteria for distributing Erasmus grants based on the country of destination?

2. Is the Commission aware of the main considerations, aside from financial difficulties, that deter many students from participating in the Erasmus programme?

3. What measures does the Commission intend to take in order to ensure that a greater number of students will be able to participate in this excellent learning and formative experience?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

The Erasmus programme is managed by the Commission in cooperation with National Agencies (NA). The Commission sets the maximum rate for the monthly grant per host country ([1]) but grant allocation policy is left to national agencies and higher education institutions.

In the Flash Eurobarometer survey 'Youth on the Move' (2011), young adults were asked to choose two reasons for not spending time abroad for education, training, working or volunteering. 37% of those who had never gone abroad in this way said they were not interested in doing so. A third answered that they had no access to funding or that it would have been too expensive, while a quarter had family commitments that kept them from going.

Lack of foreign language skills and a lack of information about mobility opportunities were cited by 14% and 13%, respectively. Small percentages (3%-4%) selected other reasons, such as legal obstacles and concerns about the quality of training.

Current demand far exceeds available funds. The Commission proposes to invest more than EUR 19 billion in the new education and training framework programme 'Erasmus for All' (2014-2020) which will include *inter alia* the current Erasmus activities. This constitutes an increase of more than 70% over current funding. It will offer mobility opportunities to nearly 5 million people in 2014-2020, (2.2 million higher education students). It will ensure wider access for under-represented groups incuding learners from lower socioeconomic background. A loan guarantee mechanism is also proposed to help those who wish to do a Master's programme abroad and currently have no access to loans.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/official-documents-on-the-llp_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004886/12
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Salvaguardia del lago di Massaciuccoli

Nelle scorse settimane il Nucleo unificato regionale di valutazione e verifica degli investimenti pubblici (NURV) della Toscana ha presentato un parere tecnico relativamente allo stato di salute del lago di Massaciuccoli. Dalla relazione si evince che il lago lucchese presenta oggi notevoli problematiche, tra cui:

— deficit idrico di circa 32 milioni di metri cubi l'anno;

— graduale e costante decremento dei livelli idrici medi e delle falde acquifere a esso collegate;

— continuo aumento di fenomeni di subsidenza favoriti dal drenaggio delle acque operato dalla bonifica che, abbassando il livello della falda, innesca l'inevitabile compattazione delle torbe superficiali;

— progressiva salinizzazione per intrusione delle acque marine;

— progressivo interrimento ed eutrofizzazione per continua immissione di ingenti quantità di nutrienti e solidi sospesi da parte delle attività antropiche;

— progressiva riduzione della diversità biologica del lago e delle aree circostanti, con specie originarie in diminuzione e sviluppo di specie più resistenti o esotiche.

Il Lago di Massaciuccoli rappresenta una realtà unica e particolarmente importante dal punto di vista biologico e ambientale, la cui sopravvivenza è messa oggi fortemente a rischio, anche per la presenza di diverse discariche abusive e la continua immissione di sostanze inquinanti direttamente pericolose anche per la salute umana.

— La Commissione europea è a conoscenza della situazione di crisi in cui versa questa riserva naturale?

— Può indicare se siano stati erogati in passato finanziamenti europei per la tutela di quest'area?

— La Regione Toscana ha adeguatamente utilizzato eventuali finanziamenti, e come valuta la Commissione l'intera gestione regionale dell'area negli ultimi anni?

— Quale misure intende inoltre attuare per aiutare a preservare il particolare ecosistema del lago di Massaciuccoli?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(2 luglio 2012)

Sulla base delle informazioni comunicate alla Commissione nel piano di gestione dei bacini idrografici del distretto del fiume Serchio previsto dalla direttiva quadro in materia di acque (2000/60/CE ([1])), il lago di Massaciuccoli è classificato come corpo idrico fortemente modificato e presenta attualmente uno scarso potenziale ecologico e un cattivo stato chimico. Gli impatti significativi individuati sono molteplici, come ad esempio l'alterazione degli habitat, i sedimenti contaminati, l'infiltrazione di acqua marina, l'immissione di nutrienti e sostanze organiche. La Commissione sta ora esaminando i piani di gestione previsti dalla direttiva quadro in materia di acque notificati dagli Stati membri e pubblicherà i risultati della sua valutazione a novembre del 2012. Qualora fossero individuati casi di cattiva attuazione, la Commissione potrebbe decidere di ricorrere ai meccanismi giuridici stabiliti dal trattato per garantire che la direttiva quadro in materia di acque sia attuata correttamente.

In base all'ultima relazione ([2]) alla Commissione, dal 2009 gli agglomerati urbani nella zona del lago di Massaciuccoli rispettano gli obblighi di raccolta e trattamento secondario stabiliti dalla direttiva 91/271/CEE ([3]). Tuttavia, nel 2003 il lago è stato definito area sensibile e ciò dovrebbe comportare, dal 2010, il ricorso ad un trattamento più rigoroso per gli impianti che scaricano nel bacino idrografico del lago Massaciuccoli (Viareggio, Massarosa e Torre del Lago Puccini) rifiuti provenienti da agglomerati con un numero di abitanti equivalenti superiore a 10 000.

([1]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000.
([2]) Documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione SEC(2011) 1561 definitivo.
([3]) GU L 135 del 30.5.1991.

Inoltre, il lago di Massaciuccoli è situato in un territorio designato come zona vulnerabile ai nitrati ai sensi della direttiva 91/676/CEE ([4]) del Consiglio. Pertanto, a tale zona va applicato un programma d'azione con misure vincolanti in materia di protezione delle acque dall'inquinamento provocato dai nitrati provenienti da fonti agricole.

Secondo le informazioni di cui dispone la Commissione, per la protezione del lago di Massaciuccoli non sono stati erogati finanziamenti nell'ambito del fondo di sviluppo regionale europeo nei periodi di programmazione 2000-2006 e 2007-2013.

([4]) GU L 375 del 31.12.1991.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004886/12
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Protecting Lake Massaciuccoli

In recent weeks, the Unified Regional Unit for Evaluation and Verification of Public Investment (NURV) in Tuscany has presented a technical opinion on the health of Lake Massaciuccoli. The report shows that the lake near Lucca has significant problems, including:

— a water deficit of around 32 million cubic metres per year;

— a gradual and constant decline in average water levels and groundwater aquifers connected to it;

— a continuous increase in the effects of subsidence aggravated by water drainage carried out by reclamation works which, by lowering the water level, are triggering the inevitable compacting of the surface peat;

— progressive salinisation caused by the intrusion of sea water;

— progressive silting and eutrophication by the continuous release of enormous quantities of nutrients and suspended solids from human activity;

— a progressive reduction of the biodiversity of the lake and surrounding areas, with native species in decline and development of more resistant or exotic species.

Lake Massaciuccoli is unique and is especially important from a biological and environmental perspective. Massaciuccoli's survival is today at great risk, also because of the presence of various illegal dumps and the continuous release of harmful substances that are also directly hazardous to human health.

— Is the European Commission aware of the crisis occurring in this nature reserve?

— Can it indicate whether European funding has been allocated in the past to protect this area?

— Has the Region of Tuscany used any funding appropriately? How does the Commission rate the overall regional management of the area in recent years?

— What measures does it intend to implement to help preserve Lake Massaciuccoli's unique ecosystem?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

According to the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC ([1])) river basin management plan for the Serchio river basin district, as reported to the Commission, the Lake Massaciuccoli is identified as heavily modified and is currently in bad ecological potential and bad chemical status. The significant impacts identified are multiple, including altered habitats, contaminated sediments, nutrient and organic enrichment and saline intrusion. The Commission is currently assessing the WFD plans reported by the Member States and will publish its findings in November 2012. In case instances of bad implementation are identified, the Commission may consider using the legal mechanisms in the Treaty to ensure that the WFD is properly implemented.

According to the latest report ([2]) to the Commission, as of 2009 the agglomerations in the area of Lake Massaciuccoli fulfil the obligation of collection and secondary treatment of Directive 91/271/EEC ([3]). However, the lake was designated in 2003 as a sensitive area, which means that as of 2010, more stringent treatment should be applied in the treatment plants larger than 10,000 population equivalent discharging into the catchment area of the lake (Viareggio, Massarosa, and Torre del Lago Puccini).

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([2]) Commission Staff Working Paper SEC(2011) 1561 final.
([3]) OJ L 135, 30.05.1991.

In addition, the Lake is within a 'Nitrate Vulnerable Zone', designated according to Council Directive 91/676/EEC ([4]). Therefore, an Action Programme with mandatory measures concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources applies to this area.

According to the information available to the Commission, the protection of Lake Massaciuccoli has not been co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund in the 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 programming periods.

([4]) OJ L 375, 31.12.1991.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004887/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(14 mai 2012)

Subiect: Durata de viață programată a aparatelor electrice

Anumiți specialiști în aparate electrice de uz casnic mici afirmă că aparatele electrice au o durată de viață programată, astfel încât să se asigure reînnoirea lor. La inițiativa producătorilor și a vânzătorilor, uzura morală este impusă aproape de facto consumatorilor. În rândul strategiilor utilizate de producători se numără: întreruperea producției de piese de schimb, pretextul de a nu mai exista reparații etc. Cel mai cunoscut exemplu este cel al imprimantelor, dintre care unele sunt echipate cu un chip cu contor care blochează imprimarea peste un număr stabilit de pagini.

În aceste circumstanțe, ar putea Comisia să răspundă la următoarele întrebări?

— Respectă această practică legislația europeană în materie de protecție a consumatorilor?

— Intenționează Comisia să propună reglementări noi în acest sens?

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(5 iulie 2012)

Distinsul membru al Parlamentului European este invitat să consulte răspunsul comun la întrebările E-001284/2011, formulată de Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, E-002875/2011, formulată de Franz Obermayr, și E-004273/2011, formulată de Anneli Jaatteenmaki ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004887/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Pre-programmed useful life of electrical appliances

Some electrical appliance specialists claim that electrical appliances have a pre-programmed useful life in order to ensure that they are replaced. Obsolescence is imposed on consumers, virtually de facto, at the initiative of manufacturers and sellers. The strategies used by manufacturers include the following: discontinuing the manufacture of replacement parts, the pretext that the goods cannot be repaired, etc. The best-known example is that of printers, some of which are fitted with a counter chip which prevents printing more than a pre-set number of pages.

— Does this practice comply with European legislation on consumer protection?

— Does the Commission intend to propose new regulations for such cases?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the joint reply given to Questions E-001284/2011 by Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, E-002875/2011by Franz Obermayr and E-004273/2011 by Anneli Jaatteenmaki ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004888/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(14 mai 2012)

Subiect: Directiva 2009/128/CE

Directiva 2009/128/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 21 octombrie 2009 de stabilire a unui cadru de acțiune comunitară în vederea utilizării durabile a pesticidelor (JO L 309, 24 noiembrie 2009) nu prevede distanța de siguranță care trebuie respectată în timpul aplicării produselor fitosanitare în zona locuințelor.

Comisia este invitată să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

— Intenționează să modifice legislația pentru a impune stabilirea unor zone-tampon?

— Este posibil să se prevadă, pentru stabilirea acestor zone, o compensație financiară în cadrul PAC?

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(3 iulie 2012)

Directiva 2009/128/CE ([1]) este pe deplin aplicabilă de la 26 noiembrie 2011. Dată fiind această perioadă relativ scurtă, Comisia nu consideră necesar, în acest stadiu, să revizuiască dispozițiile în ceea ce privește instituirea de zone-tampon.

În plus, instituirea unor măsuri de reducere a riscului, cum ar fi zonele-tampon în jurul zonelor rezidențiale, este strict legată de caracteristicile și de modul de utilizare al fiecărui produs de protecție a plantelor și, prin urmare, la nivel național, sunt instituite măsuri specifice de reducere a riscurilor drept condiții pentru autorizarea introducerii pe piață și a utilizării produselor de protecție a plantelor în conformitate cu Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1107/2009 ([2]).

Nu este prevăzută acordarea de despăgubiri în cadrul politicii agricole comune pentru respectarea măsurilor solicitate și necesare de reducere a riscurilor legate de utilizarea autorizată a anumitor produse de protecție a plantelor.

([1]) JO L 309, 24.11.2009.
([2]) JO L 309, 24.11.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004888/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Directive 2009/128/EC

Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides compatible with sustainable development (OJ L 309 of 24 November 2009) does not provide for a safety distance to be respected when crop protection products are applied near homes.

The Commission is requested to answer the following questions:

— Does it intend to amend legislation to impose buffer zones?

— Could compensation be envisaged within the framework of the CAP for the establishment of these zones?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

Directive 2009/128/EC ([1])is fully applicable since 26 November 2011. Given this relatively short period, the Commission does not see a need, at this stage, to review the provisions as regards the imposition of buffer zones.

Moreover, the imposition of risk mitigation measures, such as buffer zones around residential areas, is strictly linked to the properties and manner of use of each plant protection product and therefore, specific risk mitigation measures are imposed at national level as conditions of authorisation for the marketing and use of plant protection products in compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([2]).

It is not envisaged to provide compensation in the framework of the common agricultural policy for the respect of required and necessary risk mitigation measures linked with the authorised use of specific plant protection products.

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009.
([2]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004889/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(14 mai 2012)

Subiect: Reducerea expunerii copiilor la radiații

Administrația SUA pentru alimente și medicamente intenționează să stabilească norme pentru producătorii de dispozitive precum aparatele cu raze X, aparatele de tomografie computerizată și echipamentele de angiografie pentru a lua în considerare în primul rând copiii atunci când sunt proiectate astfel de echipamente. Producătorii vor include setări specifice pentru copii (nou-născuți, copii cu vârsta de un an, de cinci ani, de doisprezece ani) și vor dovedi că aparatele sunt sigure pentru copii sau le vor eticheta ca nefiind utilizabile pentru copii.

Ar putea Comisia să ofere propriile observații cu privire la această inițiativă și la eventuala utilitate a unei astfel de dispoziții juridice în EU?

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(11 iulie 2012)

Directiva 93/42/CEE ([1]) privind dispozitivele medicale obligă deja producătorii să demonstreze că dispozitivele pe care le introduc pe piață sunt proiectate și fabricate în așa fel încât, atunci când sunt utilizate în condițiile și în scopurile pentru care au fost destinate, acestea nu dăunează stării clinice sau siguranței pacienților, inclusiv a copiilor, atunci când este cazul. Eticheta, instrucțiunile de utilizare și orice alte materiale promoționale care însoțesc dispozitivele trebuie să reflecte scopul pentru care este destinat dispozitivul și includ, după caz, orice restricții privind utilizarea, de exemplu, în ceea ce privește pacienții cărora le este destinat. Directiva 93/42/CEE prevede în plus faptul că dispozitivele care emit radiații sunt proiectate și fabricate în continuare astfel încât expunerea la radiații a pacienților este redusă în măsura în care acest lucru este compatibil cu scopul propus.

În plus, Directiva 93/42/CEE nu aduce atingere aplicării Directivei 96/29/Euratom a Consiliului din 13 mai 1996 de stabilire a normelor de securitate de bază privind protecția sănătății lucrătorilor și a populației împotriva pericolelor prezentate de radiațiile ionizante ([2]), nici aplicării Directivei 97/43/Euratom a Consiliului din 30 iunie 1997 privind protecția sănătății persoanelor împotriva pericolelor pe care le prezintă radiațiile ionizante rezultate din expunerea în scopuri medicale ([3]).

Comisia va urmări atent inițiativa Autorității pentru supravegherea alimentelor și medicamentelor din Statele Unite (*US Food and Drug Administration* — FDA) pentru a evalua dacă alte dispoziții ar trebui să fie incluse în cadrul juridic european privind dispozitivele medicale.

([1]) JO L 169, 12.7.1993, p. 1.
([2]) JO L 159, 29.6.1996, p. 1.
([3]) JO L 180, 9.7.1997, p. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004889/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Cutting children's radiation exposure

The US Food and Drug Administration plans to set rules for manufacturers of devices such as X-ray machines, CT scanners and angiography equipment in order to put children first when designing such equipment. The manufacturers will have to include child settings (newborn, one-year old, five-year old, twelve-year old) and prove that the machines are safe for children, or label them as not for use with children.

Could the Commission comment on this initiative and on the possible usefulness of such legal provisions in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

Directive 93/42/EEC ([1]) concerning medical devices already requires manufacturers to demonstrate that the devices they place on the market are designed and manufactured in such a way that, when used under the conditions and for the purposes intended, they will not compromise the clinical condition or the safety of patients, including children where appropriate. The labelling, instructions for use and any other promotional materials accompanying the devices must reflect the use for which the device is intended and shall include, where appropriate, any restrictions on use, for example in terms of intended patients. Directive 93/42/EEC further specifies that devices emitting radiations shall be designed and manufactured in such a way that exposure of patients to radiation shall be reduced as far as compatible with the intended purpose.

In addition, Directive 93/42/EEC does not affect the application of Council Directive 96/29/Euratom of 13 May 1996 laying down basic safety standards for the protection of the health of workers and the general public against the dangers arising from ionizing radiation ([2]), nor of Council Directive 97/43/Euratom of 30 June 1997 on health protection of individuals against the dangers of ionizing radiation in relation to medical exposure ([3]).

The Commission will carefully follow the US Food and Drug Administration's initiative in order to assess whether additional provisions should be incorporated into the European medical device legal framework.

([1]) OJ L 169, 12.7.1993, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 159, 29.6.1996, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L 180, 9.7.1997, p. 22.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004891/12
à la Commission
Corinne Lepage (ALDE)
(14 mai 2012)

Objet: Procédure de réhomologation de pesticides pourtant retirés du marché en 2007

D'après l'ONG Pesticides Action Network (PAN), 88 pesticides ont fait l'objet d'un régime spécial dérogeant au régime d'autorisation déjà en place. Ce régime, dit de resoumission, offre une seconde chance par le biais d'une procédure accélérée pour les pesticides non homologués.

En 2007, un accord aurait été passé entre la DG SANCO et les industriels pour rendre volontaire le retrait des demandes d'homologation, introduites précédemment, pour ces pesticides, en échange d'un accès au marché durant la réalisation des évaluations. Trois ans plus tard, la grande majorité des pesticides (dont des substances telles que le 1,3-dichloropropène, le métam, la chloropicrine et le bromure de méthyle — tous des agents stérilisants des sols) — a été homologuée dans le cadre de cette procédure de resoumission. Et ce, alors même que, dans la plupart des cas, les données fournies par les industriels étaient insuffisantes pour conclure à l'innocuité de ces substances.

— La Commission confirme-t-elle l'existence de ce régime spécial d'autorisation, qui permettrait l'homologation de substances sur lesquelles les données sont pourtant insuffisantes?

— La directive 91/414/EEC sur les pesticides (devenue le règlement (CE) nº 1107/2009) autorise-t-elle une telle insuffisance de données lors de la procédure d'homologation?

— Quelles ont été les modalités de la procédure de réhomologation? Cette procédure a-t-elle été proposée à tous les producteurs de pesticides? Sinon, pourquoi?

— Comme, dans la plupart des cas, l'évaluation du risque pour le consommateur et pour l'environnement n'était pas finalisée, comment la Commission a-t-elle pu s'assurer de l'absence d'effets négatifs de ces produits?

— Est-il vrai qu'au sein du comité permanent (Standing Committee), il existe une politique consistant à ne pas interdire un pesticide pour des raisons environnementales?

— La charge de travail supplémentaire qu'entraîne pour la DG SANCO cette procédure de resoumission a-t-elle eu des effets négatifs sur les activités de la DG? Explique-t-elle l'allongement des délais dans d'autres tâches telles que la révision de procédures d'évaluation du risque pour les pesticides aujourd'hui périmées ou encore le développement d'une liste de produits de substitution?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(3 juillet 2012)

L'Honorable Parlementaire voudra bien se reporter à la réponse que la Commission a donnée aux questions écrites E-004148/2012 et E-004727/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004891/12
to the Commission
Corinne Lepage (ALDE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Re-approval procedures for pesticides withdrawn from the market in 2007

According to the NGO Pesticides Action Network (PAN), 88 pesticides were dealt with under a special approval scheme which derogated from the authorisation procedure already in place. This scheme, known as resubmission, offers a second chance to secure approval for pesticides through an accelerated procedure.

In 2007, an agreement was reportedly concluded between the Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Policy (DG SANCO) and major firms to make the withdrawal of applications for approval in respect of these pesticides voluntary in exchange for access to the market during the risk assessments. Three years later, the vast majority of the pesticides in question (including substances such as 1.3-dichloropropene, metam, chloropicrin and methyl bromide — all soil-sterilising agents) were authorised under the resubmission scheme, even though in most cases the data supplied by firms did not provide sufficient grounds to consider these substances safe.

— Can the Commission confirm the existence of this special authorisation scheme, which apparently makes it possible for substances to be approved on the basis of inadequate data?

— Does Council Directive 91/414/EEC concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market (subsequently Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009) make provision for approval on the basis of such inadequate data?

— What form did the re-approval procedure take? Was this procedure offered to all pesticide producers? If not, why not?

— Given that, in most cases, the consumer and environmental risk assessment had not been completed, how was the Commission able to satisfy itself that these products have no harmful effects?

— Is it true that the Standing Committee has a policy of not banning pesticides on environmental grounds?

— Has the extra workload which this resubmission procedure entails for DG SANCO had any adverse effects on the DG's other activities? Does it explain the longer completion times for other tasks, such as the review of risk assessment procedures for pesticides whose authorisation has expired or the development of a list of substitute products?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The Commission would refer the honourable Member to its answers to previous Written Questions E-004148/2012 and E-004727/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004892/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 maja 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Kuba – sprawa Andrésa Carrióna Álvareza

Andrés Carrión Álvarez wyszedł z więzienia dnia 13 kwietnia, aby poczekać na proces o „zakłócanie porządku publicznego" za wnoszenie okrzyków „Wolność!" i „Precz z komunizmem!" podczas mszy na wolnym powietrzu odprawianej przez papieża w dniu 26 marca. Został ponownie aresztowany trzy dni później, w dniu 16 kwietnia. Po raz kolejny postawiono mu zarzut „naruszania porządku publicznego" i zwolniono po pięciu godzinach. Carrión Álvarez musi co tydzień zgłaszać się na posterunek policji. Nie wolno mu opuszczać gminy Santiago de Cuba bez zezwolenia. Ustalono już datę jego procesu.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zaapeluje do władz kubańskich o wycofanie wszelkich oskarżeń przeciwko Andrésowi Carriónowi Álvarezowi, których przyczyną jest korzystanie z prawa do wolności wypowiedzi, oraz o przerwanie stosowanych wobec niego prześladowań?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(26 czerwca 2012 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca z uwagą śledzi wzrost liczby przypadków tymczasowych zatrzymań na Kubie, w tym sytuację pana Andrèsa Carrióna Álvareza. Jednocześnie delegatura UE w Hawanie wraz z szefami misji UE monitoruje sytuację w zakresie praw człowieka na Kubie. Przy wielu okazjach UE powtarzała jak ważne jest, aby władze kubańskie czyniły dalsze postępy w kierunku pełnego poszanowania wszystkich praw politycznych i cywilnych ludności kubańskiej, w tym także wolności słowa i zgromadzeń. Sprawa ta była i nadal jest przedmiotem kontaktów z władzami kubańskimi w Hawanie i jej przedstawicielami w Brukseli.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004892/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Cuba — the case of Andrés Carrión Álvarez

Andrés Carrión Álvarez was released from prison on 13 April to await trial on a charge of 'public disorder' for shouting 'freedom' and 'down with communism' at an open-air mass given by the Pope on 26 March. He was arrested again three days later, on 16 April, and charged with another count of 'public disorder', before being released five hours later. Carrión Álvarez must report to a police station on a weekly basis. He is not allowed to leave his home municipality of Santiago de Cuba without prior authorisation. The date for his trial has been set.

Will the Vice-President/High Representative call on the Cuban authorities to withdraw any charges against Andrés Carrión Álvarez arising from his peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression, and cease the harassment he is facing?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2012)

The HR/VP is following closely the upsurge of temporary detentions in Cuba, including the situation of Mr Andrès Carrión Alvarez. At the same time, the EU delegation in Havana, together with the EU Heads of Mission, monitors the human rights' situation in Cuba. The EU has reiterated on several occasions the importance for the Cuban authorities to continue to make progress towards full respect of all political and civil rights for the Cuban people, including freedom of expression and assembly. This matter has been and will continue to be addressed in contacts with the Cuban authorities both in Brussels and in Havana.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004893/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 maja 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Bezprawne użycie siły przeciwko demonstrantom w Rosji

Późnym popołudniem dnia 6 maja 2012 r. przez centrum Moskwy przemaszerowały dziesiątki tysięcy demonstrantów, którzy gromadzili się na wiec zalegalizowany przez moskiewskie władze, odbywający się na Placu Bołotnaja w pobliżu Kremla. Po tym jak policyjna blokada zatrzymała tysiące demonstrantów udających się na główne miejsce zbiórki, kilku liderów opozycji zarządziło siedzący protest, a część demonstrantów próbowała przebić się przez kordon policji – w niektórych przypadkach z użyciem przemocy. Policja użyła siły i zatrzymała tysiące ludzi – zarówno pokojowych demonstrantów, jak i tych, którzy stosowali przemoc.

Prawo do pokojowych zgromadzeń zapisane jest w europejskiej konwencji praw człowieka (EKPC), Międzynarodowym pakcie praw obywatelskich i politycznych (ICCPR), którego sygnatariuszem jest Rosja, oraz w rosyjskiej konstytucji.

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zapytać, czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel planuje wezwać rosyjskie władze do wszczęcia dochodzenia w sprawie doniesień o bezprawnym użyciu siły przeciwko demonstrantom i arbitralnych aresztowaniach, do których doszło dnia 6 maja podczas protestu i po nim.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(29 czerwca 2012 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca z uwagą śledzi wydarzenia w Rosji, do których nawiązuje Szanowny Pan Poseł.

Jeśli chodzi o reakcję na użycie siły i zatrzymania podczas demonstracji, jak zapewne Szanowny Pan Poseł wie, dnia 11 maja wydane zostało oświadczenie, w którym Wysoka Przedstawiciel Unii do Spraw Zagranicznych i Polityki Bezpieczeństwa, Catherine Ashton, wyraziła zaniepokojenie w związku z aresztowaniami przywódców opozycji w Moskwie oraz skazaniem ich na karę więzienia. W oświadczeniu tym podkreślono, że swoboda wypowiedzi oraz zgromadzeń, a także udział w pokojowych demonstracjach, stanowią prawa podstawowe w państwach demokratycznych i są zapisane w rosyjskiej konstytucji. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wezwała Rosję do przestrzegania tych praw, również w świetle międzynarodowych zobowiązań Rosji wynikających z jej członkostwa w Radzie Europy i OBWE.

Okazją do bardziej wnikliwej debaty na temat przywołanych wydarzeń, a także stosownej reakcji władz rosyjskich, są konsultacje między UE i Rosją na temat praw człowieka, które prowadzone są dwa razy do roku.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004893/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Excessive use of force against protesters in Russia

In the late afternoon of 6 May 2012, tens of thousands of protesters marched in central Moscow and began to gather for a rally sanctioned by the Moscow authorities at Bolotnaya Square, near the Kremlin. After a bottleneck created by police security held up thousands of the protesters on the way to the main rally site, several leaders of the opposition called a sit-down strike and several protesters tried to break through a police line, in some cases using violence. Police responded with force and detained hundreds of people — both peaceful protesters and those who were acting aggressively.

The right of peaceful assembly is guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Russia is a party, and by the Russian Constitution.

In view of the above, I would like to inquire whether the Vice-President/High Representative intends to call on the Russian authorities to investigate reports of excessive use of force against protesters and arbitrary detentions during and following the protest on 6 May.

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

The HR/VP is following the events in Russia that the Honourable Member is referring to very closely.

As regards the response to the use of force and detentions during the demonstrations, the Honourable Member will be aware that on 11 May a statement was issued, in which the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission Catherine Ashton expressed concern with the arrests of opposition leaders in Moscow and their prison sentences. The statement stressed that the freedoms of expression and of assembly, and participation in peaceful demonstrations, were fundamental rights in democratic states, and were indeed enshrined in the Russian Constitution. The HR/VP called on Russia to respect these rights, also in light of Russia's international commitments taken as a member of the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

The forum to go into a more detailed discussion on these events as well as the appropriate response to them by the Russian Aushorities is the EU-Russia human rights consultations, which take place two times a year.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004895/12
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(14 maja 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Ekspertyzy prawne w sprawie zgodności z traktatem przedstawionych przez Komisję propozycji dotyczących dopłat bezpośrednich

Czy Komisja przeprowadziła ocenę zgodności propozycji Komisji z przepisami traktatowymi dotyczącymi dystrybucji dopłat bezpośrednich pomiędzy rolnikami w odniesieniu do traktatowego zakazu dyskryminacji ze względu na przynależność państwową oraz pomiędzy producentami rolnymi w UE?

— Jeśli Komisja nie przeprowadziła takiej oceny, to czy zamierza ją przeprowadzić?

— Czy Komisja przeprowadziła ocenę prawną pod kątem zgodności propozycji dotyczących dopłat bezpośrednich zawartych w dokumencie COM(2011) 0625 z dnia 20 października 2011 r. z przepisami traktatowymi? W szczególności chodzi o propozycje utrzymania po 2013 r. nierówności dystrybucji środków na dopłaty bezpośrednie odwołujące się do kryterium płatności historycznych.

— Jeśli Komisja nie przeprowadziła takiej oceny, to czy zamierza ją przeprowadzić?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(25 czerwca 2012 r.)

Podczas przygotowywania wniosków legislacyjnych w dziedzinie rolnictwa Komisja dokłada najwyższej staranności, aby zagwarantować ich zgodność ze wszystkimi postanowieniami Traktatu, a zwłaszcza z przepisami związanymi z zasadą równego traktowania rolników w całej UE. Jest to zasadnicza część procesu przygotowywania aktów prawnych, do której służby prawne Komisji przykładają dużą uwagę. Wniosek w sprawie płatności bezpośrednich zawarty w dokumencie COM(2011) 625 z dnia 12 października 2011 r. nie jest wyjątkiem od tej zasady.

W odniesieniu do dystrybucji środków na dopłaty bezpośrednie, zawartej we wspomnianym dokumencie, Komisja przyznaje – w motywie 21 – że coraz trudniej jest uzasadnić znaczne indywidualne różnice w poziomie wsparcia na hektar, wynikające ze stosowania historycznych danych referencyjnych. W związku z tym, Komisja stwierdza, że bezpośrednie wsparcie dochodu powinno zostać równomierniej rozdzielone między państwa członkowskie poprzez zmniejszenie powiązania z historycznymi danymi referencyjnymi i z uwzględnieniem ogólnego kontekstu budżetu Unii. Z tego powodu Komisja zaproponowała zajęcie się tym problemem w art. 22 swojego wniosku poprzez wprowadzenie procesu stopniowego zbliżenia wartości uprawnień do płatności.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004895/12
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Expert legal opinion on the compliance of the Commission's proposals on direct payments with the Treaty

Has the Commission carried out an assessment of the compliance of its proposals on the distribution of direct payments to farmers with the provisions of the Treaty prohibiting discrimination based on nationality and between agricultural producers in the EU?

— If the Commission has not carried out such an assessment, does it intend to do so?

— Has the Commission carried out a legal assessment into compliance of the proposals for direct payments contained in document COM(2011) 0625 of 20 October 2011 with theprovisions of the Treaty? At issue, in particular, are proposals to maintain after 2013 the inequalities in the distribution of funds for direct payments by basing them on historical payments.

— If the Commission has not carried out such an assessment, does it intend to do so?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2012)

When drafting legal proposals in the field of agriculture, the Commission takes extreme care to ensure that they comply with all Treaty provisions, in particular with those related to the principle of equal treatment of farmers across the EU. This is a fundamental part in the process of drafting legislation to which the legal services of the Commission pay careful attention. The proposal on direct payments contained in document COM(2011) 625 of 12 October 2011 is no exception to that rule.

As regards the distribution of funds for direct payments contained in the referred document, the Commission acknowledges, in Recital 21, that it has become increasingly difficult to justify the presence of significant individual differences in the level of support per hectare resulting from the use of historical references. Therefore, the Commission concludes, direct income support should be more equitably distributed between Member States by reducing the link to historical references and having regard to the overall context of the Union budget. For that reason, the Commission has proposed to adress this problem in Article 22 of its proposal by instauring a process of progressive approximation in the value of payment entitlements.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004896/12
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Allarmante aumento di violenze sui minori in Somalia

La continua escalation del conflitto in Somalia ha fatto sì che un numero crescente di bambini e civili adulti fossero catturati durante i ripetuti attacchi e i combattimenti che da mesi interessano tutto il sud e il centro del paese.

Secondo le fonti delle Nazioni Unite che monitorano le violazioni dei diritti dei minori, nell'ultimo periodo si è registrato un allarmante aumento di omicidi e ferimenti gravi nei confronti dei bambini.

Altri dati preoccupanti riguardano il reclutamento e l'impiego di minorenni nei combattimenti e gli abusi sessuali su giovani donne. Nel 2011, riferiscono fonti ONU, sono stati registrati in Somalia oltre 600 arruolamenti di minorenni e oltre 200 casi di stupro, per lo più ai danni di ragazze.

Il protrarsi del conflitto civile ha messo inoltre a repentaglio anche la consegna degli aiuti umanitari: molti, fra le centinaia di migliaia di bambini che già rischiano la vita per fame o malattie, corrono il rischio di vedersi privati anche dell'assistenza da cui dipende la loro vita.

— Intende la Commissione sostenere azioni volte ad arginare il perdurante conflitto in Somalia e così limitare le uccisioni, i ferimenti, il reclutamento e lo stupro di minori?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 luglio 2012)

L'UE segue con grande preoccupazione gli eventi nella Somalia meridionale e centrale riguardanti gli attacchi contro i civili, compresi i minori. Il conflitto somalo è stato caratterizzato dall'impiego diffuso e sistematico di bambini soldato da parte delle milizie e nelle zone ancora sotto il controllo dei ribelli islamici di Al-Shabaab la situazione è allarmante. L'UE ha fornito un sostegno costante alle iniziative delle Nazioni Unite volte a ripristinare la pace nel paese, sia dal punto di vista politico che attraverso aiuti considerevoli destinati alla creazione delle istituzioni somale, ad esempio erogando aiuti per instaurare un sistema giudiziario e forze di polizia efficaci e professionali, con un personale qualificato in materia di protezione dei civili e dei diritti umani. L'UE ha inoltre sostenuto la missione dell'Unione africana in Somalia (AMISOM), che continua a contribuire al miglioramento del livello di sicurezza nel paese. Negli ultimi mesi l'AMISOM e i militari allineati al governo federale di transizione somalo sono riusciti a riguadagnare territorio nella Somalia meridionale e centrale sotto il controllo di Al-Shabaab. L'UE contribuisce inoltre al rafforzamento delle forze di sicurezza nazionali somale, in un'ottica di cessazione del conflitto. L'UE intende contribuire a rafforzare le amministrazioni e lo Stato di diritto nelle zone nuovamente accessibili e a provvedere alle necessità di base della popolazione, anche per quanto riguarda la sicurezza e la protezione civile. Attraverso la strategia in materia di diritti umani, l'UE fornirà sostegno ai difensori dei diritti umani e assistenza al governo federale di transizione e all'AMISOM per l'attuazione di misure volte alla riduzione dei rischi per la popolazione civile. L'UE sosterrà inoltre la nomina di una persona di contatto per la tutela dell'infanzia all'interno del ministero della Difesa del governo federale di transizione, affinché siano garantite misure adeguate per porre fine al reclutamento di bambini soldato e favorire il loro reinserimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004896/12
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Alarming increase in child abuse in Somalia

A growing number of children and civilian adults have been captured during the repeated attacks and fighting that have affected the entire south and centre of Somalia for months, as the conflict there continues to escalate.

UN sources monitoring violations of the rights of minors have noted an alarming increase in the number of homicides and serious injuries sustained by children in the recent period.

Other worrying data relate to the recruitment and exploitation of child soldiers and the sexual abuse of young women. According to UN sources, over 600 abductions of minors and 200 rape cases were recorded in Somalia in 2011, mostly against girls.

The continuation of the civil war also jeopardises the provision of humanitarian aid. Many of the hundreds and thousands of children whose lives are already endangered due to hunger or disease run the risk of also losing the support upon which their lives depend.

— Does the Commission intend to support measures to stem the continuing conflict in Somalia and therefore reduce the killing, maiming, recruitment and rape of minors?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 July 2012)

The EU follows the events regarding attacks against civilians, including minors, in South Central Somalia with great concern. Fighting in Somalia has been marked by widespread and systematic use of children as soldiers by militias. In areas still under the control of the Islamist insurgency Al-Shabaab the situation is sombre. The EU has consistently supported UN efforts to bring peace to Somalia politically and with considerable assistance to help establish institutions in the country e.g. support to build an effective and professional judiciary and police force trained in the protection of civilians and human rights. The EU has also supported the African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom) which helps bring security in Somalia and continues to do so. In the past months, Amisom and troops aligned to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia have successfully recovered territory in South Central Somalia from the Al-Shabaab. The EU also contributes to developing Somali National Security Forces, thereby contributing to ending the conflict. The EU intends to help build effective administrations and the rule of law in newly accessible areas, and provide basic needs to people there, including security and civilian protection. Through its Human Rights Strategy, the EU will support human rights defenders and assist the TFG and Amisom implement measures to reduce risks for civilians. The EU will also support the appointment of a TFG focal person for child protection within the Ministry of Defense to ensure adequate measures to stop child soldiers' recruitment and the reintegration of demobilised child soldiers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004897/12
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Il problema dei matrimoni infantili nello Yemen

Secondo una recente indagine di Human Rights Watch, nello Yemen è ancora particolarmente diffusa la pratica dei matrimoni infantili che, oltre a mettere a rischio l'accesso all'istruzione per le bambine yemenite — obbligate dalle famiglie a sposarsi da piccole — pregiudica la loro salute e le colloca in una posizione di seconda classe.

La crisi politica che ha colpito il Paese ha fatto sì che tale problema venisse posto in secondo piano: attualmente circa il 14 % delle bambine yemenite si sposa prima di aver compiuto 15 anni e il 52 % prima dei 18.

In alcune zone rurali, ci sono bambine già sposate a 8 anni e con uomini molto più grandi. Specie nelle aree meno progredite i genitori fanno interrompere gli studi alle figlie all'età di 9 anni per farsi aiutare in casa, accudire i fratelli più piccoli e per farle sposare. In molti casi, inoltre, queste bambine subiscono violenza fisica e verbale nello stesso ambiente domestico.

Molti paesi mediorientali hanno fissato l'età minima per contrarre matrimonio a 18 anni, sia per i bambini che per le bambine, secondo le norme e i trattati internazionali.

Intende la Commissione intraprendere azioni volte a far sì che lo Yemen, che già aderisce ad una serie di trattati e convenzioni internazionali che vietano esplicitamente il matrimonio infantile, si impegni per risolvere il problema, promuovendo al contempo una maggiore consapevolezza sui danni causati dai matrimoni precoci?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è perfettamente consapevole del problema dei matrimoni infantili nello Yemen.

Nell'aprile del 2009 è stato presentato un progetto di legge che fissa a 17 anni l'età per contrarre matrimonio, ritirato a causa dell'opposizione di organizzazioni religiose. I negoziati non hanno ancora raggiunto l'obiettivo della reintroduzione del progetto di legge e le tensioni nel paese nell'ultimo anno hanno portato a una fase di stallo legislativo.

Nei suoi contatti con il governo yemenita il Servizio europeo di azione esterna (SEAE) ricorda regolarmente allo Yemen i suoi obblighi internazionali, in quanto il paese ha ratificato la Convenzione sull'eliminazione di ogni forma di discriminazione nei confronti delle donne (CEDAW), nonché la Convenzione sui diritti del fanciullo (CRC).

L'AR/VP userà, come ha fatto in passato, la sua influenza per sensibilizzare il governo yemenita a fare dei progressi nell'introduzione e successivamente nell'attuazione e nel controllo di un'appropriata legislazione sui matrimoni infantili, in linea con la pratica e gli obblighi internazionali.

La Commissione manterrà il suo sostegno alle organizzazioni della società civile yemenita impegnate nel promuovere i diritti delle donne e dei minori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004897/12
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Issue of child marriage in Yemen

According to a recent Human Rights Watch survey, the practice of child marriage is still widespread in Yemen. In addition to blocking access to education for young Yemeni girls forced by their families to marry at a young age, child marriage also affects their health and relegates them to second-class status.

The political crisis in the country has meant that this issue has been sidelined. Currently around 14% of Yemeni girls marry before the age of 15 and 52% before the age of 18.

In certain rural areas, girls as young as eight may already be married to much older men. In less developed areas in particular, parents interrupt their daughters' studies at the age of nine in order to make them help around the house, take care of younger siblings and marry. Furthermore, in many cases, these young girls suffer physical and verbal abuse in their domestic environment.

Many Middle Eastern countries have fixed the minimum age for marriage at 18, both for boys and girls, in accordance with international laws and treaties.

Will the Commission take action to ensure that Yemen, which already adheres to a series of international treaties and conventions that explicitly prohibit child marriage, commits itself to resolving the issue, while promoting greater awareness of the damage caused by child marriage?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The High Representative/Vice-President is well aware of the problem of child marriages in Yemen.

In April 2009, a draft law was introduced to set the age for marriage at 17 years. The draft was dropped due to opposition from religious bodies. Negotiations since have not yet resulted in the reintroduction of draft legislation, and the unrest in the country during the past year has led to a stand-still in legislating.

In its contacts with the Yemeni Government, the European External Action Service (EEAS) regularly reminds Yemen of its international obligations, as Yemen has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The HR/VP will, as it has done in the past, use its influence to sensitise the Yemeni Government to make headway introducing and subsequently implementing and monitoring proper legislation on child marriage, in line with international obligations and practice.

Support to Yemeni civil society organisations active in promoting women and children's' rights will remain available.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004898/12
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Migrazione delle donne nepalesi verso il Medioriente

Ogni anno circa 90mila donne lasciano il Nepal in cerca di lavoro: di queste la maggior parte sceglie destinazioni mediorientali, soprattutto Arabia Saudita e Kuwait, dove le opportunità di impiego sono maggiori.

Il 90 % di queste donne, secondo stime compiute da diverse ONG, sarebbe vittima di violenze sessuali e sfruttamento. I casi più drammatici si registrano nei paesi arabi, dove per le lavoratrici migranti è normale essere stuprate, picchiate e non pagate.

Purtroppo solo poche migliaia di donne nepalesi riescono a partire con regolari documenti e un contratto di lavoro. Per evitare la burocrazia, infatti, in migliaia si rivolgono a persone senza scrupoli che per 1 000 dollari promettono loro un impiego, spesso inesistente, costringendole poi a lavorare in condizioni di semi-schiavitù.

Nonostante i rischi, la percentuale di migranti è in continuo aumento poiché in Nepal le donne non hanno ancora i diritti di proprietà e vanno all'estero per migliorare il loro status economico.

Per cercare di regolarizzare l'emigrazione, il governo nepalese ha creato dei centri di assistenza dove è possibile imparare la lingua del futuro paese di impiego, le sue leggi e informarsi su eventuali rischi. Tuttavia, le strutture sono tutte a Kathmandu, e dunque difficili da raggiungere per chi proviene dai distretti più poveri e periferici.

Intende la Commissione incentivare il governo nepalese ad attuare politiche concrete per tutelare i diritti delle donne in patria, assicurando pari opportunità con gli uomini e ponendo così un argine al triste fenomeno della migrazione in altri paesi?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2012)

Per quanto riguarda le questioni relative ai lavoratori migranti, in particolare le donne, l'UE collabora attivamente con il Nepal portando avanti un dialogo politico e finanziando progetti.

I lavori preparatori del programma indicativo pluriennale 2014-2020 tengono conto delle politiche migratorie e dei programmi del governo nepalese, come il piano d'azione nazionale (PAN) sulle politiche di genere. Per affrontare le cause all'origine della migrazione, il programma ricomprende e considera prioritarie le questioni di crescita economica legate alla creazione di posti di lavoro in Nepal; quanto al dialogo politico con il governo, esso si concentrerà sull'integrazione della migrazione nella cooperazione allo sviluppo come aspetto prioritario.

Nel settembre 2012 la delegazione dell'UE organizzerà la consultazione ad alto livello sulla migrazione internazionale di manodopera in Nepal. Tale evento riunirà i funzionari governativi competenti e i partner dello sviluppo, inclusi gli Stati membri, e affronterà anche la situazione delle donne nepalesi migranti.

Due progetti attuati dalla ONG Care (560 000 euro) e da «ONU Donne» (575 779 euro) sono finanziati dal programma tematico «Migrazione e asilo» e si concentrano soprattutto sulla tutela dei diritti delle donne migranti. I progetti sensibilizzano le potenziali migranti alle violazioni dei diritti nei paesi di destinazione e contribuiscono a ridurre la violenza contro le donne nel paese d'origine, incidendo anche sul numero di donne che scelgono consapevolmente di emigrare. Tali progetti aumentano inoltre la capacità dei fornitori di servizi governativi e non governativi e dei media di attuare e monitorare le leggi sulla manodopera straniera. Il progetto SANYUKT, finanziato attraverso lo stesso programma, è incentrato sulla prevenzione della migrazione a rischio e della tratta di bambini e adolescenti e sulla riabilitazione delle vittime della tratta a partire da India, Nepal e Bangladesh.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004898/12
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Migration of Nepalese women towards the Middle East

Every year approximately 90 000 women leave Nepal in search of work. The majority of these opt for Middle East destinations, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, where employment opportunities are greater.

According to estimates by various NGOs, 90% of these women will be victims of sexual violence and exploitation. The most tragic cases occur in Arab countries, where it is normal for migrant workers to be raped, beaten and not paid.

Regrettably, only a few thousand of the Nepalese women leaving their country do so with the required documents and a contract of employment. To avoid bureaucracy, thousands turn in fact to unscrupulous people who, for USD 1 000, promise them jobs, often non-existent, forcing them to work in conditions of semi-slavery.

Despite the risks, the percentage of migrants is constantly rising, since women in Nepal do not yet have property rights and emigrate to improve their economic status.

In an attempt to regulate emigration, the Nepalese Government has created assistance centres where it is possible to learn the language and laws of the future country of employment and receive information concerning the possible risks. However, the facilities are all in Kathmandu and are therefore difficult to reach for those living in poorer, peripheral areas.

Does the Commission intend to encourage the Nepalese Government to implement specific policies to protect women's rights in their homeland, thus ensuring women have equal opportunities with men and clamping down on the sad phenomenon of migration to other countries?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

The EU is engaged with Nepal on issues related to migrant workers — women in particular — through policy dialogue and funding of projects.

The preparatory work for the Multiannual Indicative Programme 2014-2020 takes into account relevant migration policies and programmes of the Government of Nepal, such as the National Action Plan (NAP) on gender. In order to address migration root causes, economic growth issues linked to job creation opportunities in Nepal are included as priorities. Policy dialogue with the government will focus on integrating migration as a priority issue in development cooperation.

In September 2012, the EU Delegation will co-host the High-Level Consultation on International Labour Migration in Nepal. This event will bring together key government officials and development partners, including EU Member States, and will also address the situation of Nepalese migrant women.

Two projects implemented by NGO CARE (EUR 560 000) and UN Women (EUR 575 779) are being funded through the Thematic Programme Migration and Asylum, focusing on protection of migrant women's rights. The projects raise awareness of potential migrants on rights' violations in recipient countries, and contribute to reduce violence against women in the home country also through increased number of women making informed choices about migration. Additionally, they enhance the capacity of government and non-government service providers and media to implement and monitor foreign employment Acts. The SANYUKT project, funded through the same programme, focuses on the prevention of unsafe migration and trafficking in children and adolescents and the rehabilitation of victims trafficked from India, Nepal and Bangladesh.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004899/12
an die Kommission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(14. Mai 2012)

Betrifft: Unterschiedliche Verbrauchsteuer bei Bier und Wein

In der Rechtssache Kommission/Schweden C-167/05 hat der EuGH festgestellt, dass die Kommission nicht nachweisen konnte, dass die unterschiedliche Verbrauchsteuerbelastung von Wein und Bier in Schweden zu einer Diskriminierung von importiertem Wein führt. In diesem Verfahren hat die Kommission auf eine ungeeignete Vergleichsmethode abgestellt, indem ein Liter Wein mit einem Liter Bier verglichen wurde.

Der EuGH war laut Randnummer 54 seines Urteils an diese gewählte Vergleichsmethode gebunden. Die in dem schwedischen Fall angewendete Vergleichsmethode widerspricht jedoch völlig dem österreichischen Verbraucherverhalten. Danach kann der Konsum von einem Liter Bier lediglich mit dem Konsum von einem halben Liter Wein verglichen werden. Ein Liter mit Bier vergleichbarer einfacher Wein kostet in Österreich im Handel ca. 3 EUR. Zwei Liter Bier kosten in Österreich ebenfalls ca. 3 EUR. Die durch diese Verbrauchsteuer ausgelöste Gesamtsteuerbelastung inklusive der anteiligen Mehrwertsteuer beträgt für zwei Liter Bier rund 0,58 EUR.

Der Endverbraucherpreis für einen Liter Wein würde sich bei vergleichbarer Verbrauchsteuerbelastung wie für zwei Liter Bier auf 3,58 EUR pro Liter erhöhen. Dies würde einen um rund 19 % höheren Endverkaufspreis für Wein bedeuten, was zweifellos geeignet ist, das Verbraucherverhalten zu beeinflussen. Seit Abschaffung der Getränkesteuer im Jahr 2000 beträgt die Verbrauchsteuerbelastung auf Wein 0, während die Verbrauchsteuer auf Bier verdoppelt worden ist.

Diskriminiert Österreich zum Schutz seiner Weinbauern durch Erhebung einer unverhältnismäßig höheren Verbrauchsteuer auf Bier im Vergleich zu Weinkategorien, die im Wettbewerb zu Bier stehen, nicht nur die österreichischen Brauereien, sondern insbesondere auch ausländische Brauereien, denen dadurch der Markteintritt in Österreich besonders erschwert wird?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(21. Juni 2012)

Die Richtlinie 92/84/EEG legt den Mindestverbrauchsteuersatz für Bier auf 1,87 EUR je hl/Grad Alkohol fest, während Wein zum Nullsatz besteuert werden kann. Unter Berücksichtigung dieser unterschiedlichen Mindeststeuersätze kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass Unterschiede bei der Besteuerung von Wein und Bier im Einklang mit den EU-Rechtsvorschriften stehen.

In Bezug auf den Umsatz der betreffenden Erzeugnisse urteilte der Gerichtshof, dass allenfalls eine gewisse Empfindlichkeit der Verbraucher für Preisschwankungen dieser Erzeugnisse bestehe, die aber nur kurz währe, wohingegen dauerhafte Änderungen der Verbrauchsgewohnheiten zugunsten des einen und zu Lasten des anderen Erzeugnisses nicht erkennbar seien (Rechtssache C 167/05, Randnr. 59).

Außerdem geht es in dieser Rechtssache um die besondere Situation, dass ein Erzeugnis hauptsächlich in Schweden hergestellt wurde, während das andere vorwiegend aus anderen Mitgliedstaaten eingeführt wurde. Dies ist in Österreich nicht der Fall.

Nach den der Kommission vorliegenden Informationen werden Brauereien durch die österreichischen Verbrauchsteuervorschriften nicht zugunsten von Weinerzeugern benachteiligt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004899/12
to the Commission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Varying excise duty rates on beer and wine

In the case of the Commission v. Sweden C-167/05, the European Court of Justice found that the Commission failed to establish that the different excise duties on wine and beer in Sweden led to discrimination against imported wine. The Commission used an unsuitable comparison in this case, comparing one litre of wine with one litre of beer.

According to paragraph 54 of its judgment, the Court of Justice was bound by the comparative method chosen. However, the comparative method used in the Swedish case completely contradicts consumer behaviour patterns in Austria, according to which the consumption of one litre of beer is comparable to the consumption of just half a litre of wine. A litre of simple wine comparable with beer costs about EUR 3 in Austrian shops. Two litres of beer also cost EUR 3 in Austria. The total tax burden resulting from this excise duty, including the proportionate value added tax, is around EUR 0.58 for two litres of beer.

If the same level of excise duty were imposed on one litre of wine as for two litres of beer, the cost for the consumer would rise to EUR 3.58 per litre. This would mean an increase of approximately 19% in the final sale price of wine, which is doubtless calculated to impact on consumer behaviour patterns. Since the scrapping of the tax on alcoholic beverages in 2000, the excise duty on wine has been zero, while excise duty on beer has doubled.

In protecting its wine growers by levying a disproportionately higher excise duty on beer than on wine categories that compete with beer, is Austria not guilty of discrimination not only against Austrian breweries, but also, in particular, against foreign breweries, making it particularly difficult for them to enter the Austrian market?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

Directive 92/84/EEC sets the minimum rate of excise duty on beer at EUR 1.87 per hectolitre/degree of alcohol while wine can be taxed at a zero rate. Taking into account these differing minimum tax rates, differences in the taxation of wine and beer can be considered in line with the EC law.

The Court of Justice held that regarding sales of the products in question , at most, a certain sensitivity exists on the part of consumers to variations in the price of those products over a short period, but there are no long-term changes in consumer habits in favour of one product to the detriment of the other (Case C-167/05, Nr 59).

In addition to this, this case concerns the specific situation where one product was mainly produced in Sweden and the other was mainly imported from other Member States; this is not the case in Austria.

According to information available to the Commission, Austrian excise duty law does not discriminate against brewers in favour of wine producers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004900/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Lotta al contrabbando di sigarette

Cinque tonnellate di tabacchi lavorati esteri sono state sequestrate dalle forze dell'ordine di Napoli che le ha individuate all'interno di due tir, nascoste dietro un carico di copertura, componenti elettronici di una casa automobilistica, e in un vano ricavato sotto i pianali. Si sapeva da tempo che le sigarette di contrabbando erano tornate, ma ora si capisce meglio la portata di questo fenomeno.

I due tir sono stati fermati grazie all'intensificazione dei controlli: uno si trovava ad Afragola e uno all'altezza del casello autostradale di Napoli nord. Dieci le persone arrestate, alcune di nazionalità straniera. Secondo i finanzieri del comando provinciale, le sigarette erano destinate al mercato clandestino napoletano. Il valore al dettaglio è stato stimato in oltre 1,2 milioni di euro mentre i tributi doganali evasi ammontano a circa 860 mila euro.

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

1. Quali sono gli accordi stipulati dall'UE per combattere il contrabbando di sigarette?

2. Quali sono le misure della strategia di lotta contro le frodi che dovrebbero entrare in vigore nel 2014?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(2 luglio 2012)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione E-4521/12 dell'on. Andersdotter ([1]) riguardante i quattro accordi giuridicamente vincolanti firmati dalla Commissione e dagli Stati membri con quattro multinazionali del tabacco, i quali contengono una serie di misure che contribuiscono alla lotta contro il contrabbando e la contraffazione di sigarette. Al di là di tali accordi, la Commissione aiuta e sostiene, soprattutto tramite l'OLAF, le autorità di contrasto responsabili in materia di lotta al contrabbando e alla contraffazione e organizza operazioni doganali congiunte. Un'unità dell'OLAF è specificamente incaricata di indagare sul contrabbando internazionale di sigarette su vasta scala: si tratta del servizio della Commissione responsabile del negoziato di un protocollo sull'abolizione del commercio illecito dei prodotti del tabacco nell'ambito della Convenzione quadro dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità — OMS — per la lotta al tabagismo.

Il 5 giugno 2012, l'Ufficio europeo per la lotta antifrode (OLAF) e la Guardia di Finanza hanno firmato un accordo di cooperazione amministrativa che offre nuovi mezzi mirati di cooperazione rafforzata, volti a combattere i tipi più recenti e più pericolosi di frode, compreso il contrabbando di sigarette.

La lotta contro il contrabbando di sigarette è una delle priorità assolute della Commissione nell'ambito della tutela degli interessi finanziari e della lotta contro le frodi.

Una regione che desta particolare preoccupazione è la frontiera orientale dell'UE, dove il contrabbando di sigarette rappresenta uno dei principali fenomeni criminali. La questione del contrabbando attraverso le frontiere orientali viene espressamente trattata in un documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione che accompagna la strategia antifrode di quest'ultima: si tratta del piano d'azione per la lotta contro il contrabbando di sigarette e alcolici lungo la frontiera orientale dell'UE, adottato il 24 giugno 2011 ([2]). Per ulteriori dettagli su questo punto specifico la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione E-1887/2012 dell'on. Beňová ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.
([2]) SEC(2011)791.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004900/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: The battle against contraband cigarettes

Five tonnes of foreign-grown tobacco have been seized by police in Naples, They were discovered inside two articulated lorries, behind a front cargo of automotive electrical components, and hidden in an underfloor compartment. It has been widely known for a long time that contraband cigarettes were making a reappearance but we now have a better idea of the scale of this phenomenon.

The two lorries were stopped thanks to the increased number of checks: one in Afragola and one near the Naples North motorway toll booth. Ten people were arrested, some of whom were foreign nationals. According to officers from the provincial department of the *Guardia di Finanza* (Italian serious fraud police), the cigarettes were destined for the Neapolitan black market. Their retail value was estimated at over EUR 1.2 million while the unpaid customs charges amount to approximately EUR 860 000.

In view of this, could the Commission say:

1. what agreements the EU has concluded in the fight against contraband cigarettes;

2. what measures are included in the anti-fraud strategy, which is due to come into force in 2014?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-4521/12 by Ms Andersdotter ([1]) which concerns the 4 legally binding Agreements signed by the Commission and the Member States with 4 multinational cigarette manufacturers. The Agreements contain a host of measures which contribute to the fight against contraband and counterfeit cigarettes. As well as these Agreements, through OLAF in particular, the Commission assists and supports law enforcement authorities responsible for fighting contraband and counterfeit and organises joint customs operations. OLAF has a unit dedicated to investigating large-scale international cigarette smuggling and is the service of the Commission responsible for the negotiation of a Protocol on the Elimination of the Illicit Trade in Tobacco products in the context of the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

On 5 June 2012, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and Italy's Guardia di Finanza signed an Administrative Cooperation Arrangement. The Arrangement offers new and targeted means of reinforced cooperation, intended to combat the most recent and dangerous types of fraud, including cigarette smuggling.

Fighting cigarette smuggling and contraband cigarettes is one of the Commission's top priorities as regards the protection of financial interests and the fight against fraud.

One area of particular concern is the EU's Eastern Border where cigarette smuggling is one of the prevailing criminal phenomena. Smuggling through the Eastern borders is specifically addressed through a Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: the action plan to fight against smuggling of cigarettes and alcohol along the EU Eastern Border, adopted on 24 June 2011 ([2]). The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-1887/2012 by Ms Beňová for further details on this specific point ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.
([2]) SEC(2011) 791.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004901/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Nuova sostanza nel panorama della droga

Una nuova sostanza nel panorama delle droghe. In aeroporti italiani sono stati sequestrati reperti di cannabis dall'elevatissimo principio attivo, il cui uso è definito altamente pericoloso. Da analisi condotte da un laboratorio chimico di Bologna su un reperto contenente frammenti resinosi sequestrato all'aeroporto di Rimini, è emerso un delta-9-tetraidrocannabinolo, principio attivo della cannabis, a una percentuale del 54,9 %. Si tratta di reperti con elevato tenore di principio attivo dal quale scaturiscono maggiori rischi di tossicità: su tali droghe sono da considerarsi elevate, concentrazioni già nell'ordine del 20 %. Normalmente il contenuto THC arriva al 5 %, esistono anche delle supermarijuane che arrivano al 20 %, ma 55 % è quantomeno sbalorditivo come dato.

Secondo gli esperti questa sostanza è in grado di dare dipendenza perché mette in moto nel cervello meccanismi simili a quelli prodotti da droghe molto più pesanti. E il problema riguarda ragazzi sempre più giovani: sempre secondo gli esperti l'età del consumo si è abbassata a 10-11 anni. Proprio a causa della capacità di causare dipendenza della cannabis modificata e visto il suo dilagare tra i giovani, in Italia si sta pensando di spostare la cannabis nella categoria delle droghe pesanti.

Alla luce di quanto più sopra esposto, può la Commissione far sapere se l'UE ha ricevuto informazioni dalle autorità competenti degli Stati membri in merito a questa nuova sostanza secondo quanto stabilito dalla decisione 2005/387/GAI del Consiglio relativa allo scambio d'informazioni, alla valutazione dei rischi e al controllo delle nuove sostanze psicoattive?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(21 giugno 2012)

La Commissione non ha ricevuto informazioni dagli Stati membri in merito al ritrovamento di resina di cannabis con un tenore di delta-9-tetraidrocannabinolo (THC) di quasi il 55 % e considera pertanto il sequestro di tale sostanza atipico nel panorama delle droghe nell'Unione europea. In generale, in Europa la resina di cannabis o la cannabis in foglie si trova a concentrazioni di THC molto più basse, di solito tra il 2 % e l'8 %, mentre per alcuni prodotti in determinati paesi la potenza è aumentata fino al 12 %-20 % nell'ultimo decennio ([1]).

Questa tendenza sembra tuttavia essersi stabilizzata. I meccanismi strutturali di segnalazione all'Osservatorio europeo delle droghe e delle tossicodipendenze (OEDT) da parte dei punti focali nazionali del «Réseau Européen d'Information sur les Drogues et les Toxicomanies» (Reitox) hanno il compito di fornire informazioni in merito alla potenza psicoattiva della cannabis. Tuttavia, poiché la cannabis, insieme al suo principio attivo THC, è classificata come droga illecita e, in quanto tale, disciplinata dalla Convenzione ONU sugli stupefacenti del 1961, non è considerata una «nuova sostanza psicoattiva» e pertanto non viene notificata ai sensi del meccanismo per lo scambio di informazioni stabilito dalla decisione 2005/387/GAI del Consiglio ([2]).

([1]) OEDT, Un'antologia sulla cannabis: aspetti globali ed esperienze locali. Monografia n. 8, giugno 2008.
([2]) Decisione 2005/387/GAI del Consiglio, del 10 maggio 2005, relativa allo scambio di informazioni, alla valutazione dei rischi e al controllo delle nuove sostanze psicoattive (GU L 127 del 20.5.2005, pag. 32).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004901/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: New substance on the drugs scene

Cannabis samples containing high levels of an active ingredient, which is known to be highly dangerous, have been seized in Italian airports. Tests carried out in a chemical laboratory in Bologna on samples containing resin fragments seized at Rimini airport revealed delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active ingredient in cannabis, at a percentage of 54.9%. These samples contain a high content of the active ingredient, resulting in increased risks of toxicity. 20% is usually considered to be a high percentage, with THC content usually being approximately 5%. Some super-marijuanas reach 20%, but the 54.9% stated is staggering.

According to experts, this substance can be addictive because it triggers brain mechanisms that are similar to those brought on by much harder drugs. And the problem is affecting people of an increasingly younger age. According to experts, the age of consumption has lowered to 10-11 year-olds. Due to the ability of modified cannabis to cause dependency and given its spread among youngsters, Italy is considering moving cannabis to the hard drugs category.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether the EU has received information from the competent authorities of Member States in relation to this new substance, in accordance with the terms of Council Decision 2005/387/JHA on the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

The Commission has not received any reports of Member States regarding the appearance of cannabis resin with delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) potency of almost 55% and considers this seizure as atypical for the EU drugs market. In general in Europe cannabis resin or herbal cannabis is available with much lower concentrations of THC, usually between 2% and 8%, while for certain products in certain countries in the past decade the potency may have increased to 12%-20% ([1]).

However, this trend seems to have levelled off. Providing information on the psychoactive potency of cannabis is part of the structural reporting mechanisms of the 'Réseau Européen d'Information sur les Drogues et les Toxicomanies' (Reitox) national focal points to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). However, given the fact that cannabis and its active component THC is classified as an illicit drug and controlled as such under the UN 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs, it is not considered to be a 'new psychoactive substance' and therefore not notified under the information exchange mechanism of Council Decision 2005/387/JHA ([2]).

([1]) EMCDDA, A Cannabis reader: global issues and local experiences, Monograph nr. 8, June 2008.
([2]) Council Decision 2005/387/JHA of 10 May 2005 on the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances, OJ L 127, 20.5.2005, pp 32-37.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004902/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Piccole e medie imprese

Le imprese europee non possono permettersi di restare inattive di fronte ai rapidi progressi tecnologici e ad una concorrenza estera che risulta essere sempre più agguerrita e all'avanguardia. La politica dell'UE, in materia d'imprese, aiuta le stesse a tenere il passo con i loro rivali e a creare nuova occupazione, con una particolare attenzione alle esigenze delle piccole imprese.

Sebbene il mondo dell'industria venga spesso associato alle grandi multinazionali, in realtà la maggior parte delle imprese europee (92 %) sono piccole aziende con meno di dieci dipendenti. Avendo come obiettivo primario le piccole e medie imprese (PMI), il programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP) sostiene le attività innovative, offre un accesso migliore ai finanziamenti ed eroga servizi di supporto alle aziende nelle regioni. Il programma va inoltre a incoraggiare l'adozione ed l'utilizzo migliore delle tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione (TIC) e contribuisce allo sviluppo della società dell'informazione.

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

1. A quanto ammonta il bilancio complessivo del Programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP) 2007-2013 e se è stato previsto un programma successivo?

2. Se il Portale europeo per le piccole e medie imprese viene spesso utilizzato da imprenditori italiani che cercano informazioni sull'attività di sostegno per le loro imprese?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è fortemente impegnata a sostenere le PMI e ad aiutarle a diventare più competitive. In particolare, il programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione, che fornisce sostegno alle PMI, dispone di un bilancio complessivo di 3,6 miliardi di euro nell'ambito del corrente quadro finanziario pluriennale 2007-2013. Il programma quadro copre tre pilastri: il programma per l'innovazione e l'imprenditoria (EIP), il programma di sostegno alla politica in materia di TIC (PSP-TIC) e il programma Energia intelligente per l'Europa (EIE). Nel novembre 2011 la Commissione ha presentato la proposta di un nuovo programma per la competitività delle imprese e le piccole e medie imprese (COSME) che funzionerà dal 2014 al 2020 con un bilancio previsto di 2,5 miliardi di euro (a prezzi correnti). COSME migliorerà l'accesso ai finanziamenti e ai mercati, in particolare per le PMI, oltre a promuovere l'imprenditorialità e a migliorare le condizioni quadro.

Il Portale europeo per le piccole imprese è finanziato dal programma CIP-EIP e riunisce tutte le informazioni fornite dall'UE sulle e per le PMI, informazioni che vanno da consigli pratici a questioni politiche, dai punti di contatto locali ai link per la costituzione di reti. Il portale è visitato in particolare da utilizzatori italiani. Stando alle nostre statistiche l'italiano è la seconda lingua più usata nel portale dopo l'inglese e l'Italia è l'ubicazione privilegiata degli utenti del portale. La maggior parte delle domande ricevute tramite il portale provengono da imprenditori italiani che cercano informazioni sul sostegno finanziario dell'UE alle PMI o sulla legislazione/sulle iniziative dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004902/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Small and medium-sized enterprises

European businesses cannot afford to stand still in the face of fast-moving technological change and ever-keener and forward-thinking foreign competition. EU enterprise policy aims to ensure that we keep up with our rivals while also creating jobs, paying particular attention to the needs of small businesses.

Although industry is often associated with multinationals, the vast majority of European companies (92%) are in fact small firms employing less than ten people. With small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as its main target, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) supports innovation activities, provides better access to finance and delivers business support services in the regions. The programme also aims to encourage a better take-up and use of information and communication technologies and to help to develop the information society.

1. How much is the overall budget of the CIP 2007-2013? Have provisions been made for a follow-up programme?

2. Is the European portal for small and medium-sized enterprises used regularly by Italian entrepreneurs seeking information about the support available for their businesses?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission is strongly committed to supporting SMEs and to helping them to become more competitive. In particular, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme provides support to SMEs with a total budget of EUR 3.6 billion under the current multi-annual financial framework 2007-2013. The framework Programme covers three pillars: the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP), the ICT Policy Support Programme (ICT-PSP) and the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme (IEE). In November 2011, the Commission presented a proposal for a new Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME) which will run from 2014-2020 with a planned budget of EUR 2.5 billion (current prices). COSME will improve access to finance and to markets, in particular for SMEs, as well as promoting entrepreneurship and improving framework conditions.

The European Small Business Portal is financed from CIP-EIP and brings together all the information provided by the EU on and for SMEs, ranging from practical advice to policy issues, from local contact points to networking links. The portal is visited in particular by Italian users. According to our statistics, Italian is the second most popular language used in the Portal after English and Italy is the top location of portal users. Most of the questions received via the Portal come from Italian entrepreneurs looking for information on EU financial support for SMEs or on EU legislation/initiatives.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004903/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Pillole a base di carne umana

La polizia sud-coreana sta lottando contro un nuovo tipo di traffico, quello delle pillole a base di carne umana. Secondo la dogana coreana, i controlli sono stati rafforzati dopo la scoperta di alcune pillole che servirebbero a migliorare le prestazioni sessuali maschili. In realtà questo farmaco sarebbe fatto a base di resti di feti morti e con carne di bambini deceduti, prima ridotti in polvere e poi mescolati alle erbe. Una pratica inaccettabile moralmente, ma anche da un punto di vista sanitario, perché ognuna di queste pillole è un pericolo reale per le persone che le assumono. Esse, infatti, sarebbero una vera fucina di batteri, secondo i funzionari coreani che ora stanno cercando di combattere il traffico di queste pillole che proverrebbero dalla Cina.

I piccoli corpi senza vita venivano comprati e conservati in normali frigoriferi domestici. I corpicini, infatti, una volta consegnati alle cliniche, venivano essiccati a colpi di microonde, e infine liofilizzati. La polvere ottenuta veniva mescolata con altri ingredienti vegetali, con l'unico scopo di confondere le autorità sanitarie e gli ufficiali delle dogane. Sono state sequestrate dai doganieri coreani 18 mila scatole di pillole. Si tratta di un commercio illegale che va avanti già da diverso tempo e chiaramente desta grande preoccupazione, soprattutto in Cina, da cui arriva proprio il «principio attivo».

Il rischio ora, è che siano vendute anche su Internet.

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

1. nonostante l'organizzazione e l'erogazione dei servizi sanitari sia di competenza dei singoli Stati membri e l'Agenzia per i medicinali è un'istituzione europea, l'UE non ritiene che si debba intervenire per fermare questa pratica inaccettabile dal punto di vista morale e in virtù del fatto che i problemi sanitari non conoscono frontiere?

2. questa vicenda non intende eseguire un maggiore controllo sul traffico di medicinali su Internet al fine di salvaguardare la salute e proteggere gli individui da possibili minacce, legate all'utilizzo (anche inconsciamente) del farmaco in questione?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2012)

1. La Commissione è pienamente d'accordo con l'onorevole deputato quanto al fatto che queste pratiche sono assolutamente inaccettabili. La Commissione non dispone però di poteri per intervenire in merito al commercio illegale tra Cina e la Corea del Sud. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni a indicare che tali prodotti, che sarebbero ovviamente illegali nell'UE, siano offerti sul mercato UE.

2. Per quanto concerne la vendita di medicinali via internet, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-002186/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp?language=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004903/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Pills made from human flesh

South Korean police are fighting a new kind of trafficking — pills made from human flesh. According to Korean customs, searches have been stepped up following the discovery of pills designed to enhance male sexual performance. In fact, this drug is made from the remains of dead foetuses and the flesh of dead babies, which are first ground into a powder and then mixed with herbs. This is clearly an unacceptable practice from both a moral and a health point of view, as these pills pose a real danger to those taking them because, according to Korean officials, they are full of bacteria. Those same officials are now trying to halt the trafficking of these pills, which apparently come from China.

The child corpses were bought and stored in normal household refrigerators. Once delivered to the clinics, they were dried in microwaves and finally lyophilised. The resulting powder was mixed with other herbal ingredients, the sole purpose of which was to confuse public health authorities and customs officers. Korean customs officials have seized 18 000 boxes of the pills. This is an illegal trade that has been running for some time and is clearly of great concern, especially in China, which supplies the 'active ingredient'.

The risk now is that they may also be sold on the Internet.

1. Despite the fact that the organisation and delivery of health services is the responsibility of individual Member States, and given that the European Medicines Agency is a European institution, does the Commission not consider that, because health issues know no borders, it must take action to stop this morally unacceptable practice?

2. In view of this incident, does the Commission not intend to exercise greater control over the sale of drugs on the Internet in order to safeguard health and protect citizens from the potential risks involved of using the drug in question, maybe without even being aware of having used it?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

1. The Commission fully agrees with the Honourable Member that these practices are totally unacceptable. However, the Commission has no power to intervene regarding the illegal trade between China and South Korea. The Commission does not have any indication that the products which obviously would be illegal in the EU are made available on the EU market.

2. Regarding the sale of medicines on the Internet, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-002186/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp?language=en.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-004904/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(14. maj 2012)

Om: Kontrol med taler i den tyske Forbunsdag

I Tyskland har man i Forbundsdagen planer om at lade det være op til ledelsen i de enkelte partigrupper at bestemme, hvem der må tale under samlinger, og hvor længe. Den direkte anledning har været et ønske om at lukke munden på modstandere af euro-redningspakken.

Finder Kommissionen ikke i den forbindelse, at parlamentarikeres grundlæggende rettigheder trædes under fode, idet partierne således tilkendes en magt, som er uforeneligt med ånden i et demokratisk samfund, og at det enkelte parlamentmedlems taleret bør være ukrænkelig, således at politikeren ene og alene står til ansvar for sine vælgere — også når debatten drejer sig om kontroversielle temaer som EU?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(28. juni 2012)

Kommissionen har ingen kompetence for så vidt angår tilrettelæggelsen af de nationale parlamenters samlinger.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004904/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Controlling speeches in the German Bundestag

In the Bundestag in Germany there are plans to give the leadership of individual party groups the power to decide who is to be allowed to speak during sessions and for how long. The explicit reason for this has been a desire to silence those opposed to the euro rescue package.

In this regard, does the Commission not find that the basic rights of parliamentarians are being disregarded, as the parties are thus being given a power which is incompatible with the spirit of a democratic society, and that the speeches of individual Members of Parliament should be inviolable to ensure that no one other than the politicians themselves are responsible to their voters, even when the debate involves controversial subjects such as the EU?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

The Commission has no competence as regards the organisation of sessions of national parliaments.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-004905/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(14. maj 2012)

Om: Om Günter Grass og Israel

I digtet »Was gesagt werden muss« anklagede den tyske forfatter Günter Grass blandt andet Israel for at være en trussel mod verdensfreden og legitimerer dermed indirekte Israels naboers fjendtlige hensigter mod den eneste demokratiske stat i Mellemøsten. Under indtryk af Nobelprismodtageren Günter Grass' holdninger, har Israel nægtet ham indrejse med henvisning til blandt andet hans medlemskab af den nazistiske organisation Waffen-SS.

Spørgeren er bekendt med, at Kommissionen normalt er hurtig til at fordømme »hate speech« og tiltag, som kan opfattes som værende i strid med demokrati og menneskerettigheder og ønsker på den baggrund Kommissionens holdning til Günter Grass-digtet.

— Er Kommissionen enig i Günter Grass' politiske betragtninger, eller vil Kommissionen i benægtende fald direkte tage officiel afstand fra et indhold, der på linje med nazisternes propaganda udpeger Israel til en trussel mod verdensfreden?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af højtstående repræsentant/næstformand Catherine Ashton
(11. juli 2012)

Kommissionen deler ikke de politiske synspunkter, som Günter Grass udtrykker i sit digt »Hvad der må siges« (»Was gesagt werden muss«).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004905/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Günter Grass and Israel

In his poem 'What has to be said' ('Was gesagt werden muss'), the German author Günter Grass accuses Israel, amongst others, of being a threat to world peace, thereby indirectly legitimising the hostile intent of Israel's neighbours against the only democratic state in the Middle East. On the basis of the attitude of Nobel Prize winner Günter Grass, Israel has refused him entry referring, amongst other things, to his membership of the Nazi organisation the Waffen SS.

I am aware that the Commission is usually quick to condemn 'hate speech' and actions which may be considered to be incompatible with democracy and human rights, and on this basis would like to know its opinion on Günter Grass' poem.

— Does the Commission agree with Günter Grass' political views? If not will it officially distance itself from ideas which, in line with Nazi propaganda, brand Israel as a threat to world peace?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission does not share the political views expressed by Mr Grass in his poem 'Was gesagt werden muss'.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-004907/12
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(14 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: Restricción argentina de importación de jamón español e italiano

El gobierno argentino ha decidido recientemente restringir las importaciones de jamón español e italiano para favorecer la producción e impulsar el consumo de productos nacionales, medida totalmente contraria a las normas de la Organización Mundial del Comercio.

— ¿Qué piensa hacer la Comisión para impedir que se sigan produciendo este tipo de acciones proteccionistas y restrictivas que ocasionan graves perjuicios a los productores europeos, en este caso al sector ganadero y del embutido español y europeo? ¿Qué medidas va a tomar la Comisión para contrarrestar las pérdidas que sufrirá la industria del embutido como consecuencia de las prohibiciones argentinas?

— ¿Qué medidas de vigilancia o control va a tomar la Comisión para no permitir que se produzcan prohibiciones de importación de otros productos en otros países?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de junio de 2012)

La Comisión es consciente de las cuestiones que menciona Su Señoría y las sigue de cerca.

El 25 de mayo de 2012, la UE inició un procedimiento de solución de diferencias en la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC) en contra de las medidas de restricción a las importaciones, incluidas las aplicadas a productos cárnicos.

La UE ya había manifestado a Argentina su preocupación sobre este asunto en numerosas ocasiones, tanto de forma bilateral como multilateral en los organismos de la OMC (por ejemplo, en el Consejo del Comercio de Mercancías, el 30 de marzo de 2012, con el apoyo de diecinueve miembros de la OMC), pero todo fue en vano.

La OMC es el foro adecuado para resolver las diferencias comerciales entre sus miembros. La decisión de la UE constituye una señal clara de que no tolera medidas que violen las normas internacionales y que está decidida a actuar con firmeza contra las medidas proteccionistas de Argentina o de cualquier otro miembro.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004907/12
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Argentina's restrictions on imports of Spanish and Italian ham

The Argentinian Government recently decided to limit imports of Spanish and Italian ham with a view to boosting domestic production and the consumption of domestic products, an initiative that is in clear contravention of World Trade Organisation rules.

— What does the Commission intend to do to prevent protectionist and restrictive practices of this nature that severely harm European producers, in this case to the livestock sector and the Spanish and European sausage sector? What measures will the Commission take to compensate for the losses the sausage industry has incurred as a result of Argentina's ban?

— What supervisory or control measures will the Commission take to prevent such bans on imports?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 June 2012)

The Commission is aware and following closely the issues referred to by the Honourable Member.

On 25 May 2012, the EU initiated a dispute settlement procedure in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) against import restriction measures, including those applied to meat products.

The EU had already raised its concerns on this matter with Argentina on numerous occasions, both bilaterally and multilaterally in WTO bodies (e.g. in the Trade in Goods Council on 30 March 2012 with the support of 19 WTO Members), but to no avail.

The WTO is the adequate forum to address trade disputes between WTO Members. This decision is a clear signal that the EU does not tolerate measures in violation of international rules and is determined to act firmly against protectionist measures by Argentina or by any other partner.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004908/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 Μαΐου 2012)

Θέμα: Η επίδραση της μείωσης της αποζημιώσης απόλυσης στην αύξηση της ανεργίας

Κατά την υλοποίηση των Μνημονίων Δανεισμού στην Ελλάδα έχει πραγματοποιηθεί μια σημαντική αποδυνάμωση του προστατευτικού πλαισίου για την απόλυση εργαζομένων με τη θέσπιση της «δοκιμαστικής περιόδου» (δυνατότητα απόλυσης χωρίς αποζημίωση μέχρι και 12 μήνες μετά την πρόσληψη), τη μείωση του χρόνου προειδοποίησης (που συνδέεται με το ύψος της αποζημίωσης) καθώς και με την αύξηση του ποσοστού ομαδικών απολύσεων.

Συνέπεια των παραπάνω ρυθμίσεων και της καταχρηστικής εφαρμογής τους υπήρξε η διόγκωση του φαινομένου της ανεργίας με τη «διευκόλυνση» απολύσεων ακόμη και μη σχετιζόμενων με τη βιωσιμότητα των επιχειρήσεων. Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό Τύπο, υπάρχουν σκέψεις για περαιτέρω ευελιξία στις απολύσεις και επιπρόσθετες μειώσεις στο ποσό των αποζημιώσεων. Με δεδομένο ότι η αποζημίωση συνιστά αφενός αποτρεπτικό παράγοντα για απολύσεις και, αφετέρου, ένα χρηματικό ποσό αναγκαίο για τη βραχυπρόθεσμη επιβίωση του απολυόμενου, που αποκτά ακόμη πιο καθοριστική σημασία σε περιόδους υψηλής ανεργίας, και μάλιστα μακροχρόνιας ανεργίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τις μεθόδους -σε σχέση με τη διακύμανση του ύψους της αποζημίωσης- που ακολούθησαν άλλα κράτη μέλη προκειμένου να «συγκρατήσουν» την απασχόληση είτε σε κλάδους που εμφάνιζαν κινδύνους μαζικών απολύσεων είτε στο σύνολο της αγοράς εργασίας;

— Θεωρεί ότι μέτρα προς αυτήν την κατεύθυνση συμβάλλουν στην καταπολέμηση ή συγκράτηση της ανεργίας; Πώς αξιολογεί τις συνέπειές τους στη διασφάλιση της εργασίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Ιουλίου 2012)

Οι απολύσεις στην Ελλάδα οφείλονται κυρίως στην οικονομική κατάσταση: οι επιχειρήσεις πιθανόν να μείωναν τις θέσεις εργασίας ακόμη και εάν εξακολουθούσαν να ισχύουν οι προηγούμενοι κανόνες περί απόλυσης. Μεσοπρόθεσμα εν τούτοις, η μείωση των αποζημιώσεων απόλυσης δεν εξαρτάται από την αύξηση του ποσοστού της ανεργίας. Για την ακρίβεια, οι υπερβολικά υψηλές αποζημιώσεις απόλυσης αποθαρρύνουν την πρόσληψη νέων εργαζομένων και μπορεί επίσης να θέσουν σε κίνδυνο την ίδια την ύπαρξη των επιχειρήσεων σε περίοδο κρίσης. Συνεπώς, όπως συμβαίνει και σε άλλες χώρες, π.χ. στην Πορτογαλία, στην Ιταλία ή στην Ισπανία, ο σκοπός των μεταρρυθμίσεων της νομοθεσίας για την προστασία της απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα είναι να δημιουργήσει τις προϋποθέσεις για ταχύτερη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας, κυρίως για τους νέους. Κατά γενική ομολογία η μείωση των αποζημιώσεων απόλυσης μπορεί μερικές φορές να έχει ως αποτέλεσμα την αύξηση της ανεργίας, αλλά μόνο προσωρινά. Ωστόσο, η μείωση του χρόνου προειδοποίησης απόλυσης δεν θα έχει επιπτώσεις στις υπάρχουσες θέσεις εργασίας ενώ παράλληλα θα ενθαρρύνει νέες προσλήψεις.

Επιπρόσθετα, καταβάλλονται προσπάθειες για τον περιορισμό των επιπτώσεων της ύφεσης στην απασχόληση και για την άμβλυνση του κοινωνικού κόστους της ανεργίας. Πρέπει σύντομα να μειωθεί η φορολογία των εισοδημάτων από την εργασία ώστε να μην επηρεασθεί ο προϋπολογισμός και να καταστεί πιο ελκυστική για τη διατήρηση των υφιστάμενων θέσεων εργασίας. Με την υποστήριξη της ειδικής Ομάδας Δράσης για την Ελλάδα, οι ελληνικές αρχές βελτιώνουν τις δημόσιες υπηρεσίες απασχόλησης ενώ τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της ΕΕ στοχεύουν όλο και περισσότερο σε φιλικές προς την απασχόληση πρωτοβουλίες.

Τέλος, το ευρύ πρόγραμμα μεταρρυθμίσεων που συμφωνήθηκε με τις ελληνικές αρχές καλύπτει επίσης τη βελτίωση του επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος και τη λειτουργία των αγορών προϊόντων. Η πλήρης υλοποίηση του γενικού πακέτου των συμφωνηθέντων μέτρων σε αυτούς τους τομείς είναι το κλειδί για τη δημιουργία των συνθηκών για την τόνωση της απασχόλησης και της ανάπτυξης μεσοπρόθεσμα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004908/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Effect of severance pay reductions on the increase in unemployment

In implementing the loan memoranda in Greece, the protective framework of employee compensation has been significantly weakened by the adoption of a 'trial period' (possibility of dismissal without compensation for 12 months following recruitment), the reduction in notice periods (linked to the level of compensation) and an increase in the rate of collective redundancies.

The consequence of the above arrangements and their excessive use has been an increase in unemployment and the 'facilitation' of redundancies, even those unrelated to enterprises' viability. According to the Greek press, even greater flexibility is being considered for making employees redundant, together with further reductions in the amount of compensation. Given that compensation is a) an inhibiting factor for redundancies and b) a sum necessary for the short-term survival for dismissed employees — which has even more significance in periods of high unemployment and certainly in periods of long-term unemployment — will the Commission say:

— Are there figures on the methods — in relation to the fluctuating levels of compensation — used by other Member States to 'retain' employment either in sectors in danger of suffering mass redundancies or in the entire employment market?

— Does it think that measures to this end would contribute to combating or preventing unemployment? What does it think the consequences of such measures would be on safeguarding employment?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2012)

Dismissals in Greece are mostly linked to the economic situation: firms would have probably reduced employment even if previous dismissal rules had remained in place. As a matter of fact, over the medium term, lower dismissal compensations are not associated with higher overall unemployment. In fact, too high severance payments discourage the hiring of new workers and may also put at risk the very existence of firms in time of crisis. Hence, as in other countries like Portugal, Italy, or Spain, the purpose of the reforms of Employment Protection Legislation in Greece is to create the conditions for faster job creation looking forward, notably for the young. Admittedly, a reduction in severance payments may sometimes lead to higher unemployment but only temporarily. However, the reduction of the dismissal notice period would have no impact on existing jobs, while encouraging new hiring.

Moreover, efforts are being taken to contain the employment impact of the recession and to mitigate the social costs of unemployment. A reduction of the tax wedge on labour should be put forward soon conditional on being neutral for the budget, with a view of making it more attractive to maintain existing jobs. With the support of the Taskforce for Greece, the Greek authorities are improving public employment services, while EU structural funds are increasingly being targeted at employment-friendly initiatives.

Last but not least, the comprehensive reform agenda agreed with the Greek authorities covers also to improve the business environment and the functioning of product markets. The full implementation of the overall package of the agreed measures in these areas is key for creating the conditions for boosting job creation and potential growth over the medium.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004909/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(14. Mai 2012)

Betrifft: Autobahnbau in Slowenien

Die EU-Kommission fördert mit den TEN-T-Netzen den Ausbau der Infrastruktur innerhalb der EU. Auch über die Kohäsions- und Strukturfonds wird benachteiligten oder weniger entwickelten Regionen Geld für Infrastrukturprojekte, insbesondere auch im Straßenbau, zur Verfügung gestellt. Ein geschlossenes Autobahn- und Schnellstraßennetz innerhalb der EU hat zweifellos positive Auswirkungen auf den Binnenmarkt, die Dienstleistungsfreiheit oder den freien Personenverkehr.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission unter diesen Gesichtspunkten den schleppenden Ausbau der Straßen in Slowenien, insbesondere an der Grenze zu Kroatien?

2. Wäre es nicht im Hinblick auf den in Kürze zu erwartenden Beitritt Kroatiens zur EU sinnvoll, vor allem die Lücken im Autobahnnetz auf der Strecke Koper-Istrien (ca. 20 km) und Laibach-Rijeka (ca. 30 km) schnellstmöglich zu schließen? Gedenkt die Kommission hier auf die slowenischen Behörden positiv einzuwirken?

3. Wäre es möglich, entsprechende Mittel aus den Kohäsions- oder Strukturfonds vorrangig für den Ausbau der genannten Autobahnabschnitte zu verwenden?

4. Woran liegt es nach Meinung der Kommission, dass der Vollausbau der Autobahn bisher noch nicht erfolgt ist?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(28. Juni 2012)

1. Slowenien verfügt über ein gut ausgebautes Autobahnnetz und eine sehr hohe Autobahndichte (mehr als doppelt so hoch wie der EU-Durchschnitt); die Vollendung des Netzes ist für 2013 geplant. Die EU unterstützt den Ausbau des slowenischen Autobahnnetzes mithilfe der EFRE-/Kohäsionsfondsprogramme für den Zeitraum 2007-2013: Aus dem Kohäsionsfonds wurde der Bau von Autobahnabschnitten von insgesamt 52 km Länge gefördert, darunter zwei Streckenabschnitte mit Anschluss an Kroatien (Ljubljana-Novo mesto-Obrežje/kroatische Grenze und Maribor-Draženci-Gruškovje/kroatische Grenze). Im Rahmen des Programms wird auch die Modernisierung des Nationalstraßennetzes gefördert: Geplant sind der Ausbau (23 km) oder Neubau (9 km) von Straßen sowie der Bau mehrerer Ortsumgehungen zur Beseitigung von Verkehrsengpässen.

2. Die Achse Österreich-Kroatien (über Ljubljana-Kočevje und Ljubljana-Postojna–Ilirska Bistrica) ist eine der Prioritäten Sloweniens. Mehrere Streckenabschnitte auf dieser Achse sollen ausgebaut werden, um die wirtschaftliche und demografische Entwicklung der Region um Ribnica und Kočevje zu fördern. Die Kommission wird die Umsetzung dieser Priorität verfolgen, aber für die Auswahl der Projekte und die Prioritätensetzung sind die nationalen Behörden verantwortlich.

3. Nationalstraßen können im Rahmen des EFRE gefördert werden; aus dem Kohäsionsfonds können nur Projekte im Rahmen der TEN-T-Netze unterstützt werden, z. B. der Streckenabschnitt Postojna-Jelšane-kroatische Grenze. Die Auswahl der Projekte hängt aber auch vom Stand ihrer technischen Planung ab.

4. Eine Förderung für die Strecke Koper-Istrien ist im derzeitigen Programm nicht vorgesehen. Der Ausbau der Verbindung Ljubljana-Kočevje, einer Nationalstraße, soll dagegen gefördert werden. Hier kam es aufgrund langwieriger Raumplanungs- und Umweltverfahren und bei der Erteilung der Baugenehmigungen zu Verzögerungen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004909/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Motorway construction in Slovenia

The Commission is using the TEN-T networks to promote expansion of the EU's infrastructure. The Cohesion and Structural Funds are also being used to make funding available to disadvantaged or less developed regions for infrastructure projects, including, in particular, road construction. There is no doubt about the positive impact of an integrated motorway and express road network on the internal market, freedom to provide services and freedom of movement.

1. In this context, how does the Commission view the slow expansion of the road network in Slovenia, in particular at the border with Croatia?

2. In view of Croatia's likely accession to the EU in the near future, would it not make sense to close the gaps in the motorway network on the Koper-Istria and Ljubljana-Rijeka sections (approximately 20 km and 30 km respectively) as quickly as possible? Is the Commission considering exerting positive influence on the Slovenian authorities in this connection?

3. Would it be possible to use resources from the Cohesion or Structural Funds mainly to extend those sections of motorway?

4. In the view of the Commission, why has the motorway not yet been completed?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

1. Slovenia has a good motorway network and a very high motorway density (more than double the EU average); the completion of the network is scheduled for 2013. The EU is supporting extension of the Slovene motorway network through the 2007-2013 ERDF/Cohesion Fund programmes: 52 km of motorway sections were constructed with cohesion funding, including 2 sections concern links with Croatia: 'Ljubljana — Nove mesto — Obrežje Croatian border' and 'Maribor — Draženci — Gruškovje Croatian border'. The programme also supports the modernisation of the national road network: a total of 23 km of roads will be upgraded, 9 km will be constructed, along with several bypasses to remove bottlenecks.

2. An axis from Austria to Croatia (through Ljubljana-Kočelvje and Ljubljana- Postojna-Ilirska-Bistrica) is part of Slovene priorities. Sections of this will be upgraded to give support to economic and demographic development of the Ribnica-Kočelvje region. The Commission will monitor implementation of this priority, but the selection and prioritisation of individual projects remains the responsibility of the national authorities.

3. National roads can be supported by the ERDF; Cohesion Fund can only support projects on the TEN-T networks, such as the section Postojna-Jelšane-Croatian border, but the selection of projects also depends on their technical maturity.

4. The section Koper-Istria is not foreseen to be supported in the current programme, in contrast to the Ljubljana-Kočevje road link, which is a national road to be upgraded. For the latter, the national authorities have faced delays because of lengthy spatial planning and environmental procedures, and in obtaining building permits.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004910/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Declaración pública ante la grave situación en Colombia: multiplicación de las amenazas, asesinatos, ataques y desapariciones forzosas

Entre enero y marzo de este año, 64 defensoras de derechos humanos, sindicalistas o líderes campesinas fueron agredidas, habiendo sido asesinadas 13 de ellas. Así, tras las injustificadas y peligrosas declaraciones realizadas por personas cercanas al Gobierno y al Ejército colombiano estigmatizando y mostrando como enemigo al movimiento político «Marcha Patriótica», grupos paramilitares han intensificado sus acciones contra este y otros movimientos y organizaciones sociales, publicando amenazas que ligan su acción criminal a la defensa del actual Gobierno de Santos: «Ya hemos empezado a exterminar a cada uno de ellos sin piedad. No permitiremos que dañen la política de nuestro Presidente haciendo exigencias sobre la ley de víctimas y tierras», reza una nota de un grupo paramilitar publicada el 5 de mayo.

Hernán H. Díaz y Marta Cecilia Guevara, dos organizadores de la «Marcha Patriótica», han desaparecido en los últimos días y Mao Enrique Rodríguez, quien también participó en la Marcha y está ligado al Partido Comunista Colombiano, fue asesinado el pasado 27 de abril. Además, ese mismo día también fue asesinado por su labor político-social Daniel Aguirre, Secretario General de Sinalcorteros, sindicato que agrupa a los cortadores de caña de azúcar.

Teniendo en cuenta la dramática situación expuesta, el empeoramiento de la situación y la ausencia de garantías reales y efectivas para la defensa de los derechos humanos y de los derechos democráticos básicos por parte del actual Gobierno colombiano, así como el último informe sobre derechos humanos del Gobierno del Reino Unido, en el que este Estado miembro «lamenta el empeoramiento de la situación de los defensores en Colombia», y en el marco del Acuerdo de Asociación que la Unión Europea quiere firmar con Colombia:

— ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante hacer declaraciones públicas formales mostrando su preocupación por el empeoramiento de la situación y exigiendo al Gobierno colombiano la implementación de medidas que garanticen efectivamente la protección de estas defensoras de los derechos humanos y el respeto a los movimientos políticos y sociales como la «Marcha Patriótica»?

— ¿No considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que un Acuerdo de Asociación en estas condiciones, sin la existencia de las garantías necesarias para el ejercicio de los derechos más básicos, empeora la situación y supone una contradicción a la supuesta labor en defensa de los derechos humanos y de la democracia en la UE?

— ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante hacer un llamamiento al Gobierno colombiano mostrando su preocupación específica por la persecución y acoso que sufre la «Marcha Patriótica»?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de junio de 2012)

Remito a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a su pregunta n° E-004483/2012. Como en ella se indica, la Unión Europea condena firmemente el uso de la violencia y ha pedido insistentemente al Gobierno que adopte medidas eficaces que garanticen la seguridad de los sectores vulnerables de la población y de las personas en peligro, incluidos los defensores de los derechos humanos y los activistas políticos y sociales. El caso específico de la Marcha Patriótica y de aquellos de sus miembros que han sido víctimas de atentados o desapariciones será tratado en la próxima VII Sesión del Diálogo UE-Colombia sobre Derechos Humanos.

El Acuerdo Comercial negociado con Colombia y Perú, con sus disposiciones en materia de derechos humanos y desarrollo sostenible, es un elemento central de la política de la Unión para Colombia. Estamos convencidos de que el refuerzo de la asociación económica con Colombia que aportará dicho acuerdo ayudará al país a realizar la transición desde una cultura del conflicto y la violencia a una sociedad de libertad y oportunidades. Por tanto, el Acuerdo tiene potencial para contribuir considerablemente a promover la causa de los derechos humanos en Colombia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004910/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Public Statement on the serious situation in Colombia: increase in threats, murders, attacks and forced disappearances

Between January and March 2012, 64 human rights defenders, trade unionists and rural workers' leaders were attacked, of whom 13 were murdered. After unjustified and dangerous statements were made against the political movement *Marcha Patriótica* (Patriotic March) by people close to the Government and the Colombian army, stigmatising and labelling it as the enemy, paramilitary groups intensified their actions against this and other movements and social organisations, issuing threats linking their criminal action to the defence of the current Santos Government: 'We have begun eliminating each one of them without mercy. We will not allow them to damage the policies of our President with their demands about the law of victims and land', read a note from a paramilitary group published on 5 May 2012.

Hernán H. Díaz and Marta Cecilia Guevara, two organisers of the *Marcha Patriótica* movement, have disappeared in the last few days, and Mao Enrique Rodríguez, who also belonged to this movement and was linked to the Colombian Communist Party, was murdered on 27 April 2012. On the same day, Daniel Aguirre, General Secretary of Sinalcorteros, the sugarcane cutters' union, was also killed for his social and political activism.

Taking into account the dramatic and worsening situation and the failure of the present Colombian Government to provide any real and effective guarantees upholding basic democratic and human rights, as well as the latest human rights report by the UK Government, which 'laments the worsening situation of human rights defenders in Colombia', and in the context of the association agreement that the European Union hopes to sign with Colombia:

— Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to make a formal public statement expressing concern at the worsening situation and demanding that the Colombian Government implement measures to guarantee effective protection for these human rights defenders and respect for social and political movements such as *Marcha Patriótica*?

— Does the Vice-President/High Representative not consider that an association agreement in these circumstances, without the existence of guarantees for the most basic rights, makes the situation worse and runs counter to the EU's efforts to support human rights and democracy?

— Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to make an appeal to the Colombian Government, expressing specific concern for the persecution and harassment suffered by *Marcha Patriótica*?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

Reference is made to the reply given to the Honourable Member's question no E-004483/2012. As indicated there, the European Union firmly condemns the use of violence, and has consistently called on the government to take effective measures to ensure the safety of vulnerable parts of the population and of persons under threat, including human rights defenders and social and political activists. The specific case of the *Marcha Patriótica* and of those of its members that have been victims of attacks or disappearances will be taken up at the forthcoming VIIth session of the EU-Colombia Human Rights Dialogue.

The Trade Agreement negotiated with Colombia and Peru, with its provisions on human rights and sustainable development, is a central element in the Union's policy of engagement with Colombia. It is our conviction that the enhanced economic partnership with Colombia that it will bring will support the transition of the country from a culture of conflict and violence to a society of freedom and opportunity. The Agreement thus has the potential to contribute strongly to furthering the cause of human rights in Colombia.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004917/12
till kommissionen
Christofer Fjellner (PPE)
(14 maj 2012)

Angående: Direktivet om tobaksvaror och rökfri tobak för användning i munnen

1. Principen om likabehandling och icke-diskriminering erkänns som en allmän princip i EU-rätten. Den kräver att jämförbara situationer inte får behandlas olika.

Snus och tuggtobak skiljer sig i grunden inte åt vad gäller avsedd användning och ingen av produkterna skiljer sig avsevärt åt vad gäller sammansättning, men en ansenlig mängd vetenskapliga rapporter visar att snus är mindre farligt än de flesta tuggtobaksprodukter som lagligt säljs på den inre marknaden idag. Vid en jämförelse av snus och cigaretter menar kommissionens egen vetenskapliga kommitté för nya och nyligen identifierade hälsorisker (SCENIHR) i sin rapport att snusliknande produkter är runt 90 procent mindre skadliga än cigarettrökning.

— Hur tänker kommissionen hantera det gällande snusförbudet, vilket är motsägelsefullt, leder till bristande likabehandling och inte når målet att bli en del av en allvarligt menad hälsopolitik, som krävs under rådande rättspraxis (mål C-120/97)?

2. I samband med översynen av direktiv 2001/37/EG åligger det alla EU-institutioner att beakta vetenskapliga bevis som har offentliggjorts sedan detta direktiv antogs. Om inte hänsyn tas till sådana vetenskapliga bevis kommer varje åtgärd som följer av översynen riskera att ogiltigförklaras på grund av bristande motivering eller brott mot proportionalitetsprincipen, principen om icke-diskriminering och den fria rörligheten för varor.

— Kan kommissionen ge en översikt över vilka vetenskapliga bevis – efter det att SCENIHR-rapporten offentliggjordes 2008 – som har använts under översynen vad gäller snusförbudet?

3. I SCENIHR-rapporten påpekas att rökfri tobak allmänt används i 10 europeiska länder. Hur tänker kommissionen beakta dessa traditionella produkter i översynen av direktivet om tobaksvaror?

4. I SCENIHR-rapporten påpekas att rökfri tobak allmänt används i 10 europeiska länder. Dessutom finns det 107 miljoner rökare i EU. Hur tänker kommissionen bedöma den relativa risk som alla tillgängliga – både lagliga och olagliga – tobaksprodukter utgör?

5. Företrädare för GD Hälso- och konsumentfrågor har upprepade gånger offentligt sagt att förbudet inte kommer att rivas upp. Kommissionen är skyldig att genomföra en kvantitativ bedömning av hälsokonsekvenserna i sin riskbedömning inför översynen av direktivet om tobaksvaror. Det finns starka bevis för att snus är en effektiv metod för att sluta röka i de länder där det finns tillgängligt. Efter de offentliga uttalanden som GD Hälso- och konsumentfrågor har gjort, vilken metod kommer kommissionen att tillämpa för att visa hur stor kostnaden blir för att införa en enhetlig produktreglering för rökfria tobaksvaror, både vad gäller konsekvenser för näringslivet och konsekvenser för hälsan?

Svar från John Dalli på kommissionens vägnar
(27 juni 2012)

Kommissionen planerar att anta ett förslag till ändring av direktivet om tobaksprodukter ([1]) innan slutet av 2012. Kommissionen har således inte tagit ställning till hur tobak för användning i munnen (snus) eller andra rökfria tobaksvaror ska hanteras vid översynen av direktivet.

I samband med konsekvensbedömningen analyserar kommissionen hälsoriskerna med tobaksprodukter, inklusive rökfri tobak. Kommissionen känner till ett antal studier som offentliggjordes efter 2008 års yttrande från vetenskapliga kommittén för nya och nyligen identifierade hälsorisker och analyserar befintlig forskning, t.ex. när det gäller användning av rökfria tobaksvaror för att sluta röka, den rökfria tobakens relativa skadliga effekter på hälsan och rökfri tobak som en inkörsport till rökning. Kommissionen beaktar dessa undersökningar i samband med riskbedömningen som kommer att offentliggöras tillsammans med lagstiftningsförslaget. Kommissionen analyserar även den inverkan de olika politiska alternativen för att hantera rökfria tobaksvaror skulle ha på ekonomi, samhälle och den inre marknaden ([2]).

([1]) Direktiv 2001/37/EG (EGT L 194, 18.7.2001, s. 26).
([2]) SEK(2009) 92.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004917/12
to the Commission
Christofer Fjellner (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Tobacco Products Directive and smokeless oral tobacco

1. The principle of equal treatment or non-discrimination is recognised as a general principle of EC law. It requires that comparable situations must not be treated differently.

Snus and chewing tobacco are not fundamentally different in terms of their intended use and neither are they fundamentally different in terms of composition, although an overwhelming number of scientific reports suggest that snus is less harmful than most of the chewing tobacco products legally available on the internal market today. Comparing snus with cigarettes, the Commission's own SCENIHR report states that snus-like products are around 90% less harmful than cigarette smoking.

— How does the Commission intend to address the current ban on snus, which is inconsistent, gives rise to inequalities and fails to 'form part of a seriously considered health policy', as required under the relevant case law (Case C-120/97)?

2. In revising the directive 2001/37/EC, all EU institutions are obliged to take account of scientific evidence that has become available since the adoption of that directive. Failure to take account of such evidence will make any measure which results from the revision process liable to annulment on grounds of lack of reasoning or breach of the principle of proportionality, the principle of non-discrimination or free movement of goods.

— Can the Commission outline what scientific evidence — following the publication of the SCENIHR report in 2008 — it has used in the revision process with regards to the snus ban?

3. The SCENIHR report points out that there is widespread use of smokeless tobacco in 10 European countries. How does the Commission intend to take these traditional products into account in the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive?

4. The SCENIHR report points out that there is widespread use of smokeless tobacco in 10 European countries. There are also 107 million European smokers in the EU. How will the Commission assess the relative risk posed by all available — legal and illegal — tobacco products?

5. Representatives of SANCO have repeatedly and publicly stated that the ban on snus will not be removed. The Commission is obliged to carry out a quantitative analysis of health impact in its risk assessment in the run-up to the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive. There is strong evidence suggesting that snus is an effective smoking cessation aid in countries where it is available. Following SANCO's public statements, which method will the Commission use to demonstrate the cost of introducing a coherent product regulation on smokeless tobacco, in terms of both impact on business and impact on health?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

The Commission foresees to adopt a proposal on the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive ([1]) before the end of 2012. As such, the Commission has not taken a position on how to address oral tobacco (snus) or other smokeless tobacco products in the revision of this directive.

In the context of the impact assessment, the Commission is analysing the health risks posed by tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco. The Commission is aware of a number of studies issued after the 2008 opinion of the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks and is analysing existing evidence e.g. on the use of smokeless tobacco in smoking cessation, the relative adverse health effects of smokeless tobacco and smokeless tobacco as a gateway to smoking. The Commission is considering these studies in the context of the impact assessment, which will be published together with the legislative proposal. The Commission is also analysing the economic, social and internal market impacts of various policy options to address smokeless tobacco ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2001/37/EC, OJ L 194, 18.7.2001, p. 26.
([2]) SEC(2009)92.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004918/12
alla Commissione
Guido Milana (S&D)
(14 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Catture accessorie del tonno rosso

Premesso che:

— l'articolo 8, paragrafo 2 del regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006, che disciplina la pratica delle imbarcazioni autorizzate alla pesca attiva del tonno rosso, recita: «È vietato l'uso di reti da posta fisse per la cattura delle specie seguent: … tonno rosso (Thunnus Thynnus)…»;

— l'articolo 11 del regolamento (CE) n. 302/2009 disciplina le catture accessorie effettuate da navi da cattura comunitarie che non praticano la pesca attiva del tonno rosso;

— il medesimo articolo 11 dispone che quando è aperta la pesca del tonno rosso, è vietato rigettare in mare gli esemplari morti delle catture accessorie e che quindi altro non è possibile se non sbarcare gli esemplari catturati accessoriamente, pur nel vincolo degli articoli 17, 18, 21, 23 e 34 del regolamento stesso;

— il legislatore comunitario sembra dunque riconoscere l'inevitabilità della cattura di specie non bersaglio mediante l'uso di strumenti consentiti per la cattura di altre specie;

— per ogni campagna di pesca del tonno rosso in Italia viene emanato un decreto ministeriale che ripartisce la quota nazionale tra i vari sistemi di pesca. Una parte della quota viene sempre accantonata come «parte indivisa» dalla quale detrarre anche le catture accessorie che vanno imputate al contingente assegnato agli Stati membri dell'Unione europea.

Si chiede alla Commissione di chiarire se l'articolo 8, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 è riferito alla pesca attiva.

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2012)

L'articolo 8, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 del Consiglio (il regolamento relativo alla gestione della pesca nel Mediterraneo) non disciplina specificamente la pratica delle imbarcazioni autorizzate alla pesca del tonno rosso, la quale è regolamentata, come giustamente ricordato dall'onorevole parlamentare, dal regolamento (CE) n. 302/2009 del Consiglio.

Ai sensi dell'articolo 8, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006, nel Mar Mediterraneo è vietato l'uso di reti da fondo per la cattura di determinate specie, siano esse specie bersaglio o catture accessorie, elencate nell'articolo stesso.

La Commissione conferma che il divieto istituito dall'articolo 8, paragrafo 2, del regolamento relativo alla gestione della pesca nel Mediterraneo si applica sia alle specie bersaglio che alle catture accessorie e non si limita pertanto alla «pesca attiva». Tuttavia, il secondo comma di tale articolo prevede una deroga per alcune specie di squali, per le quali è consentita la cattura accessoria di non più di tre esemplari, che possono essere tenuti a bordo o sbarcati.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004918/12
to the Commission
Guido Milana (S&D)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Bluefin tuna bycatches

Given that:

— Article 8(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 of 21 December 2006, governing the practices of authorised vessels actively fishing for bluefin tuna, states that: 'Bottom-set nets shall not be used to catch the following species: … Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*)';

— Article 11 of Council Regulation (EC) No 302/2009 of 6 April 2009 regulates the by-catches of EU fishing vessels not fishing actively for bluefin tuna;

— The very same Article stipulates that the discarding of dead fish from the by-catch of bluefin tuna is prohibited while the bluefin tuna fishery is open, so that it is also only possible to land any by-catch under the terms of Articles 17, 18, 21, 23 and 34 of the regulation;

— The EU legislature appears to accept as inevitable the catching of non-target species through the use of equipment authorised for catching other species;

— A ministerial decree will be issued for each bluefin tuna fishing season in Italy, which divides the national quota between the various fishing methods, a part of the quota always being set aside as 'undivided share' for the deduction of by-catch set against the quota allocated to the Member States of the European Union:

Can the Commission clarify whether Article 8(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 refers to active fishing?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2012)

Article 8(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 (the Mediterranean Regulation) does not govern specifically the practice of authorised vessels fishing for bluefin tuna, which is regulated by Council Regulation (EC) No 302/2009, as correctly recalled by the Honourable Member.

Article 8(2) of the Mediterranean Regulation stipulates that in the Mediterranean Sea bottom-set nets shall not be used to catch a number of species, listed in the same article, independently from those species being caught as target or by-catch.

The Commission confirms that the prohibition established by Article 8(2) of the Mediterranean Regulation applies to target species as well as to species caught as by-catch and is therefore not limited to 'active fishing'. However, the second subparagraph of this Article provides for a derogation for shark species by allowing a by-catch of maximum three specimens to be retained on board or landed.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004919/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Riscos das E-bombs para a União

O Secretário da Defesa britânico Phillip Hammond reconheceu a necessidade de investir mais na criação de defesas contra possíveis ataques de «E-bombs» que ponham em causa as redes e os sistemas de comunicações eletrónicas e inviabilizem a sua utilização.

A vulnerabilidade do Reino Unido a este tipo de ataques não deve ser excecional no quadro europeu, temendo-se que muitos outros Estados-Membros apresentem níveis de exposição aos mesmos ainda superiores ao britânico.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Dispõe de dados quanto a este tipo de ataques e à vulnerabilidade dos Estados-Membros?

— Não obstante a competência em matérias de defesa se centrar maioritariamente nos Estados-Membros, estaria disponível para apoiar estudos científicos e promover a investigação nesta área?

— Tem noção em que medida os seus próprios sistemas de comunicações eletrónicas estão expostos a ataques daquele tipo? Estará disponível para fazer essa avaliação e procurar aumentar a capacidade de resistência dos mesmos?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(2 de julho de 2012)

As «*e-bombs*» a que se refere o Ministro da Defesa britânico, Philip Hammond, referem-se a ataques baseados em impulsos eletromagnéticos (*Electro-Magnetic Pulses* (EMP)) ([1]). Um relatório da Comissão de Defesa britânica ([2]) analisa em pormenor essas ameaças EMP. Não dispomos de informações que indiquem que tenha alguma vez ocorrido um ataque EMP de proporções importantes. No entanto, trata-se de uma ameaça que, de acordo com o relatório, pode provir de: 1) Armas nucleares EMP de grande altitude: o risco é considerado baixo, dado que apenas pode provir de Estados que possuem capacidades nucleares. No entanto, poderá ter efeitos devastadores nas infraestruturas. 2) Ataques EMP de indivíduos isolados utilizando dispositivos não nucleares: têm um efeito localizado e não podem ter grande impacto nas infraestruturas, a menos que combinados com outras formas de ataque.

Sendo a proteção das infraestruturas críticas uma competência dos Estados-Membros, não existe uma noção clara das vulnerabilidades a nível da UE. Em toda a Europa, utilizam-se equipamentos muito semelhantes para instalar infraestruturas TIC, pelo que a vulnerabilidade a este tipo de ataques não se resumirá provavelmente ao Reino Unido.

A segurança é um dos domínios temáticos fundamentais do programa de cooperação do 7.° Programa-Quadro. O seu foco são exclusivamente as aplicações civis. O mais recente programa de trabalho do Sétimo Programa-Quadro está pronto para publicação em 10 de julho de 2012 e não inclui investigação sobre estes temas.

No que respeita ao programa Horizonte 2020, a investigação em matéria de defesa não faz parte da proposta da Comissão que se encontra atualmente em processo de codecisão. É demasiado cedo para a Comissão fornecer indicações sobre quais as atividades de investigação em matéria de segurança civil que poderá financiar e se poderão incluir questões relacionadas com os ataques por EMP.

A Comissão Europeia estabeleceu planos de continuidade das atividades, que cobrem vários tipos de riscos e incidentes, incluindo os danos às redes e sistemas de comunicações.

([1]) Public Service.co.uk, «Hammond: E-bomb threat needs digital defence», 14 de maio de 2012, (http://www.publicservice.co.uk/ news_story.asp?id=19722).

([2]) Comissão de Defesa da Casa dos Comuns — «Developing Threats: Electro-Magnetic Pulses (EMP)», 22 de fevereiro de 2012, (http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmdfence/1552/1552.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004919/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Risks posed to the EU by e-bombs

The British Defence Secretary Philip Hammond has acknowledged the need for further investment to build defences against potential e-bomb attacks that would jeopardise electronic communications networks and systems, and render them unusable.

The UK's vulnerability to attacks of this kind is probably not unique within the EU, the fear being that many other Member States might be even more at risk than the British.

— Does the Commission have information on attacks of this kind and on the vulnerability of Member States?

— Although competence for defence matters lies mainly with Member States, would the Commission be willing to support scientific studies and promote research in this area?

— Is it aware of the extent to which its own electronic communications systems are vulnerable to attacks of this kind? Is it prepared to evaluate this and seek to increase their ability to withstand such attacks?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

The announcement of British Defence Secretary Philip Hammond refers to e-bombs as attacks using Electro-Magnetic Pulses (EMP) ([1]). A report of the British Defence Committee ([2]) analyses in detail these EMP threats. We do not have information that a major EMP attack has ever taken place. However, this is a threat that according to this report could come from: (1) High Altitude Nuclear EMP Weapons: the risk is considered low since it only comes from states with nuclear capabilities. However, it could have devastating effects on the infrastructures. (2) EMP attacks from individuals using non-nuclear devices: have a localised effect and cannot have a large impact on the infrastructures unless combined with other forms of attacks.

As Critical Infrastructure Protection is within the competence of Member States, an overview on vulnerabilities at the EU level remains limited. Since very similar equipment is used across Europe to deploy ICT infrastructures, vulnerability to these attacks will probably not be limited to the United Kingdom.

Security is one of the key thematic areas of the FP7 Cooperation Programme. It has an exclusive civil application focus. The last Work Programme under FP7 is ready for publication on 10 July 2012 and does not include research on these topics.

With regard to Horizon 2020, defence research is not part of the Commission proposal that is currently in co-decision procedure. It is too early for the Commission to provide indications, as to what civil security research it might fund and whether this could include EMP issues.

The European Commission has established Business Continuity plans covering various types of risks and incidents, including damages to communication networks and systems.

([1]) Public Service.co.uk, 'Hammond: E-bomb threat needs digital defence', 14 May 2012, http://www.publicservice.co.uk/news_story.asp?id=19722.
([2]) House of Commons Defence Committee, 'Developing Threats: Electro-Magnetic Pulses (EMP)', 22 February 2012, http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmdfence/1552/1552.pdf.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004920/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Resposta da União Europeia às catástrofes

A 12 de agosto de 2011, em resposta à minha pergunta escrita E-006313/2011, a Comissão, por intermédio da senhora Comissária Kristalina Georgieva, declarou que estaria «a preparar um pacote legislativo (a ser proposto em finais de 2011) que deverá melhorar a eficácia e a coerência da resposta da União Europeia às catástrofes, incluindo incêndios florestais» e que a «Comissão propõe o desenvolvimento de uma Capacidade Europeia de Resposta para situações de emergência (incluindo, nomeadamente, o estudo de cenários de referência, o recenseamento dos meios de proteção civil dos Estados-Membros e a criação de um agrupamento voluntário de recursos dos Estados-Membros permanentemente disponível para participar numa resposta europeia), bem como de um novo Centro de Resposta a Emergências.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Chegou a apresentar o referido pacote legislativo?

— Deste, que medidas concretas destaca?

— Em que estádio do seu desenvolvimento se encontram a Capacidade Europeia de Resposta e o Centro de Resposta a Emergências?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(4 de julho de 2012)

A Comissão apresentou a proposta legislativa, COM(2011)934 final, em 20 de dezembro de 2011. Esta proposta pode ser consultada *online*, através do seguinte endereço: (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/about/com_2011_proposal-decision-cpmechanism_en.pdf).

As principais inovações do pacote legislativo incluem propostas para:

— A criação de um Centro Europeu de Resposta a Emergências (ERC);

— A criação de uma Capacidade Europeia de Resposta a Emergências sob a forma de um agrupamento voluntário de recursos pré-identificados que os Estados-Membros disponibilizem para operações de resposta da UE;

— O desenvolvimento de recursos complementares financiados pela UE para preencher as lacunas em termos de capacidade de resposta dos Estados-Membros que tenham sido identificadas e sempre que seja considerado mais eficaz em termos de custos do que o investimento individual dos Estados-Membros;

— O alargamento do âmbito de aplicação do mecanismo de proteção civil da UE, a fim de cobrir a prevenção de catástrofes;

— Um aumento do âmbito de aplicação das ações de preparação da UE no domínio da formação;

— A obrigação de os Estados-Membros comunicarem os planos de gestão de risco.

Através da inclusão destas medidas, a proposta tem por objetivo assegurar uma resposta da UE a catástrofes mais eficiente, eficaz, coerente e com visibilidade, a fim de aumentar o nível de preparação, de integração das políticas de prevenção e dos instrumentos de gestão dos riscos e melhorar a coerência dos esforços internacionais em matéria de proteção civil.

O ERC está atualmente em preparação e deverá estar pronto no segundo trimestre de 2013. Os trabalhos da Capacidade Europeia de Resposta a Emergências começarão logo que a nova legislação entrar em vigor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004920/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: EU response to disasters

On 12 August 2011, Ms Georgieva, on behalf of the Commission, responded to my Written Question E-006313/2011 and stated that the Commission 'is currently preparing a legislative package (to be proposed by the end of 2011) that should improve the efficiency and coherence of the EU's response to disasters, including forest fires' and that the 'The Commission proposes to develop a European emergency response capacity (comprising, *inter alia*, reference scenarios, mapping of Member States' civil protection assets, and a voluntary pool of Member States' resources on standby for participation in a European response) and a new Emergency Response Centre'.

— Has the Commission submitted this legislative package?

— What specific measures does the legislative package address?

— At what stage of development are the European emergency response capacity and the Emergency Response Centre?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2012)

The Commission submitted the legislative proposal, COM(2011) 934 final, on 20 December 2011. It can be accessed online at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/about/COM_2011_proposal-decision-CPMechanism_en.pdf

The main innovations in the legislative package include proposals for:

— the establishment of an Emergency Response Centre (ERC);

— the establishment of a European emergency response capacity in the form of a voluntary pool of pre-identified assets which Member States make available for EU response operations;

— the development of complementary EU-funded assets where gaps in the response capacities of Member States have been identified and where this has been considered more cost-efficient than Member States' individual investments;

— an enlarged scope of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism to cover the prevention of disasters;

— an increased scope of EU preparedness actions in the field of training;

— the requirement for Member States to communicate risk management plans.

By including these measures, the proposal aims to ensure a more efficient, effective, coherent and visible EU disaster response, to increase the level of preparedness, to integrate prevention policy and risk management planning instruments, and to improve the consistency in international civil protection work.

The ERC is currently under preparation and is scheduled to be ready in the second quarter of 2013. Work on the European emergency response capacity will start once the new legislation is in force.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004921/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Estratégia Europeia para a Formação Profissional

Segundo a Comissão Europeia, «a nova estratégia a favor da formação profissional [2011/2020] tem por objetivo dotar os trabalhadores atuais e futuros das competências técnicas gerais e específicas de que necessitarão numa economia moderna». Esta «procura melhorar a qualidade da formação e do ensino profissionais, incentivar a criatividade e o espírito empresarial e facilitar a aprendizagem em todas as etapas da carreira académica e profissional» e tem «igualmente por objetivo garantir que as pessoas oriundas de meios desfavorecidos, as pessoas com necessidades especiais e os trabalhadores mais velhos tenham o mesmo acesso à formação profissional que todos os outros.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que avaliação faz dos resultados já conhecidos da nova estratégia a favor da formação profissional?

— Face ao atual cenário de crise, considera que a mesma se encontra dotada de meios e medidas concretas que permitam aos trabalhadores, às empresas e aos estados fazer-lhe face?

— Não considera haver necessidade de investir mais na formação dos trabalhadores europeus? Através de que meios?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(3 de julho de 2012)

A atual estratégia para o ensino e formação profissionais foi acordada pelos ministros europeus do ensino e formação profissionais, os parceiros sociais europeus e a Comissão, em dezembro de 2010. A estratégia inclui uma visão sobre a forma como o setor do ensino e formação profissionais deve desenvolver-se até 2020, bem como um conjunto de medidas para atingir esse objetivo.

A responsabilidade principal pela aplicação da estratégia é a nível nacional. A Comissão, com o apoio do Centro Europeu para o Desenvolvimento da Formação Profissional (Cedefop) e da Fundação Europeia de Formação (FEF), acompanha e apoia a sua execução. A política de formação profissional tem um papel importante a desempenhar na estratégia Europa 2020 e, por conseguinte, tem sido dada uma atenção específica a este aspeto no quadro do Semestre Europeu, tal como demonstrado na recente proposta da Comissão de recomendações específicas para cada país.

Com efeito, a crise atual sublinha a urgência e a importância de investir em competências. É por esta razão que a Comissão, nas Comunicações «Oportunidades para a juventude» e «Uma recuperação geradora de emprego», propôs recentemente uma série de medidas que irão reforçar o investimento nas competências, bem como a facilitar a transição do sistema de educação e formação para a vida ativa. Tal inclui, nomeadamente, a mobilização focalizada dos fundos estruturais; apoio à criação de aprendizados; uma proposta de quadro de qualidade em relação aos estágios; uma melhor gestão em matéria de antecipação e adequação das competências.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004921/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: European vocational training strategy

According to the Commission, 'the new vocational training strategy [2011-2020] aims to provide current and future workers with both the job-specific and broad expertise they'll need in the modern economy'. The strategy 'seeks to improve the quality of vocational training and teaching, encourage creativity and entrepreneurship, and make it easier for people to learn at all stages of their academic and professional careers' and also 'aims to ensure those from poorer backgrounds, people with special needs and older workers have the same access to vocational training as everyone else.'

— What is the Commission's assessment of the outcome, to date, of the new vocational training strategy?

— Given the current crisis, does the Commission believe that the strategy provides the resources and specific measures to enable workers, businesses and countries to deal with it?

— Does it not believe that there is a need to invest more in training European workers? If it does, how?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The current strategy for vocational education and training was agreed by the European Ministers for Vocational Education and Training, the European social partners and the Commission in December 2010. The strategy includes both a vision on how vocational education and training should develop until 2020 as well as a set of measures on how to get there.

The main responsibility for the implementation of the strategy is at national level. The Commission, with the support of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the European Training Foundation (ETF), monitors and supports its implementation. Vocational training policy has an important role to play in the Europe 2020 strategy and consequently specific attention has been paid to this aspect within the European semester, as demonstrated in the Commission's recent proposal of country specific recommendations.

The current crisis does indeed underline the urgency and importance of investing in skills. It is for this reason that the Commission, in its communications on 'Youth opportunities' and 'Towards a job rich recovery', has recently proposed a number of measures which will strengthen the investment in skills as well as facilitate the transition from education and training to work. This includes, notably, the targeted mobilisation of structural funds; support to establish apprenticeship schemes; a proposal for a quality framework for traineeships; and improved management of skills forecasting and matching.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004922/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Prémios Sakharov cubanos: ponto da situação

Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas, as «Damas de Blanco» e Guillermo Fariñas foram galardoados com o Prémio Sakharov do Parlamento Europeu, respetivamente, nos anos de 2002, 2005 e 2010.

Estes sinais repetidamente dados pelo Parlamento Europeu, reconhecendo a luta pacífica pela democracia em Cuba, demonstram claramente que a situação neste país não tem conhecido melhorias de monta e que a repressão se mantém.

Os vencedores do Prémio Sakharov, pelo prestígio interno e externo de que gozam e pelo conhecimento profundo da realidade cubana que têm, estão particularmente aptos a esclarecer as instituições europeias quanto à veracidade, ritmo, coerência e boa-fé do processo de reformas em Cuba.

Assim, pergunto à Vice-presidente / Alta Representante:

— Está disposta a convidar Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas, as «Damas de Blanco» e Guillermo Fariñas a deslocarem-se às instituições europeias para que possam testemunhar, de viva voz, acerca do estado de coisas em Cuba?

— Tem-los contactado?

— Que diligências tem desenvolvido junto das autoridades cubanas no sentido de promover uma efetiva democratização do país e a libertação imediata dos presos políticos?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(6 de julho de 2012)

A AR/VP segue de perto a situação da oposição pacífica em Cuba. O SEAE e a delegação da União Europeia em Havana têm debatido com as autoridades cubanas o facto de os galardoados cubanos com Prémios Sakharov, com a exceção de Oswaldo Payá em dezembro de 2002, não terem sido autorizados a viajar para Estrasburgo a fim de receber o seu prémio. A questão continuará a ser abordada no contexto do diálogo político UE-Cuba.

A delegação da UE em Havana está em contacto direto com a oposição pacífica, incluindo os galardoados com os Prémios Sakharov.

A delegação da UE em Havana, juntamente com os Chefes de Missão da UE, tem acompanhado a situação dos direitos humanos em Cuba. Os direitos humanos e as liberdades fundamentais estão no centro das relações da União Europeia com os países terceiros, incluindo Cuba. A UE congratulou-se com o processo de libertação de prisioneiros de consciência, mediado pela igreja católica e por Espanha, e repetiu, em várias ocasiões, a importância que representa para as autoridades cubanas continuarem a fazer progressos no sentido do pleno respeito dos direitos políticos e civis para o povo cubano, incluindo a liberdade de expressão e de reunião. A UE manifestou a sua preocupação junto das autoridades cubanas sobre o recrudescimento das detenções temporárias. Estas questões são abordadas no contexto do diálogo político UE-Cuba.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004922/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Cuban Sakharov Prize winners: state of play

Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas, the Ladies in White and Guillermo Fariñas were awarded the European Parliament Sakharov Prize in 2002, 2005 and 2010 respectively.

These repeated European Parliament gestures, made in recognition of the peaceful struggle for democracy in Cuba, clearly demonstrate that the situation in this country has not improved significantly and that repression continues.

Owing to the prestige they enjoy both at home and abroad and their in-depth knowledge of Cuban reality, the Sakharov Prize winners are especially qualified to explain the truth, speed, consistency and good faith of the reform process in Cuba to EU institutions.

I therefore ask the Vice-President/High Representative:

— Is she willing to invite Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas, the Ladies in White and Guillermo Fariñas to EU institutions to personally testify on the state of affairs in Cuba?

— Has she contacted them?

— What steps have been taken, with the Cuban authorities, to promote effective democratisation of the country and the immediate release of political prisoners?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

The HR/VP follows closely the situation of peaceful opposition in Cuba. The EEAS and the EU Delegation in Havana have discussed with the Cuban authorities the fact that the Cuban Sakharov Prizes, with the exception of Oswaldo Paya in December 2002, were not allowed to travel to Strasbourg to receive their prizes. The matter will continue to be pursued within the context of the EU-Cuba political dialogue.

The EU Delegation in Havana is in direct contact with the peaceful opposition, including those awarded with Sakharov Prizes.

The EU Delegation in Havana, together with the EU Heads of Mission, monitors the human rights' situation in Cuba. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are at the core of EU relations with third countries, including Cuba. The EU welcomed the process of release of prisoners of conscience mediated by the Catholic Church and Spain and has reiterated on several occasions the importance for the Cuban authorities to continue to make progress towards full respect of all political and civil rights for the Cuban people, including freedom of expression and assembly. The EU has expressed concern to the Cuban authorities on the upsurge of temporary detentions. These questions are addressed in the context of the EU-Cuba political dialogue.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004923/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Uma recuperação geradora de emprego

A Comissão Europeia deu a conhecer, no passado dia 18 de abril de 2012, a Comunicação COM(2012)0173 intitulada «Uma recuperação geradora de emprego», a qual, tal como o nome indica, se destina a procurar estancar o aumento do desemprego que vem afetando muitos dos trabalhadores europeus.

Para esse efeito, a Comunicação dispõe-se a «complementar as prioridades de emprego da Análise Anual do Crescimento com orientações políticas de médio prazo, em função das metas de emprego da estratégia Europa 2020. Assenta nas Orientações de Emprego, define ações que exigem uma atenção especial no contexto atual e visa gerar confiança entre todos os agentes para desencadear as necessárias reformas nesta área.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Qual a recetividade que a sua Comunicação tem tido junto dos Estados-Membros?

— Que medidas preconizadas na Comunicação destaca a Comissão como mais relevantes e com maior potencial gerador de emprego?

— Que boas práticas estatais pode a Comissão salientar com vista à geração de emprego, as quais poderiam ser adotadas pelos demais países da União?

— Como avalia os resultados do EURES transfronteiriço?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(6 de julho de 2012)

Em 21 de junho, os Estados-Membros debateram a Comunicação «Uma recuperação geradora de emprego» na reunião dos ministros do Emprego, Política Social, Saúde e Consumidores. Os ministros apoiaram fortemente este «pacote do emprego», tendo em conta que prevê um conjunto de medidas destinado a recuperar o crescimento e o emprego na Europa.

Perante a atual situação económica e social, torna-se necessário privilegiar a vertente da procura ao criar emprego, explorar o potencial de emprego de setores-chave como a economia verde, a saúde ou as TIC e restabelecer a dinâmica dos mercados de trabalho dos Estados-Membros.

Em 19 de junho, o Comissário Europeu responsável pelo Emprego, Assuntos Sociais e Inclusão convidou igualmente os parceiros sociais a participar estreitamente na definição e aplicação das políticas de emprego. Além disso, alertou claramente os ministros para a urgência de reforçar a coordenação das políticas de emprego dos Estados-Membros a nível da UE.

As propostas apresentadas na Comunicação baseiam-se em grande medida nas boas práticas dos Estados-Membros em matéria de definição e aplicação de políticas laborais bem-sucedidas, que cada Estado-Membro deverá contudo aplicar diferentemente, em função do seu próprio mercado do trabalho e dos desafios que enfrenta.

As parcerias transfronteiriças EURES alcançaram bons resultados em termos de prestação de informação aos trabalhadores em mobilidade e respetivos empregadores. É preciso melhorar os resultados em termos de colocação e recrutamento, razão pela qual a Comissão refere na Comunicação a forma como deverá ser reformada a rede EURES, para que possa tornar-se um instrumento europeu de emprego verdadeiramente eficaz que facilite os fluxos de mobilidade intra-UE de vários grupos-alvo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004923/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Towards a job-rich recovery

On 18 April 2012, the Commission published communication COM(2012) 0173 entitled 'Towards a job-rich recovery', aimed, as its title suggests, at halting the rise in unemployment affecting many European workers.

To that end, the communication seeks to 'complement the employment priorities of the Annual Growth Survey with medium-term policy guidance in conjunction with the Europe 2020 employment objectives. It builds upon the Employment Guidelines, sets out actions requiring particular emphasis in the present context and aims at building trust among all actors and generating confidence to put the necessary employment reforms in motion'.

— How have the Member States responded to this communication?

— Which of the measures advocated in the communication does the Commission believe to be most relevant and most likely to generate employment?

— Which best practices of Member States does the Commission think should be recommended with a view to generating employment and could be adopted by the other EU countries?

— What is its assessment of the results of the cross-border EURES?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

Member States have discussed the communication 'Towards a job-rich recovery' at the meeting of EPSCO Ministers on the 21st June. Ministers have given the strongest support to the package as it provides a set of measures for restoring growth and jobs in Europe.

Given today's economic and social situation, it is necessary to focus on the demand side of job creation, to exploit the job potential of key sectors such as the green economy, the health or the ICT sector, and to restore the dynamics of Member States' labour markets.

The Member of the Commission responsible for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion also invited on 19th June the social partners to be closely involved in shaping and delivering employment policies. He also made clear to the Ministers the urge for reinforced coordination of Member States' employment policies at EU level.

The proposals in the communication are extensively based on Member States' best practice in designing and implementing successful labour market policies, to be applied however differently by Member States, given the diverse labour market situations and challenges they face.

EURES cross-border partnerships have reached good results in terms of information provision to mobile workers and their employers. The results in terms of placement and recruitment need to be strengthened. For this reason the Commission has outlined in the communication how EURES will be reformed to become an effective European employment instrument facilitating intra-EU mobility flows of various target groups.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004924/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Venezuela — comunicação social e eleições presidenciais

Notícias recentes dão conta de diversas ações levadas a cabo por autoridades estatais e milícias afetas ao poder político que visam condicionar a ação dos órgãos de comunicação social independentes na Venezuela e intimidar os seus profissionais.

É de temer que, com a aproximação das eleições presidenciais de 7 de outubro e o consequente adensar do clima político na Venezuela, estas ações se multipliquem e aumentem de gravidade.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Está ao corrente das recentes tentativas de controlo e intimidação dos meios de comunicação social por parte de elementos integrantes do ou afetos ao poder político venezuelano?

— Contactou as autoridades venezuelanas a este respeito? Que respostas obteve?

— Tenciona deslocar uma missão de observação às eleições presidenciais? Dispõe já do acordo do Estado venezuelano para que esta possa atuar país naquele período? E das garantias deste de que a sua ação será ampla e livre de quaisquer constrangimentos que possam inibir uma verificação aturada do grau de lisura de todo o processo eleitoral?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(10 de julho de 2012)

A AR/VP está ao corrente da situação da liberdade de imprensa na Venezuela, como atesta o elevado número de recomendações constantes do Exame Periódico Universal de outubro de 2011. A situação não parece melhorar neste ano eleitoral.

A UE não mantém um diálogo político estruturado com a Venezuela. Nos seus contactos regulares com o Governo, a AR/VP abordou questões relacionadas com os direitos humanos e continuará a fazê-lo no futuro. A UE manifestou a sua disponibilidade para enviar uma missão de observação eleitoral da UE, que teria também por missão acompanhar a situação da comunicação social durante a campanha eleitoral.

A proposta de enviar uma missão de observação eleitoral foi oficializada em Caracas, em março, e confirmada ao Embaixador da Venezuela em Bruxelas, em 3 de maio de 2012. Em 25 de abril de 2012, a Delegação da UE em Caracas enviou uma nota ao Presidente do Conselho Nacional Eleitoral recordando-lhe a proposta da UE. Até à data, a União Europeia ainda não recebeu uma resposta formal sobre a proposta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004924/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 May 2012)

Subject: Venezuela — the media and presidential elections

It has recently been reported that State authorities and Government-backed militias have made various attempts to impose restrictions on the independent media in Venezuela and to intimidate media professionals.

Given that the approach of the presidential elections on 7 October 2012 is likely to heighten the tensions within the Venezuelan political climate, it is feared that actions of this kind will occur more frequently and be intensified.

— Is the Commission aware of the recent attempts by the Venezuelan Government and its supporters to control and intimidate the media?

— Has it contacted the Venezuelan authorities about this matter? What response has it received?

— Will it send a mission to observe the presidential elections? Has it already obtained the Venezuelan Government's consent for the mission to observe the country at that time? Has the Venezuelan Government guaranteed that the mission will be able to operate free of any constraints that might hinder constant checks on the fairness of the entire electoral process?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

The HR/VP is aware of the situation of press freedom in Venezuela, as reflected by the high number of recommendations contained in the October 2011 Universal Periodic Review. The situation does not seem to improve in the electoral year.

The EU does not conduct a structured political dialogue with Venezuela. The HR/VP has raised human rights issues in its regular contacts with the Government and will continue to do in the future. The EU has expressed its availability to mobilise an EU Elections Observation Mission (EOM), which would also monitor the media environment during the election campaign.

The offer to mobilise an EOM was formalized in Caracas in March and reiterated to the Venezuelan ambassador in Brussels on 3 May 2012. The Delegation in Caracas sent a 'reminder' to the President of the National Electoral Council on the 25 April 2012. Until today the EU has not received a formal reply to the offer of EOM.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-004925/12
till kommissionen
Carl Haglund (ALDE)
(15 maj 2012)

Angående: Höga fosforutsläpp i Östersjön från floden Luga, nära EuroChem Phosphorits område med gruvdrift, fabrik och deponering i Kingisepp i Ryssland

I slutet av 2011 upptäckte Helsingforskommissionen för skydd av Östersjöns marina miljö (Helcom) att extremt höga mängder fosfor, den största bidragande faktorn till eutrofieringen i Östersjön, släpptes ut i Finska viken från floden Luga i Ryssland. Den årliga fosformängden från denna enda källa är den största som någonsin har upptäckts, och beräknas vara högre än 1 000 ton, en siffra som motsvarar en tredjedel av Finlands årliga fosforutsläpp i Östersjön. Forsforn i Luga härrör sannolikt från EuroChems gödselfabrik i staden Kingisepp i Ryssland.

Nordiska miljöfinansieringsbolaget (NEFCO) genomförde ett informationsuppdrag till Eurochem-anläggningen i februari 2012, och undertecknade ett samförståndsavtal med Kingisepps kommun om att finansiera en modernisering av kommunens anläggningar för vattendistribution och vattenrening. I april greps emellertid en finländsk forskare av den ryska säkerhetstjänsten, FSB, under en godkänd vattenprovtagning runt EuroChems fabrik, och hans prover, dator och annan utrustning togs i beslag. Trots krav från det finländska utrikesministeriet har det inte kommit någon officiell förklaring till gripandet från de ryska myndigheterna, och hans utrustning har inte återlämnats.

— Vilka verktyg (diplomatiska, juridiska eller finansiella) har kommissionen till sitt förfogande för att hjälpa nationella myndigheter och icke-statliga organisationer i Ryssland och EU att upprätta goda arbetsförbindelser för att snabbt identifiera källan till fosforutsläppen och förhindra att de når Östersjön?

— Vilka planer har kommissionen för närvarande för att uppnå detta mål?

Svar från Janez Potočnik på kommissionens vägnar
(27 juni 2012)

De höga fosforhalterna i floden Luga upptäcktes inom det EU-finansierade Balthazar-projektet i slutet av november 2011. Projektet finansieras genom Europaparlamentets program för pilotprojekt och förvaltas av projektets genomförandeenhet som inrättats vid Helsingforskommissionens (Helcom) sekretariat i samarbete med den ryska partnern *Ecology and Business*, en offentlig organisation med säte i Sankt Petersburg. Projektet är inriktat på Sankt Petersburg samt provinserna Leningrad och Kaliningrad och syftar till att underlätta Rysslands genomförande av Helcoms handlingsplan för Östersjön.

Kommissionen har ett antal andra verktyg till sitt förfogande, däribland samarbete inom multilaterala och bilaterala avtal, kapacitetsuppbyggnad samt ytterligare övervakning genom finansiering av riktade projekt. Helcom kommer på grundval av kompletterande uppgifter från Ryssland, de senaste provtagningsresultaten och erfarenheter från Balthazar-projektet att bedöma om ytterligare åtgärder är nödvändiga. Helcom och EU har lanserat ett nytt gemensamt samarbetsprojekt – BASE-projektet – som bygger på resultaten från Balthazar-projektet och är planerat att inledas i slutet av juni 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004925/12
to the Commission
Carl Haglund (ALDE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: High phosphorus emissions into the Baltic Sea from the River Luga, close to the EuroChem Phosphorit mining, factory and deposit area in Kingisepp, Russia

In late 2011, the Helsinki Commission for Baltic Marine Environment Protection (Helcom) discovered extremely high amounts of phosphorus, the greatest contributor to eutrophication in the Baltic Sea, being emitted into the Gulf of Finland from the River Luga in Russia. The annual amounts of phosphorus from this single source are the largest ever identified, estimated to be in excess of 1 000 tonnes, a figure corresponding to one-third of Finland's annual phosphorus discharge into the Baltic Sea. The phosphorus in the River Luga is likely to originate from the EuroChem fertiliser factory in the town of Kingisepp, Russia.

The Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO) undertook a fact-finding mission to the EuroChem plant in February 2012, and has signed a memorandum of understanding with the municipality of Kingisepp to finance the modernisation of the latter's water distribution and wastewater treatment facilities. However, in April a Finnish researcher was arrested by the Russian security service, the FSB, during an authorised water sampling exercise around the EuroChem factory, and his samples, computer and other equipment were confiscated. Despite requests from the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there has been no official explanation for the arrest by the Russian authorities, nor has his equipment been returned.

— What tools (diplomatic, legal or financial) does the Commission have at its disposal to assist national authorities and non-governmental organisations in Russia and the EU in establishing good working relations in order to quickly identify the source of the phosphorus emissions and to prevent them from reaching the Baltic Sea?

— What plans does the Commission currently have to help achieve this aim?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

The high concentrations of phosphorous in the River Luga were discovered through the EU-funded BALTHAZAR project in late November 2011. The project is funded by the European Parliament Pilot Project Facility and managed by the Project Implementation Unit established at the Helsinki Commission (Helcom) Secretariat in cooperation with the Russian Partner St. Petersburg Public Organisation 'Ecology and Business'. The project focuses on the St. Petersburg, Leningrad and Kaliningrad Oblasts to facilitate Russia's implementation of the Helcom Baltic Sea Action Plan.

The Commission has a number of other tools at its disposal, including cooperation within multilateral and bilateral agreements, capacity building and further monitoring through funding of targeted projects. Helcom will consider further information from Russia and the results of the latest sampling and lessons learnt from the BALTHAZAR project, and assess whether further action is required. Helcom and the EU have launched a new joint cooperation project — the BASE project — building on the results of the BALTHAZAR project and planned to start at end of June 2012.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004926/12
do Komisji
Jan Kozłowski (PPE)
(15 maja 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Program Współpracy Transgranicznej Polska-Białoruś–Ukraina 2007-2013

Program Współpracy Transgranicznej Polska-Białoruś–Ukraina na lata 2007-2013 stanowi kontynuację i rozszerzenie współpracy w obszarach przygranicznych trzech państw. Beneficjentami projektu mogą być m.in. władze centralne, samorządowe oraz organizacje pozarządowe i non-profit.

Dla każdego projektu wszyscy partnerzy muszą wybrać spośród siebie partnera wiodącego przed złożeniem wniosku. Partner wiodący składa wniosek, podpisuje umowę grantową ze Wspólną Instytucją Zarządzającą oraz odpowiada prawnie i finansowo za realizację projektu.

W celu spełnienia warunków kwalifikowalności w zakresie dofinansowania, wnioskodawcy (partnerzy wiodący projektów parasolowych) muszą m.in. posiadać doświadczenie w realizacji (jako partner wiodący) co najmniej jednego projektu finansowanego przez UE i co najmniej jednego projektu transgranicznego o wartości każdego z nich co najmniej 150 000 EUR. Dla wielu organizacji wymóg ten stanowi barierę uniemożliwiającą ubieganie się o wsparcie finansowe na realizację swoich projektów.

— Chciałbym zapytać Komisję, czy rozważa ona zmianę wyżej opisanego kryterium, i tym samym zmianę warunków koniecznych kwalifikowalności do wsparcia finansowego, przy kolejnym naborze wniosków oraz w nowej perspektywie finansowej 2014-2020. Jakie inne ułatwienia zostaną zaproponowane przez Komisję w celu umożliwienia dostępu do dofinansowania dla wnioskodawców niemających pierwszego doświadczenia w prowadzeniu projektu transgranicznego i innego projektu finansowanego przez UE na podaną kwotę?

— W jaki sposób Komisja planuje wspierać wnioskodawców w poszukiwaniu partnerów wiodących do realizacji projektu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleго w imieniu Komisji
(22 czerwca 2012 r.)

W przypadku programów współpracy transgranicznej wdrażanych w ramach Europejskiego Instrumentu Sąsiedztwa i Partnerstwa (ENPI) obowiązuje zasada zarządzania dzielonego, co oznacza, że za realizację programów odpowiedzialne są państwa członkowskie.

Kluczowymi organami podejmującymi decyzje w odniesieniu do wszystkich programów współpracy transgranicznej w ramach ENPI są wspólne komitety monitorujące (WKM). WKM podejmują decyzje jednomyślnie, a wszystkie wchodzące w ich skład państwa są jednakowo reprezentowane. Komisja uczestniczy w posiedzeniach WKM wyłącznie w charakterze obserwatora, aby zapewnić zgodność podejmowanych decyzji z przepisami UE. Decyzja dotycząca wspomnianego kryterium kwalifikowalności leży w gestii WKM w momencie przyjmowania wytycznych dotyczących zaproszenia do składania wniosków.

Kryteria kwalifikowalności wyznaczane są z należytym uwzględnieniem celów i priorytetowych obszarów działania określonych dla danego zaproszenia do składania wniosków. Muszą być też zgodne z zasadą przejrzystości i niedyskryminacji. Kryteria przywołane w zapytaniu mają zastosowanie jedynie do partnera wiodącego, a nie do wszystkich partnerów.

Zasadniczo możliwa jest zmiana wspomnianego kryterium w odniesieniu do kolejnych zaproszeń do składania wniosków. Wszelkie uwagi należy kierować do wspólnej instytucji zarządzającej (WIZ), która dopilnuje, by sugestie zostały przedyskutowane na forum WKM. W tym przypadku instytucją zarządzającą jest Ministerstwo Rozwoju Regionalnego.

WKM, jako organy wdrażające programy współpracy transgranicznej, posiadają budżet na pomoc techniczną, z którego mogą finansować inicjatywy wspierające potencjalnych wnioskodawców w poszukiwaniu partnerów. Ponadto istnieje również projekt INTERACT ENPI ([1]) wspierający wnioskodawców i beneficjentów w dostępie do środków finansowych przeznaczonych na współpracę transgraniczną.

([1]) http://www.interact-eu.net/enpi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004926/12
to the Commission
Jan Kozłowski (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: The Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007-2013

The Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007-2013 is a continuation and expansion of cooperation in the border areas of the three states. The beneficiaries of the project can include central authorities, local government authorities and non-governmental and non-profit organisations.

For each project, all partners must appoint a lead partner chosen amongst themselves prior to submitting the application. The lead partner submits the application, signs the grant agreement with the Joint Managing Authority and assumes legal and financial responsibility for the implementation of the project.

In order to meet the eligibility conditions for the grant, the applicants (lead partners in umbrella projects) must, *inter alia*, have experience (as a lead partner) in the implementation of at least one project financed by the EU and at least one cross-border project with a value of at least EUR 150 000 each. For many organisations, this requirement is a barrier to applying for financial support for the implementation of their projects.

— Is the Commission considering changing the aforesaid criterion, and thus changing the eligibility conditions for financial support in the next call for proposals and in the new financial perspective for 2014-2020? What other measures does the Commission intend to propose to simplify the process and to enable access to funding for applicants who do not have prior experience in leading a cross-border project or another project financed by the EU involving the sum stipulated?

— How does the Commission plan to help applicants to find lead partners for the implementation of the project?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 June 2012)

European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) CBC programmes are managed under the shared management principle meaning that Member States are responsible for programme implementation.

Joint Monitoring Committees (JMCs) are the key decision making bodies for all ENPI CBC programmes. JMCs take decisions by unanimity and participating countries are equally represented. The Commission participates in the JMC meetings merely as observer ensuring that decisions are aligned to EU's rules. The mentioned eligibility criterion falls within the JMC's decision making role when adopting call for proposal guidelines.

The eligibility criteria must be established with due regard for the objectives and priority issues covered by the call for proposals and shall comply with the principles of transparency and non-discrimination. The criteria referred to in the question apply only to the lead applicant and not to the partners.

In principle, it is possible to amend the said criterion for the next calls for proposals. Comments should be directed to the Joint Managing Authority (JMA) which ensures that suggestions are discussed by the JMC. In this case, the JMA is the Ministry of Regional Development of Poland.

JMAs are the implementing bodies of CBC programmes. They have a technical assistance budget at their disposal, which can finance events to help potential applicants in finding partners. In addition, INTERACT ENPI ([1]) is supporting applicants and beneficiaries in accessing cross border cooperation funds.

([1]) http://www.interact-eu.net/enpi.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004927/12
do Rady
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(15 maja 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wytyczne dla sieci TEN-T, plany rozwoju europejskich dróg wodnych po 2030 r.

W odniesieniu do międzyinstytucjonalnej dyskusji toczącej się na temat projektu legislacyjnego w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dla sieci TEN-T (rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej (KOM(2011) 0144)) mam poważną wątpliwość. Mapy załączone do projektu prezentują wyłącznie sieć bazową dla dróg wodnych, co nie jest spójne z podejściem przedstawionym w głównym tekście dokumentu, w którym mówi się o przyszłym rozwoju całej sieci TEN-T w oparciu o strukturę dwupoziomową. W konsekwencji nie jest możliwe zapoznanie się z planami rozwoju europejskich dróg wodnych po 2030 r.

W związku z powyższym, czy Rada ma świadomość opisanej wyżej niespójności? Jakie jest zdanie Rady w tej materii?

Odpowiedź
(2 lipca 2012 r.)

W dniu 22 marca 2012 r. Rada przyjęła podejście ogólne do wniosku dotyczącego rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej.

Podejście ogólne odnosi się również do map dróg wodnych przedstawionych w załącznikach i odzwierciedla stanowisko Rady w stosunku do proponowanego rozporządzenia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004927/12
to the Council
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Guidelines for the TEN-T network, plans for the development of European waterways after 2030

I have serious concerns regarding the ongoing interinstitutional discussion on the draft legislation for Union guidelines for the TEN-T network (Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network (2011/0294 (COD)). The maps annexed to the draft only show the core waterways network. This is not consistent with the approach set out in the main text of the document, which refers to the future development of the entire TEN-T network, based on a two-tier structure. Consequently, it is not possible to become acquainted with the plans for the development of the European waterways after 2030.

In view of the above, is the Council aware of the inconsistency described in the previous paragraph? What is the Council's opinion on this matter?

Reply
(2 July 2012)

On 22 March 2012, the Council adopted a general approach on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network.

The general approach also refers to the maps of the waterways network set out in the annexes and reflects the position of the Council on the proposed regulation.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004928/12
do Rady
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(15 maja 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wytyczne dla sieci TEN-T, dopuszczalność III klasy żeglowności

Analizując mapy załączone do projektu legislacyjnego w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dla sieci TEN-T (rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej (COM(2011) 0144)) można odnieść wrażenie, że niektóre państwa członkowskie w ogóle są pozbawione systemu dróg wodnych, podczas gdy w rzeczywistości znajdują się na ich terytoriach rzeki o pierwszoplanowym i strategicznym znaczeniu dla transportu, tyle że rzeki te należą do III klasy żeglowności. Oparcie sieci bazowej tylko i wyłącznie o rzeki spełniające kryteria IV klasy żeglowności spowoduje, że wiele krajów członkowskich nie będzie w stanie wypełnić postulatów zrównoważonego rozwoju zawartych w Białej Księdze – planie utworzenia jednolitego europejskiego obszaru transportu.

Czy Rada nie ma wrażenia, że wyłączenie dróg wodnych III klasy żeglowności z sieci TEN-T doprowadzi do wykluczenia niektórych państw członkowskich z efektywnego funkcjonowania w ramach całej sieci TEN-T? Jakie jest stanowisko Rady w tej materii?

Odpowiedź
(19 czerwca 2012 r.)

Rada nie ma nic do dodania do swojej odpowiedzi na pytanie nr E-002153/2012 wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004928/12
to the Council
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Guidelines for the TEN-T network, the admissibility of Class III navigation

A study of the maps annexed to the draft legislation for Union guidelines for the TEN-T network (Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network (COM(2011) 650 final)) could suggest that some Member States lack a waterways system of any kind, while in fact rivers of prime and strategic importance to transport are located on their territories, but the rivers in question are categorised as Class III for navigation purposes. Basing the core network only on rivers that satisfy the criteria for Class IV navigation will mean that many Member States will be unable to comply with the requirements for sustainable development contained in the White Paper — Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area (COM(2011) 0144).

Does the Council not believe that excluding Class III navigation waterways from the TEN-T network will lead to the exclusion of some Member States from effective operation within the TEN-T network as a whole? What is the Council's position on this matter?

Reply
(19 June 2012)

The Council has nothing to add to its reply to Written Question E-002153/2012.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004929/12
do Rady
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(15 maja 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wytyczne dla sieci TEN-T, koszty struktur administracyjnych

W odniesieniu do międzyinstytucjonalnej dyskusji toczącej się na temat projektu legislacyjnego w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dla sieci TEN-T (rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej (COM(2011) 0144)) chciałbym wyrazić swoją wątpliwość wobec zapisu dotyczącego zarządzania nowymi strukturami administracyjnymi. Urzeczywistnienie koncepcji korytarzy sieci bazowej rodzi bowiem ryzyko nadmiernego rozrostu struktur administracyjnych odpowiedzialnych za zarządzanie wyżej wspomnianymi korytarzami i wiążącymi się z tym wysokimi kosztami obsługi tych struktur.

W związku z tym: czy Rada otrzymała od Komisji wstępny kosztorys (w skali całej Wspólnoty) dla wspomnianych wyżej struktur administracyjnych? Jakie jest zdanie Rady w tej materii?

Odpowiedź
(2 lipca 2012 r.)

Rada nie otrzymała jak dotąd od Komisji wstępnej oceny kosztów struktur administracyjnych opisanych w pytaniu Posła, a co za tym idzie, nie wypracowała jeszcze stanowiska w tej sprawie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004929/12
to the Council
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Guidelines for the TEN-T network, cost of administrative structures

In connection with the ongoing interinstitutional discussion on the draft legislation for Union guidelines for the TEN-T network (Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network (2011/0294 (COD)), I would like to express my doubts regarding the provision concerning management of new administrative structures. The implementation of the concept of core network corridors carries with it the risk of excessive growth of the administrative structures responsible for managing the aforesaid corridors and the related high cost of maintaining these structures.

In consideration of the above, did the Council receive a preliminary cost estimate from the Commission (on a Community scale) for the aforesaid administrative structures? What is the Council's opinion on this matter?

Reply
(2 July 2012)

The Council has not received a preliminary cost estimate from the Commission for the administrative structures described in the Honourable Member's question, and has therefore not taken a position on this issue.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004934/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(15 mai 2012)

Objet: Directive relative au bien-être des truies

Récemment, des producteurs de porcs ont manifesté leur préoccupation s'agissant de la mise aux normes du bien-être des truies, qu'exige l'actuelle règlementation européenne. Selon leurs affirmations, confirmées par une étude de l'Interprofession anglaise «BPEX Imports Report» d'octobre 2011, seulement 40 % du troupeau européen de truies pourrait remplir les exigences en matière de normes à la date butoir (début 2013) prévue par la directive. Tous les pays européens sans exception ont pris du retard dans la transposition de la directive et se trouvent à peu près au même niveau d'avancement de cette mise aux normes. Même avec la meilleure volonté, il apparaît aujourd'hui techniquement difficile d'imaginer une mise aux normes complète pour la fin de l'année. Les retards constatés dans la transposition de la directive s'expliquent très largement par la conjoncture difficile rencontrée par la filière porcine ces cinq dernières années. Beaucoup d'élevages ont en effet été fragilisés par le surenchérissement des matières premières entrant dans l'alimentation de leurs animaux, un poste représentant généralement près de 70 % de leur prix de revient.

De nombreux investissements n'ont par conséquent pas pu être réalisés à temps, notamment dans les petites structures de production.

— Que devront faire les éleveurs au 1er janvier 2013 de leurs cheptels issus d'élevages non conformes à la directive?

— Le maintien de la date butoir rendra-t-il illégale une partie de la viande des truies «non conformes»?

— Vu la situation, la Commission ne ferait-il pas mieux d'envisager de proposer un délai supplémentaire de deux ans, pour permettre à chacun des éleveurs européens de pouvoir remplir les exigences de cette directive relative au bien-être des truies?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(10 juillet 2012)

À partir du 1er janvier 2013, les éleveurs de porcs qui ne maintiendront pas leurs truies en groupe seront en infraction avec la directive relative à la protection des porcs ([1]).

Les États membres sont chargés de veiller à l'application de la législation de l'Union européenne. L'article 54 du règlement (CE) nº 882/2004 sur les contrôles officiels ([2]) leur impose de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour obliger les exploitants à remédier à d'éventuels manquements. Les États membres peuvent ainsi décréter, selon le cas, la suspension des activités ou la fermeture de tout ou partie de l'entreprise en cause, la restriction ou l'interdiction de la mise sur le marché, de l'importation ou de l'exportation d'aliments pour animaux, de denrées alimentaires ou d'animaux, ou toute autre mesure jugée appropriée.

En outre, l'article 55 du règlement dispose que les États membres définissent des sanctions effectives, proportionnées et dissuasives pour punir les infractions à la législation sur le bien-être animal, et prennent toutes les mesures nécessaires pour garantir leur application.

La Commission veillera à ce que les États membres appliquent les mesures ou sanctions requises pour faire respecter les dispositions européennes en matière de bien-être animal, et engagera au besoin des procédures d'infraction à compter du 1er janvier 2013.

La Commission rassemble actuellement des données sur le futur état d'application de l'obligation relative à la conduite en groupe des truies. La situation s'est améliorée depuis la publication du rapport BPEX ([3]): à ce jour, quatre États membres sont déjà en pleine conformité avec la directive, et dix-huit autres estiment qu'ils le seront d'ici au 1er janvier 2013.

([1]) JO L 47 du 18.2.2009, p. 5.
([2]) JO L 191 du 28.5.2004, p. 1.
([3]) http://www.eurocarne.com/informes/pdf/Market_Impact_of_EU_Regulations_On_Group_Housing_of_Sows.pdf

L'obligation de maintenir les truies en groupe a été adoptée en 2001, et le secteur porcin a bénéficié d'une période de transition suffisamment longue pour s'y adapter; cette disposition s'applique déjà aux nouvelles exploitations porcines des États membres de l'UE-15 depuis le 1er janvier 2003, et à celles des pays de l'UE-12 depuis leur date d'adhésion. La Commission n'a pas l'intention de proposer l'allongement du délai réglementaire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004934/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Directive on pig welfare

Pig producers have recently expressed concerns over compliance with the current European Regulation concerning pig welfare. According to their statements, confirmed by a report on imports by the British inter-professional body BPEX in October 2011, only 40% of Europe's pig population will meet the standards before the deadline (beginning of 2013) provided by the directive. All EU countries, without exception, are lagging behind in transposing the directive and are making roughly the same level of progress in meeting such standards. Despite their best efforts, it now seems technically difficult to imagine that full compliance will be achieved by the end of the year. The delays in the transposition of the directive are explained largely by the difficult situation faced by the pig industry in the last five years. Many farms have been weakened by price increases of raw materials for feeding their animals, which generally account for almost 70% of their costs.

A number of investments have therefore not been completed in time, especially on small farms. Can the Commission say:

— On 1 January 2013, what will farmers have to do with their pig populations that do not comply with the directive?

— Will some of the non-compliant pig meat be considered illegal after the deadline for the implementation of this directive?

— In view of the situation, would the Commission not consider extending the deadline for a further two years to enable all of Europe's farmers to comply with the directive on the welfare of pigs?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

From 1 January 2013, pig keepers not keeping sows in groups will infringe the directive on the protection of pigs ([1]).

Member States are responsible for ensuring the implementation of EU legislation. In case of non-compliance, Article 54 of the regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([2]) on official controls requires they take action to ensure that the operator remedies the situation. Where appropriate, Member States can take measures such as the suspension of operation, or closure of all or part of the business, the restriction or prohibition of the placing on the market, import or export of feed, food or animals, as well as any other measure deemed appropriate.

In addition, Article 55 of the regulation requires that Member States have effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions applicable to infringements to animal welfare rules and that they take all measures necessary to ensure that they are implemented.

The Commission will ensure that Member States take the necessary actions and/or sanctions to implement EU welfare legislation and if necessary, will launch infringement procedures as of 1 January 2013.

The Commission is collecting data on the future state of implementation of group housing of sows. The situation has improved since the publication of the BPEX report ([3]) and at this date, 4 Member States are now already fully compliant and 18 Member States estimate that they will fully comply by 1 January 2013.

The requirement to keep sows in groups was adopted in 2001 and gave a long enough transitional period for the pig sector to adapt; it already applies to all new pig holdings since 1 January 2003 in EU-15 Member States and since the date of accession in EU-12 Member States. The Commission does not intend to make a proposal postponing the legal deadline.

([1]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5.
([2]) OJ L 191, 28.5.2004, p. 1.
([3]) http://www.eurocarne.com/informes/pdf/Market_Impact_of_EU_Regulations_On_Group_Housing_of_Sows.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004935/12
adresată Comisiei
Ioan Enciu (S&D)
(15 mai 2012)

Subiect: Restricții în domeniul muncii impuse de Spania cetățenilor români

Ca răspuns la solicitarea guvernului spaniol, la 11 august 2011 Comisia a emis Decizia 2011/503/UE de autorizare a Spaniei să suspende temporar în cazul lucrătorilor români aplicarea articolelor 1-6 din Regulamentul (UE) nr. 492/2011 privind libera circulație. Această decizie a fost emisă ca urmare a unor grave tulburări ale pieței muncii din Spania și se aplică pe întregul teritoriu al Spaniei și pentru toate sectoarele; restricția va rămâne în vigoare până la 31 decembrie 2012. Cu toate acestea, decizia prevede că ar putea fi abrogată sau domeniul de aplicare al restricțiilor ar putea fi redus în cazul în care Comisia constată că factorii relevanți care au dus la adoptarea deciziei s-au modificat sau că efectele sale se dovedesc a fi mai restrictive decât impune scopul său.

În acest sens, Spaniei i s-a solicitat să furnizeze trimestrial Comisiei date statistice privind situația pieței muncii din toate sectoarele și de pe întregul său teritoriu, pentru a permite Comisiei să evalueze necesitatea modificării sau a abrogării deciziei, primul raport trimestrial trebuind prezentat înainte de 31 decembrie 2011.

1. Spania a furnizat în timp util Comisiei rapoarte privind situația actualizată a pieței muncii de la nivel național din toate sectoarele de activitate și de pe întregul său teritoriu?

2. Care sunt concluziile Comisiei în ceea ce privește evaluarea rapoartelor depuse de Spania?

3. Comisia ia în considerare abrogarea sau modificarea Deciziei 2011/503/UE pentru a elimina sau a limita restricțiile impuse cetățenilor români în cadrul pieței muncii de la nivel național din Spania?

Răspuns dat de dl M. Andor în numele Comisiei
(22 iunie 2012)

La 1 februarie și la 3 mai 2012, Spania a prezentat Comisiei rapoarte privind evoluția pieței forței de muncă. Rapoartele respective prezintă atât situația economică generală și situația pieței forței de muncă din Spania, cât și situația specifică a cetățenilor români care trăiesc în țara respectivă.

Acestea confirmă că piața forței de muncă din Spania rămâne supusă unor perturbări grave, cifre-cheie arătând că situația s-a deteriorat semnificativ după 2008 și odată cu începutul crizei economice. În plus, toate sursele de informații suplimentare furnizate de Spania (cum ar fi ancheta asupra forței de muncă, serviciile de securitate socială și serviciile publice pentru ocuparea forței de muncă) indică o deteriorare a situației deja dificile și, în special, o creștere a ratei șomajului (atingând aproximativ 24,4% în primul trimestru al anului 2012). Se pare că toate sectoarele și regiunile au fost afectate de reducerea nivelului de ocupare a forței de muncă.

Cifrele furnizate în rapoarte arată că, deși numărul cetățenilor români care trăiesc în Spania a continuat să crească în ultimele luni, numărul celor (în vârstă de muncă) care contribuie la securitatea socială a scăzut în continuare, atât în termeni absoluți, cât și în termeni relativi. În plus, numărul cetățenilor români înregistrați ca șomeri la serviciul public pentru ocuparea forței de muncă a crescut, la 31 decembrie 2011, la 95 600 (o creștere de 5 000 de persoane față de trimestrul precedent).

Comisia nu are în vedere revocarea sau modificarea Deciziei 2011/503/UE ([1]) din moment ce rapoartele arată că circumstanțele care au condus la adoptarea acesteia nu s-au modificat.

([1]) Decizia 2011/503/UE a Comisiei din 11 august 2011 de autorizare a Spaniei să suspende temporar în cazul lucrătorilor români aplicarea articolelor 1-6 din Regulamentul (UE) nr. 492/2011 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind libera circulație a lucrătorilor în cadrul Uniunii, JO L 207, 12.8.2011, p. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004935/12
to the Commission
Ioan Enciu (S&D)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Labour restrictions imposed by Spain on Romanian citizens

In response to a request by the Spanish Government, on 11 August 2011 the Commission issued Decision 2011/503/EU authorising Spain to temporarily suspend the application of Articles 1 to 6 of Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 on freedom of movement for Romanian workers. This decision was issued as a result of a serious disturbance in the Spanish labour market and it applies to the entire territory of Spain and to all sectors; the restrictions will remain in place until 31 December 2012. However, the decision stipulates that it could be repealed or the scope of the restrictions could be reduced should the Commission ascertain that the relevant factors which led to its adoption have changed or that its effects prove to be more restrictive than its purpose requires.

To this end, Spain was required to provide statistical data to the Commission, on a quarterly basis, concerning the labour market situation in all sectors of activity and throughout its territory in order for the Commission to evaluate the necessity of amending or repealing the decision, with the first quarterly report to be presented before 31 December 2011.

1. Did Spain provide the Commission with reports concerning the updated situation in the national labour market in all sectors of activity and in its entire territory in a timely fashion?

2. What are the Commission's conclusions with regard to the evaluation of the reports submitted by Spain?

3. Is the Commission considering repealing or amending Decision 2011/503/EU in order to eliminate or limit the restrictions imposed on Romanian citizens in the Spanish national labour market?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(22 June 2012)

On 1 February and 3 May 2012 Spain provided reports to the Commission on the evolution of its labour market. These reports depict both the general economic and labour market situation in Spain and the specific situation of Romanian citizens living in the country.

They confirm that the Spanish labour market remains subject to serious disturbances, key figures showing that the situation has deteriorated significantly since 2008 and the start of the economic crisis. Moreover, all additional data sources provided by Spain (such as the Labour Force Survey, social security and Public Employment Services) point to a worsening of the already difficult situation and, in particular, a rising unemployment rate (reaching around 24.4% in the first quarter of 2012). It seems that all sectors and regions have been affected by this decline in employment.

The figures provided in the reports show that, although the number of Romanian citizens living in Spain has continued to increase in recent months, the number of those (of working-age) contributing to social security has further decreased in both absolute and relative terms. Moreover, the number of Romanian citizens registered as unemployed in the public employment service had increased, on 31 December 2011, to 95 600 (an increase of 5 000 compared to the previous quarter).

The Commission is not considering repealing or amending Decision 2011/503/EU [1] as the reports show that the circumstances which led to its adoption have not changed.

[1] Commission Decision 2011/503/EU of 11 August 2011 authorising Spain to temporarily suspend the application of Articles 1 to 6 of Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on freedom of movement for workers within the Union with regard to Romanian workers, OJ L 207, 12.8.2011, p. 22.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004936/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Batteri come fonte di energia

Dal mondo animale a quello dell'energia. Secondo una ricerca realizzata da studiosi californiani sarà possibile trasformare l'anidride carbonica in benzina, grazie a batteri ingegnerizzati e a un po' di elettricità.

I batteri scelti appartengono a un genere già conosciuto per la capacità di utilizzare idrogeno e sostanze organiche come fonte di energia. I ricercatori li hanno modificati geneticamente, facendo in modo che i sottoprodotti del loro metabolismo siano isobutanolo e metil butanolo, due alcool complessi che possono essere usati nei motori a scoppio come carburante.

Una volta mescolati con CO_2 ed elettricità, i microrganismi si sono dimostrati in grado di trasformare l'anidride carbonica in quantità elevate di questi prodotti. Il sistema è stato studiato per essere accoppiato alle fonti di energia rinnovabili, come l'eolico e il fotovoltaico, che nei momenti di picco hanno una produzione maggiore rispetto al fabbisogno. L'energia in eccesso può essere quindi conservata sotto forma di questi carburanti.

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

— se, visto che il problema dell'energia è oggi una delle principali sfide per l'Europa, e la sua sicurezza e competitività sul mercato sono messe a rischio dall'aumento dei prezzi dell'energia e dalla sua crescente dipendenza dalle importazioni di questa risorsa, non ritiene utile sostenere e finanziare lo studio summenzionato attraverso gli strumenti messi a disposizione per la ricerca e l'innovazione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2012)

Nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7°PQ, 2007-2013) sono stati sostenuti progetti di ricerca e sviluppo sui processi e dispositivi per convertire l'anidride carbonica in carburante liquido o gassoso attraverso procedimenti biologici e grazie alla fotosintesi artificiale che converte il CO_2 in energia: DIRECTFUEL ([1]), SOLARH2 ([2]) e SOLHYDROMICS ([3]) sono esempi di questi progetti finanziati che raggruppano 27 partecipanti per un contributo totale della Commissione pari a 10,5 milioni di euro.

DIRECTFUEL è stato selezionato con un classico invito a presentare proposte che prevedevano temi di ricerca prestabiliti. SOLARH2 e SOLHYDROMICS sono stati selezionati tramite inviti a presentare proposte nell'ambito delle Tecnologie emergenti e future; in quel contesto l'effettivo ambito di ricerca e sviluppo è interamente di competenza della comunità scientifica (ossia gli inviti seguono un approccio dal basso verso l'alto). L'ultimo invito a presentare proposte nel contesto delle Tecnologie emergenti e future del 7°PQ è stato pubblicato nel luglio 2011 ed è attualmente in corso di valutazione.

([1]) http://www.directfuel.eu.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/85749_it.html
http://www.fotomol.uu.se/Forskning/Biomimetics/solarh2/Solarh2.shtm.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/89443_it.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004936/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Bacteria as a source of energy

Energy from the animal world; according to research conducted by Californian scientists, it will be possible to transform carbon dioxide into petrol with the aid of genetically engineered bacteria and a little electricity.

The bacteria chosen belong to a genus already known for its ability to use hydrogen and organic substances as a source of energy. The researchers modified them genetically so that the by-products of their metabolism are isobutanol and methyl butanol, two complex alcohols which can be used in internal combustion engines as fuel.

Once mixed with CO_2 and electricity, the micro-organisms have shown an ability to transform the carbon dioxide into large quantities of these products. The system was studied in order to be combined with various sources of renewable energy, such as wind and solar power, which, at peak times, produce more energy than is needed. The surplus energy can therefore then be conserved in the form of these fuels.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— whether, bearing in mind that the energy problem is one of Europe's main challenges today, and that its security and competitiveness on the market are jeopardised by the rise in energy prices and the growing dependence on imports, it does not agree that it would be useful to support and fund the aforementioned study through the EU's research and innovation instruments?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

Research and development on processes and devices to convert carbon dioxide into liquid or gaseous fuel through biological routes and on artificial photosynthesis to convert carbon dioxide into energy, have been supported under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). DIRECTFUEL ([1]), SOLARH2 ([2]) and SOLHYDROMICS ([3]) are examples of such funded projects. They regroup 27 participants for a total Commission contribution of EUR 10.5 million.

DIRECTFUEL was selected through a classical call for proposals involving pre-defined research topics. SOLARH2, SOLHYDROMICS were selected through Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) calls for proposals. In the context of FET calls, the actual areas for research and development are entirely left to the prerogative of the scientific community (i.e. FET calls follow a 'bottom-up' approach). The last FP7 FET call for proposals was published in July 2011 and is currently under evaluation.

([1]) http://www.directfuel.eu.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/85749_en.html
http://www.fotomol.uu.se/Forskning/Biomimetics/solarh2/Solarh2.shtm.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/89443_en.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004937/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Etichette delle sigarette elettroniche

Le forze dell'ordine di Torino, nell'ambito dei servizi svolti a tutela della sicurezza del consumatore, stanno effettuando controlli sulla distribuzione di sigarette elettroniche che, emulando anche esteticamente i tradizionali prodotti per il fumo, consentono di provare un sapore e una sensazione simili a quelle derivanti dal tabacco tradizionale senza però il rischio cancerogeno legato all'aspirazione di prodotti tossici combusti. La pericolosità di questi apparecchi, in ogni caso, è legata alla presenza di nicotina liquida, sostanza altamente tossica anche al semplice contatto con la pelle che, oltre a generare dipendenza, causa aumento della pressione sanguigna e del battito cardiaco, contrazioni dei vasi sanguigni periferici e, in dosi elevate, gravi sintomi (nausea, vomito, etc.) che possono portare al decesso. Per questo motivo, le confezioni di sigarette elettroniche e di nicotina liquida utilizzata per le ricariche devono riportare indicazioni anche sulla pericolosità del prodotto ed avvertenze sul grado di pericolosità e sulle precauzioni d'uso.

Sui flaconi ci sono illustrazioni di pericolo irregolari o notevolmente più piccole rispetto a quanto prescritto dalla normativa, tali da non consentire al consumatore di rendersi conto della nocività della sostanza contenuta, e non riportano gli avvisi di sicurezza, tra cui quello di conservare il prodotto sotto chiave, con grave pericolo in particolare per la salute dei bambini che, ignari della pericolosità di ogni singolo flacone, potrebbero ingerirne il contenuto con effetti letali.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto si chiede alla Commissione:

1. È a conoscenza dei controlli delle forze dell'ordine italiane sul prodotto summenzionato?

2. Dato che l'etichettatura dei prodotti deve garantire che i consumatori dispongano di informazioni complete sul contenuto e sulla composizione dei prodotti allo scopo di tutelarne la salute e gli interessi, non ritiene che si debba intervenire, in tutti gli Stati membri dove sono in commercio, per verificare se nel confezionamento degli stessi vengano rispettate le norme europee?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2012)

1. La Commissione discute regolarmente sulle sigarette elettroniche con le autorità nazionali nel contesto del comitato di regolamentazione istituito dalla direttiva 2001/37 sui prodotti del tabacco ([1]) ed è generalmente informata sugli sviluppi registrati negli Stati membri.

2. Non vi sono regole comuni stabilite a livello di UE in tema di etichettatura delle sigarette elettroniche. La Commissione sta analizzando una serie di opzioni sul modo per disciplinare i prodotti contenenti nicotina, comprese le sigarette elettroniche. La Commissione non ha raggiunto una posizione nel merito. La proposta legislativa per la revisione della direttiva sui prodotti del tabacco dovrebbe essere adottata entro la fine del 2012.

([1]) GU L 194 del 18.7.2001, pagg. 26-35.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004937/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Labelling on electronic cigarettes

The police in Turin, in the context of providing services to protect consumer safety, are conducting checks on the distribution of electronic cigarettes which emulate traditional cigarettes aesthetically and enable smokers to experience a taste and sensation similar to that derived from traditional tobacco, yet without the carcinogenic risk associated with inhaling toxic combustible substances. However, these devices are dangerous due to the presence of liquid nicotine, a substance which is highly toxic even upon slight skin contact and which, as well as causing addiction, leads to raised blood pressure and heart rate, contraction of peripheral blood vessels and, in high doses, serious symptoms (nausea, vomiting, etc.) which are potentially fatal. For this reason, the packaging of electronic cigarettes and the liquid nicotine used for refills must also bear information about the danger of the product and warnings about the degree of danger and precautions for use.

The bottle displays illustrations showing the dangers, yet these are often incorrect or much smaller than stipulated by law; as a result the harmful aspect of the content is unclear to the consumer. Furthermore, there are no safety warnings, including the fact that the product must be locked away, as it presents a great threat to children who, unaware of the dangers, could swallow the contents with fatal results.

1. Is the Commission aware of the police checks carried out on this product?

2. Given that the labelling of products should ensure that consumers possess full information about the contents and composition of the products in order to protect their health and interests, does it not agree that it should take action, in all Member States where these products are sold, to verify that their packaging complies with EU legislation?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

1. The Commission regularly discusses electronic cigarettes with the national authorities in the context of the Regulatory Committee set up under the Tobacco Products Directive 2001/37 ([1]) and is generally informed about developments in Member States.

2. There are no common rules on labelling for electronic cigarettes established at EU level. The Commission is currently analysing a number of options on how to regulate nicotine-containing products including electronic cigarettes. The Commission has not reached a position on this matter. The legislative proposal for the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive is planned for adoption before the end of 2012.

([1]) OJ L 194, 18.7.2001, pp. 26-35.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004938/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Crisi delle imprese agricole

Sono ormai mesi che il ritornello rimbalza da un'organizzazione agricola all'altra, ed è sempre lo stesso: la crisi sta falcidiando il sistema delle imprese agricole. In Italia il dato è allarmante, con un saldo negativo di 13 335 aziende che hanno chiuso i battenti. La metà delle imprese cancellate in Italia dunque ha il marchio agricolo e ancora una volta a crollare sono le ditte individuali che hanno lasciato sul campo, secondo una rilevazione del terzo trimestre 2012, 13 599 unità. La situazione di difficoltà d'ora in poi, con la stangata IMU e con il costante aumento del gasolio, rischia di appesantirsi ulteriormente. Un dato che si affianca anche al calo dei lavoratori. Insomma, la crisi sta favorendo il processo di svuotamento delle campagne.

A marzo i prezzi pagati agli agricoltori sono scesi del 2,3 % rispetto allo scorso anno, mentre si è verificato un aumento dei costi, a partire dal gasolio che è rincarato del 44 %. Il «credit crunch» ha colpito anche i campi dove sei imprese agricole su dieci hanno difficoltà ad accedere al credito, con il costo del denaro in agricoltura che ha raggiunto il 6 % e risulta superiore del 30 % a quello medio del settore industriale. Si tratta di una situazione di difficoltà che si aggiunge agli effetti dei danni da maltempo.

1. Alla luce di quanto sovraesposto, può la Commissione far sapere se è in possesso di dati inerenti al numero di imprese agricole negli Stati membri che hanno dichiarato fallimento nel primo trimestre del 2012?

2. Quali sono le strategie dell'UE per fronteggiare le criticità e per sostenere la tenuta delle piccole e medie aziende agricole sul territorio europeo, e in particolare quali sono le strategie della PAC dopo il 2013 per favorire l'organizzazione dei nuclei produttivi agricoli?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2012)

La PAC offre ai produttori dell'UE una rete di sicurezza attraverso le misure del primo pilastro, volte a sostenere i redditi agricoli e a stabilizzare i mercati, mentre le misure del secondo pilastro garantiscono flessibilità agli Stati membri per affrontare problematiche specifiche.

Nell'ambito delle proposte per la PAC dopo il 2013, i pagamenti diretti contribuiranno ad assicurare un reddito di base agli agricoltori in modo più mirato e le misure di mercato permetteranno una risposta più efficace per tutti i prodotti agricoli e una maggiore reattività alle minacce di perturbazioni del mercato nella maggior parte dei settori agricoli. Nel secondo pilastro sarà disponibile uno strumentario potenziato per la gestione dei rischi e misure volte a incoraggiare i produttori a riorganizzarsi, a diversificare la produzione e ad avere un accesso migliore ai mercati.

Per quanto concerne la promozione dell'attività cooperativa, si propone di introdurre l'obbligo di riconoscimento, in tutti gli Stati membri e per tutti i settori agricoli, delle organizzazioni di produttori, delle loro associazioni o organizzazioni interprofessionali, in modo da garantire la certezza del diritto e pari condizioni. Il finanziamento previsto dal secondo pilastro per la creazione di gruppi di produttori è esteso a tutti i settori e a tutti gli Stati membri.

La partecipazione a tali forme di cooperazione potrebbe essere facilitata dall'adozione di misure intese ad esempio a sensibilizzare in merito alle possibilità a disposizione degli agricoltori, come il sistema di consulenza aziendale e alcune misure del secondo pilastro volte a promuovere la conoscenza e l'innovazione. Le misure a favore dell'attività cooperativa proposte nell'ambito del secondo pilastro prevedono diverse forme di sostegno possibili per le piccole e medie aziende agricole (tra gli altri beneficiari), quali ad esempio l'utilizzo comune di strutture e risorse, lo sviluppo di filiere corte, ecc.

Per quanto riguarda la domanda dell'onorevole parlamentare sui dati relativi al numero di aziende negli Stati membri che hanno dichiarato lo stato di fallimento, si prega di notare che i servizi della direzione generale Agricoltura e dello sviluppo rurale non sono al corrente della raccolta di tali informazioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004938/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Farming crisis

The same story has been repeated for several months now, from a variety of farming organisations: the recession is destroying the farming system. The data in Italy are alarming, with a total of 13 335 businesses being forced to close. Half of the businesses which have been wiped out in Italy are connected with agriculture and once again it is the sole trader sector which has lost a total of 13 599 businesses, according to information released for the third quarter of 2012. There is a risk of this difficult situation becoming even worse, with the IMU (Imposta Municipale Unica [Single Municipal Tax]) tax hike and constantly rising diesel fuel prices. These data go hand in hand with a fall in the number of workers. In conclusion, the crisis is contributing to a depopulation process in the countryside.

In March 2012, prices paid to farmers fell by 2.3% compared with last year, while costs continued to rise, starting with diesel fuel which increased by 44%. The credit crunch has also had an effect in this sector, with six out of ten farms finding it hard to obtain credit, with the interest rate in agriculture reaching 6%, which is 30% higher than the average level in the industrial sector. This is a difficult situation which has been exacerbated by the damage caused by bad weather.

1. In view of the above, can the Commission state whether it possesses data on the number of farms in Member States which have declared bankruptcy in the first quarter of 2012?

2. What are the EU strategies for dealing with this crisis and for helping small and medium-sized farms in Europe to survive, and in particular what will the CAP strategies be after 2013 to promote the organisation of productive agricultural groups?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

The CAP provides a safety net to EU producers through Pillar I measures that support farm income and stabilise markets while Pillar II measures provide flexibility to Member States in addressing specific challenges.

In the context of the proposals for the CAP post-2013, direct payments will contribute to a basic income to farmers with improved targeting, and market measures will enable a more efficient response for all agricultural products, as well as an increased responsiveness to threat of market disturbance in most agricultural sectors. Pillar II will provide an improved risk management toolkit and measures that encourage producers to restructure, diversify production and improve access to markets.

On promoting cooperation, the mandatory recognition of producer organisations, their associations and interbranch organisations in all Member States and all agricultural sectors is proposed, granting legal certainty and ensuring a level playing field. Pillar II funding for the setting up of producer groups is extended to all sectors and all Member States.

The participation in such forms of cooperation could be facilitated through measures that could be used to raise awareness of the possibilities for farmers, such as the farm advisory system and certain Pillar II measures promoting knowledge and innovation. The 'cooperation' measure proposed under Pillar II would offer a range of potential types of support to small and medium-sized farms (among other beneficiaries) — e.g. to share facilities and resources, to build short supply chains, etc.

Regarding your request for data on the number of farms in Member States which have declared bankruptcy, please note that my services are not aware of the collection of such information.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004939/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Naso elettronico per scoprire i tumori dal respiro

Un naso elettronico per scoprire l'avvio di un tumore quando ancora non risulta da nessun altro test. È questo il nuovo studio di un ricercatore italiano che utilizza lo strumento per analizzare l'odore dell'aria inspirata, quindi niente di invasivo. Di nasi elettronici già ne esistono, sperimentali o meno, ma l'idea è scoprire gli odori giusti da individuare e i sensori capaci di registrarli. I sensori sono il naso, il cervello è un computer. Si è già sperimentato che le cellule sane cambiano odore quando si trasformano in malate, un cambiamento impercettibile, ma talmente precoce da consentire di intervenire su un apparente organismo sano in modo da evitare lo sviluppo della malattia. Ciò comporta la possibilità di ottenere informazioni utili dai messaggi odorosi provenienti dalle urine, dall'alito o dalla pelle dei pazienti affetti da varie patologie.

Studi preliminari sulla composizione dell'espirato per la diagnosi di patologie come la schizofrenia, le infiammazioni all'apparato respiratorio o tumori a carico dei polmoni e del fegato hanno già fornito interessanti risultati. Ma non basta l'olfatto umano. Troppi gli odori cellulari tra cui distinguere, quasi impercettibili i cambiamenti quando si è all'inizio della trasformazione di ciò che è sano in malato.

Il primo passo è analizzare, con sensori altamente innovativi, le sostanze volatili emesse da linee cellulari isolate da tessuto normale e tumorale a vario stadio di differenziazione. Così si potrà creare la «memoria» olfattiva del computer-cervello. Una banca di «impronte olfattive» (come quelle digitali) dei vari tumori (polmone, mammella, pelle, tiroide, fegato), del loro stadio di sviluppo, della risposta ai farmaci. Il tutto senza prelievi di sangue o quant'altro di invasivo ma solo espirando aria sul «naso elettronico».

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto si chiede alla Commissione:

1. È a conoscenza del nuovo studio del ricercatore italiano?

2. Vista l'importanza che la tutela della salute riveste nelle politiche dell'UE, non ritiene che si debba finanziarla per consentire di tradurre lo studio in applicazioni cliniche?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole parlamentare.

Relativamente ai nasi elettronici impiegati per la scoperta di tumore mediante analisi dell'aria espirata, la Commissione, nell'ambito del settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013), sta finanziando il progetto LCAOS (Un naso artificiale su scala nanometrica per individuare facilmente i biomarcatori volatili fin dalle prime fasi di tumore al polmone e le relative mutazioni genetiche). Il progetto è stato avviato nell'aprile 2011, ha una durata di 4 anni e riceve un contributo totale dell'UE di 4 140 174 EUR. Il lavoro previsto dal progetto comprende studi clinici intesi a valutare le condizioni di tumore del polmone nei pazienti e nei tessuti ([1]).

([1]) Ulteriori informazioni sono disponibili sul sito web del progetto: www.lcaos.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004939/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Electronic nose to detect tumours via breath

An electronic nose has been developed that can detect the onset of cancer in a way that no other tests can. This new study has been conducted by an Italian researcher using the instrument to analyse the odour of inhaled air, which is in no way invasive. Electronic noses already exist and have been experimented with, but the idea here is to pinpoint the right odours and the sensors able to record them. Those sensors are the nose, the brain and a computer. Experiments have already shown that the odour of healthy cells changes when they become diseased. The change is imperceptible, but occurs early enough to enable intervention on an apparently healthy organism in order to stop the disease developing. This includes the possibility of obtaining useful information from odour messages contained in the urine, breath and skin of patients with a range of pathologies.

Preliminary studies into the composition of exhaled air aimed at diagnosing pathologies such as schizophrenia, inflammation of the respiratory system and lung and liver tumours has provided interesting results. But the human nose is not enough. There are too many different cellular odours to distinguish between and the changes that take place when healthy cells first become diseased are almost imperceptible.

The first step is to analyse, with highly innovative sensors, volatile substances emitted by cell lines isolated from normal and cancerous tissue at various stages of differentiation. It will thus be possible to create an olfactory 'memory' in the computer-brain: a database of 'olfactory prints' (like fingerprints) of the various types of tumour (lung, breast, skin, thyroid, liver), of their stage of development and of how they respond to drugs. And all this without taking blood samples or performing invasive surgery; all the subject has to do is breathe onto the 'electronic nose'.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the Italian researcher's new study?

2. whether, in view of the importance awarded to safeguarding health in EU policies, it does not feel that funding should be made available so that this study can be translated into clinical applications?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the information provided by the Honourable Member.

Regarding electronic noses to discover cancer from exhaled breath, the Commission is funding a project under its Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), which is entitled 'A Nanoscale Artificial Nose to easily detect Volatile Biomarkers at Early stages of Lung Cancer and Related Genetic Mutations' (LCAOS). The project started in April 2011, has a duration of 4 years and receives a total EU contribution of EUR 4,140,174. The work to be carried out in the project includes clinical-related studies to assess lung cancer conditions in actual patients and tissues ([1]).

([1]) Further information is available from the project website: www.lcaos.eu/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004940/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Regolamentazione del gioco d'azzardo

Le forze dell'ordine di Catania, nell'ambito di controlli finalizzati a contrastare il fenomeno del gioco d'azzardo, hanno scoperto nelle sale di un lussuoso albergo, inaugurato da poco tempo vicino alla Riviera dei Ciclopi di Acireale, un vero e proprio Casinò, dove si stava svolgendo un torneo illegale di poker. I militari hanno identificato e denunciato venticinque persone per gioco illegale, tra cui due organizzatori, sprovvisti della prevista autorizzazione rilasciata dallo Stato, e il direttore dell'albergo per avere messo a disposizione la sala. È stato accertato che si trattava di un torneo dal montepremi molto ricco data la presenza di 180 giocatori provenienti da ogni parte della Sicilia.

Gli Stati membri mostrano una grande disparità nel modo in cui gestiscono il rilascio delle licenze, nella regolamentazione e nella vigilanza dei giochi online. I quadri giuridici nazionali variano notevolmente da un paese dell'UE all'altro, imponendo regole diverse in materia di rilascio delle licenze, servizi on line connessi, pagamenti, obiettivi d'interesse pubblico e lotta contro la frode.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è a conoscenza del blitz delle forze dell'ordine italiane?

2. Si intende giungere alla realizzazione di un mercato interno regolamentato con norme comuni per tutti gli Stati membri, anche in materia di pubblicità dei giochi?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(20 luglio 2012)

Come già indicato di recente all'onorevole parlamentare ([1]), la Commissione riconosce l'importanza della questione sollevata nell'interrogazione.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che le forze di polizia italiane effettuano blitz ed arresti per contrastare il gioco d'azzardo illegale e prende atto delle informazioni comunicate dall'onorevole parlamentare. È altresì a conoscenza del fatto che le autorità italiane ricorrono a una gamma di misure a difesa di tutti i cittadini, in particolare al fine di tutelare i consumatori dai rischi di frode, riciclaggio del denaro e sviluppo di problematiche legate al gioco d'azzardo.

2. Attualmente gli Stati membri possono stabilire i loro obiettivi politici, a condizione che siano conformi alla giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea nel quadro delle disposizioni del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea relative alla libera prestazione di servizi e alla libertà di stabilimento. Tuttavia, a seguito di un'indagine svolta lo scorso anno, si prevede di adottare entro il 2012 una comunicazione sul gioco d'azzardo on-line nel mercato interno ([2]). La Commissione sta vagliando diverse opzioni politiche, anche in tema di pubblicità, a livello sia di UE sia nazionale, al fine di assicurare una protezione adeguata dei consumatori e cittadini, compresi i minori e i gruppi vulnerabili.

La Commissione ricorda che vigono norme dell'UE a tutela dell'interesse economico dei consumatori vulnerabili, anche nell'ambito del gioco d'azzardo on-line (direttiva 2005/29/CE) ([3]).

([1]) E-370/12 (Silvestris).
([2]) Seguito al Libro verde sul gioco d'azzardo on-line nel mercato interno (COM(2011)128 definitivo).
([3]) E-4100/12 (Muscardini).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004940/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Regulation of gambling

As part of an operation to curb gambling, the Catania police force discovered that a luxury hotel which opened recently near Acireale's Riviera dei Ciclopi contained an actual casino. An illegal poker tournament was in progress in the casino. The police identified and charged 25 people with illegal gaming, including two organisers who lacked the required state authorisation, and the hotel manager for allowing them to use the room. It was ascertained that there was a large jackpot, given the presence of 180 players from all over Sicily.

Member States do not have a harmonised management of licensing, regulation and supervision of online gaming. National legal frameworks vary greatly from one EU country to another, applying different legislation to licensing, connected online services, payments, public-interest objectives and the fight against fraud.

Given the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of the Italian police raid?

2. Does it intend to achieve an internal market governed by common rules that are applicable in all Member States, including in relation to gambling advertising?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(20 July 2012)

The Commission recognises the relevance of the issue raised, as stated recently to the Honourable Member ([1]).

1. The Commission is aware of raids and arrests that the Italian police carry out to combat illegal gambling operations and takes note of the information provided by the Honourable Member. The Commission is aware that a range of measures to protect all citizens are pursued by the Italian authorities with a view to protecting consumers against fraud, money laundering or the development of problem gambling.

2. Currently, Member States can set their policy objectives provided these are in accordance with the case-law of the CJEU under the TFEU provisions on the freedom to provide services and the freedom of establishment. Notwithstanding this and further to the fact-finding exercise carried out last year a communication on Online Gambling in the internal market is foreseen for adoption in 2012 ([2]). The Commission is looking at a number of policy options, including advertising, both at EU level and at national level, with a view to ensure an appropriate protection of consumers and citizens, including minors and vulnerable groups.

The Commission would like to recall that there is EU legislation which protects the economic interest of vulnerable consumers, including for online gambling (Directive 2005/29/EC) ([3]).

([1]) E-370/12 (Silvestris).
([2]) Follow-up to the Green Paper consultation on Online Gambling in the internal market (COM(201) 12 final).
([3]) E-4100/12 (Muscardini).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004941/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti, città di Isernia

Gli enti territoriali, quali Comuni e Province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei fondi diretti programmati ed erogati dalle direzioni generali della Commissione europea. Tra i fondi disponibili ci sono ad esempio quelli destinati al programma «Cultura», al programma per l'occupazione e la solidarietà sociale Progress, al programma per la cittadinanza «Europa per i cittadini», a quello per l'ambiente Life+, a quello per la gestione dei flussi migratori «Gestione dei flussi migratori», a quello dedicato alle risorse umane «Investire nelle persone» e tanti altri.

In merito a questo e ad altri programmi disponibili, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Ci sono programmi per i quali la città di Isernia ha fatto richiesta?

2. In caso affermativo, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati suddetti programmi sono stati portati a termine?

Risposta di Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(5 luglio 2012)

Finora la città di Isernia non ha presentato alcuna richiesta per accedere ai fondi UE gestiti dalla direttamente Commissione.

La Commissione nota che l'onorevole parlamentare è interessato ai finanziamenti concessi direttamente alle città italiane nel quadro di specifici programmi UE gestiti dalla Commissione. Se l'onorevole parlamentare lo desidera, la Commissione è disposta a fornirgli una tabella contenente queste informazioni per le principali città italiane che probabilmente partecipano ai programmi in questione; ciò darebbe all'onorevole parlamentare un unico insieme esauriente di dati, evitando alla Commissione di dover rispondere a ogni singola domanda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004941/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Direct funding programmes — town of Isernia

Local and regional authorities, such as municipalities and provinces, are among the main potential recipients of the direct funding programmed and allocated by the European Commission's directorates-general. The funds available include those under the 'Culture' programme, the 'Progress' programme for employment and social solidarity, the 'Europe for citizens' programme for citizenship, the 'Life+' programme for the environment, the 'Management of migration flows' programme, the 'Investing in people' programme dedicated to human resources, and many others.

With regard to this and other available programmes, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Are there any programmes for which the town of Isernia has applied?

2. If so, which projects have been given access to European funds and what was the outcome of the programmes concerned?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

The town of Isernia has not so far applied for any funding directly managed by the Commission.

The Commission notes that the Honourable Member is interested in the funding granted directly to Italian cities from specific EU programmes managed by the Commission. Should the Honourable Member so wish, the Commission could prepare a table providing this information for the major Italian cities likely to take part in these programmes. This would save the Commission time needed to reply to each individual question and provide the Honourable Member with one single set of comprehensive data.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004942/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Application process for Commission staff

Can the Commission please detail any plans to streamline the application process for positions as civil servants in the Commission, as this inefficient process may lead to a concentration of Belgian nationals (who can easily wait two years in Brussels for a position) and an inadequate number of civil servants from other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

Between 2008 and 2011 the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) implemented a far-reaching programme of modernisation and improvement of selection procedures. The EPSO Development Programme (EDP) with its three pillars of action has helped Institutions attract a diverse range of top quality applications from all over Europe. Introducing improved planning and faster and more targeted recruitment, the new system established annual competitions for the most common job profiles, allowing candidates to plan applications effectively and helping strategic human resource planning by the institutions. It is faster and more efficient, involving fewer steps than the previous set-up; and stronger, shifting the emphasis from knowledge to competency-based assessment. Improvements are leading to greater efficiency and reduced wastage.

Reserve lists more accurately reflect the real and immediate needs of the recruiting services expressed in the 3-year rolling strategic human resources planning exercise conducted by the institutions. The actual number of selected laureates is better aligned to the budgetary possibilities of the institutions, resulting in a better exploitation rate of the reserve lists.

In addition to modernising and streamlining the selection procedure, the EDP included a strategy to attract the right talent and position the European public service as an attractive career choice. Approaches include use of social media, digital marketing, pod and webcasts, EU Careers student 'Ambassadors' from Member States who promote EU careers on campuses, and close collaboration with national governments. Together with the institutions, EPSO constantly monitors the geographical composition of competitions and addresses situations where the number of applications is sub-optimal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004943/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Staff ratios in the Commission

Can the Commission please detail how it determines the geographical diversity of Commission staff?

For instance, is there a ratio of Member State population to Commission officials applied to ensure geographical diversity?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

The Treaties and the Staff Regulations, more precisely the second paragraph of Article 27, do not allow for the establishment of quotas based on nationality but call for recruitment on the broadest possible geographical basis. In order to ensure an adequate presence of the new Member States' citizens, the European Parliament and the Council have allowed by regulation for a priority recruitment of such persons following enlargements. The method of calculation of recruitment targets was then based on the following criteria: population size, number of seats in the European Parliament and weighted votes in the Council.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004944/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Linguistic bias in the selection of Commission staff

Can the Commission please respond to the observation that there is a linguistic bias in the hiring of EU civil service officials, as a result of which Member States which do not have French as an official language (such as the UK) are not adequately represented amongst the staff at the Commission and other EU institutions?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

The Commission cannot confirm such a bias.

Article 27 of the Staff Regulations sets out that officials are to be recruited 'on the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States of the Communities'. According to the second paragraph of Article, 'No posts shall be reserved for nationals of any specific Member State'.

The fact that the representation of certain Member States is not proportionate to their population may have different explanations, including a possible lack of interest or information of the citizens of a given Member State, the employment conditions offered by the institutions to staff and their families or the location of the seats of the various institutions and agencies.

The distribution of Commission officials by nationality and grade is detailed in the Draft Budget of 2012 (COM(2011) 300 — May 2011 Draft General Budget of the European Commission for the Financial year 2012 — Working document Par II-Commission Human Resources, pages 15, 22, 30).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004945/12
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Lack of distinction between computer programs designed to commit offences and those used for benign software development

A report adopted by the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE) on 27 March 2012 relating to cyber attacks on IT systems has suggested that possessing or distributing hacking software and tools would be an offence, and companies would be liable for cyber attacks committed for their benefit. By what criteria would a tool be judged to be 'designed for cyber-attacks'?

Could there be a lack of distinction between programs supposedly used to commit offences and those used daily for benign software development and IT purposes?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The European Commission's proposal for a directive on attacks against information systems includes measures criminalising the use of tools to commit attacks information systems. The proposal stipulates that the production, sale, procurement for use, import, possession, distribution or otherwise making available of tools (as defined by Art. 7) designed or adapted primarily for the purpose of committing any of the offences referred to in Art. 3-6 is a criminal offence. Moreover, the directive considers it an aggravating circumstance when the offences referred to in Art. 3-6 are committed through the use of a tool designed to launch attacks affecting a significant number of information systems, or attacks causing considerable damage, such as the disruption of system services, financial cost or loss of personal data. By proposing these measures, the Commission has sought to address the rapidly growing number and scale of cyber attacks that are increasingly committed by using these tools, e.g. computer programme, enabling the launch of large-scale attacks.

The Commission is fully conscious of the fact that legitimate tools may exist for instance to conduct authorised testing in order to improve the protection of information systems that could also be used by offenders to commit cyber attacks. It is for that reason that the Commission has limited its Article 7 (tools used for committing offences) to tools 'designed or adapted primarily for the purpose of committing any of the offences'. Moreover, the definition of each offence (Art. 3-7) includes limitations to the offence being committed intentionally and without right. In addition Recital 10 clarifies that the 'Directive does not intend to impose criminal liability where the offences are committed without criminal intent, such as for authorised testing or protection of information systems'.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004946/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(15. Mai 2012)

Betrifft: Unternehmerinnen in Europa

Seit 1997 ist der Prozentanteil der von Frauen gegründeten Jungunternehmen um 13 % angestiegen. 2007 gründeten 25 206 Menschen Unternehmen, von denen 40,1 % Frauen waren. 1997 hingegen entsprach dieser Anteil 27,1 % bzw. 15 817 Frauen. 2007 wurden etwa 32,5 % aller österreichischen Unternehmen von Frauen geleitet. Das Durchschnittsalter von Unternehmerinnen liegt bei 45 Jahren.

Im Hinblick auf Führungspositionen, die in Österreich in der Hand von Frauen sind, werden 16 % der Unternehmen mit über 50 Mitarbeitern von Geschäftsführerinnen geleitet und 3 % von weiblichen Verwaltungsratsmitgliedern. In 83 % aller österreichischen Unternehmen befindet sich mindestens eine Frau in einer leitenden Funktion. Über 30 % aller Unternehmen haben mehr als drei weibliche Führungskräfte. (Diese Statistiken stammen aus einer Umfrage, die von „Women in Business" (AFEC) und dem Bundesministerium für Gesundheit und Frauen veranlasst wurde.)

1. Welche Daten werden der Kommission zufolge im Hinblick auf Unternehmen erfasst, die in Europa und speziell in Österreich von Frauen geführt werden?

2. Welche sind nach Ansicht der Kommission die größten Herausforderungen, denen Frauen ausgesetzt sind, wenn sie in Österreich ein Unternehmen gründen oder führen möchten?

3. Welchen Beitrag kann die Kommission hinsichtlich der Rolle der Frauen leisten, indem sie als Fürsprecher für die unternehmerische Beteiligung von Frauen auftritt?

4. Welche Mechanismen beabsichtigt die Kommission einzuführen, damit in Unternehmen „frauenfreundliche" Rahmenbedingungen geschaffen werden?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juli 2012)

Frauen stellen 34,4 % der Selbstständigen in der EU und nur 20 % der Unternehmerinnen im industriellen Bereich. Unter den Existenzgründern beträgt ihr Anteil etwa 30 %. Etwa 40,3 % der österreichischen Unternehmen (circa 120 000) werden von Frauen geführt. Im Jahr 2011 gründeten 30 364 Personen ein Unternehmen, davon waren 55,1 % Frauen. Das Durchschnittsalter von Unternehmerinnen liegt bei 45,4 Jahren.

Bei der Gründung und beim Betrieb ihres Unternehmens stehen Frauen vor größeren Schwierigkeiten als Männer. In Österreich liegen diese Schwierigkeiten — ebenso wie in der gesamten EU — im Zugang zu Schulungen, Finanzmitteln und Netzwerken sowie in der Vereinbarkeit geschäftlicher und familiärer Pflichten (beispielsweise durch das Fehlen geeigneter Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen).

Die Kommission setzt sich für die Stärkung der Rolle der Frau auf allen Ebenen ein. Dem dienen zielgerichtete Maßnahmen für Unternehmerinnen und die Förderung von Frauen in Aufsichtsräten und Entscheidungspositionen sowie die Arbeit der Kommission in Gleichstellungsfragen.

Zur Unterstützung des weiblichen Unternehmertums in Europa arbeitet die Kommission derzeit an Maßnahmen, mit denen Unternehmensnetzwerke für Frauen sowie der Unternehmergeist gestärkt und der Zugang zu Finanzmitteln und Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen verbessert werden sollen. In dem von der Kommission in 22 europäischen Ländern geschaffenen Europäischen Netzwerk für Botschafterinnen des Unternehmertums wirken erfolgreiche Unternehmerinnen als Rollenmodelle, um Frauen aller Altersgruppen zur Gründung ihres eigenen Unternehmens zu ermutigen.

Überdies erhalten Frauen über das Europäische Mentoring-Netz für Unternehmerinnen in 17 europäischen Ländern frühzeitig Rat und Unterstützung bei der Gründung, dem Betrieb und der Entwicklung ihres Unternehmens.

Schließlich wird auch der Aktionsplan zur Förderung der unternehmerischen Initiative, an dem die Kommission derzeit arbeitet, besondere Maßnahmen für Unternehmerinnen umfassen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004946/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Female entrepreneurship in Europe

Since 1997 the percentage of female start-ups has increased by 13%. In 2007, 25 206 people established businesses, 40.1% of them women, as against 27.1% (15 817) in 1997. In 2007 about 32.5% of all Austrian businesses were managed by women. The average age of female entrepreneurs is 45.

As regards representation of women in leading roles in Austrian businesses, 16% of businesses with more than 50 employees are headed by female managing directors and 3% by female members of management boards. 83% of Austrian companies have at least one woman in a leading position. More than 30% of all companies have more than three female leaders. (The statistics come from a survey initiated by 'Women in Business' (AFEC) and the Federal Ministry for Health and Women.)

1. According to the Commission, what data are collected regarding businesses owned by women in Europe and in Austria?

2. What are the key challenges women face in setting up and running businesses in Austria, according to the Commission?

3. How can the Commission contribute to the role of women as advocates of women's involvement in business on behalf of women?

4. What mechanisms does the Commission intend to adopt in order to establish 'female-friendly' business policies?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

Women entrepreneurs constitute 34.4% of the self-employed in the EU and only 20% in industry. Their share in start-ups is around 30%. Approximately 40.3% of the Austrian companies (around 120 000) are led by women. In 2011, 30 364 people established an enterprise, of which 55.1% were women. The average age of female entrepreneurs is 45.4 years.

Women face a number of difficulties in establishing and running their businesses which are more significant than for men. In Austria — as in all EU — difficulties are mainly in the areas of access to training, finance and networking, and in reconciling business and family obligations (for example, lack of appropriate childcare facilities).

The Commission is working for women's empowerment in all levels, by targeting actions for women enterpreneurship, encouraging women on boards and decision making places and on gender equality issues.

The Commission is working on actions to support female entrepreneurship in Europe by encouraging business networks for women, providing schemes for entrepreneurship mindsets, facilitating access to finance and access to childcare. The Commission has set up the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors in 22 European countries, whereby successful business women are acting as role models to encourage women of all ages to start up their own business.

Moreover, the European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs in 17 European countries provides advice and support to women entrepreneurs on the start-up, functioning and growth of their enterprises in the early.

Finally, the Commission is currently working on an Entrepreneurship Action Plan that will include female entrepreneurship actions.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004947/12
till kommissionen
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(15 maj 2012)

Angående: Biståndsprojekt som betalats med EU-pengar förstörda av Israel

Enligt en grupp NGO:er under ledning av FN:s kontor för humanitärt bistånd (OCHA), har Israels regering förstört en stor mängd hus, gårdar och vattencisterner vilka betalats med pengar från bland annat Europeiska kommissionen. Förra året förstördes 62 byggprojekt och ytterligare 110 rapporteras vara i riskzonen.

Vad avser kommissionen att vidta för åtgärder?

Svar från den höga representanten/vice ordförande Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar
(6 juli 2012)

EU är fullt medveten om OCHA:s rapporter om nyligen givarfinansierade strukturer som har förstörts eller riskerar att förstöras. EU är den största givaren till den palestinska myndigheten och förväntar sig att dess investeringar till stöd för det palestinska folket skyddas från skador och förstörelse.

EU anser att otillbörlig förstörelse av palestinsk egendom strider mot internationell rätt. Denna ståndpunkt har tydliggjorts i rådets slutsatser. EU:s kontor i östra Jerusalem har tidigare inkommit med en protest till det israeliska försvarsministeriet till följd av händelser som lett till skador på eller förstörelse av EU-finansierade projekt. Frågan om skador på och förstörelse av EU-finansierade projekt har också tagits upp med Israel inom ramen för den politiska dialogen mellan EU och Israel.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004947/12
to the Commission
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: EU-funded aid projects destroyed by Israel

According to a group of NGOs led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Israeli Government has demolished a large number of buildings, farms and water tanks that were paid for with money from the European Commission, among other bodies. Last year, 62 construction projects were demolished and another 110 projects are reported to be in the risk zone.

What action does the Commission intend to take?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

The EU is fully aware of the reports from OCHA regarding recent donor-funded structures that have been demolished or remain at risk of demolition. The EU is the largest donor to the Palestinian Authority and expects its investments in support of the Palestinian people to be protected from damage and destruction.

The EU considers the unwarranted demolition or destruction of Palestinian property to be illegal under International law. It has made this position clear in Council conclusions. The EU Office in East Jerusalem has in the past logged a protest with the Israeli Ministry of Defence following incidents leading to the damage or destruction of EU funded projects. The question of damage and destruction of EU funded projects is also raised with Israel in the framework of the EU-Israel political dialogue.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004948/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — 1 500 palestinos encarcelados en huelga de hambre: arbitrarias detenciones administrativas masivas por parte de Israel y condiciones infrahumanas de los presos palestinos

Según datos oficiales, cerca de 1 500 palestinos encarcelados se encuentran actualmente en huelga de hambre para protestar contra las condiciones que tienen que soportar y contra el uso extendido de la detención administrativa por parte de Israel. La mayor parte de los palestinos encarcelados comenzaron la huelga de hambre el 17 de abril pero varios iniciaron la protesta antes. Así, palestinos encarcelados como Bilal Diab, Tha'er Halahlah, Hassan Safadi y Omar Abu Shalal llevan ya más de 70 días sin comer, corriendo su vida un grave peligro.

Actualmente, hay más de 4 500 ciudadanos palestinos encerrados en cárceles israelíes, 300 de los cuales están bajo detención administrativa, una práctica militar que permite a las autoridades detener, durante un tiempo indefinido, a personas aún sin existir cargos ni pruebas contra ellas y sin la celebración de ningún juicio. Además, según un estudio reciente de una organización israelí, alrededor del 20 % (un 40 % en el caso de los hombres) de los palestinos residentes en los territorios ocupados han sido arrestados en algún momento de su vida.

Las principales exigencias de las personas palestinas en huelga de hambre son derechos básicos de cualquier sistema democrático supuestamente defensor y garante de los derechos humano: fin de las condiciones infrahumanas a las que son sometidos los presos (torturas psicológicas, maltratos, denegación de visitas de los familiares e investigaciones arbitrarias contra éstos, regímenes brutales de aislamiento…) y el fin de las detenciones administrativas.

Teniendo en cuenta que las detenciones administrativas y las condiciones infrahumanas impuestas a los presos palestinos suponen el incumplimiento por parte de Israel del Derecho Internacional, incluidos los Convenios de Ginebra, y a todas luces demuestran el escaso respeto de las autoridades de este país por los derechos humanos y los principios democráticos básicos:

— ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante pronunciarse públicamente para presionar y exigir al Gobierno de Israel que ponga fin a las detenciones administrativas y mejore las condiciones a las que están sometidos los presos palestinos en las cárceles israelíes?

— ¿Ha trasladado, o piensa trasladar, la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante al Gobierno de Israel su preocupación por la situación de estos presos palestinos cuya vida está en grave peligro?

— ¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que las autoridades israelíes están infringiendo la cláusula segunda del Acuerdo de Asociación que mantiene la UE con Israel?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2012)

La AR/VP y los Jefes de Misión de la UE en Jerusalén se han pronunciado en varias ocasiones sobre las condiciones de los palestinos en las cárceles israelíes y sobre el uso excesivo, por parte de Israel, de la detención administrativa, en el contexto de las recientes huelgas de hambre.

La AR/VP declaró el 14 de mayo de 2012:

«En nuestros debates hemos examinado también la huelga de hambre de los presos palestinos. Hemos seguido este tema muy de cerca y seguimos comprometidos con los esfuerzos actuales por encontrar una solución, incluso a través de nuestra Delegación. Nuestros Jefes de Misión ya se pronunciaron sobre esta cuestión la semana pasada.

Estamos muy preocupados por el crítico estado de salud de los palestinos detenidos por el gobierno israelí que llevan en huelga de hambre más de dos meses. Existen indicios positivos sobre una posible solución, e insto a Israel y a todas las partes a que hagan todo lo necesario por encontrar una solución inmediata a la situación actual y eviten la pérdida de vidas.»

El 14 de mayo de 2012 las autoridades israelíes y los representantes de los presos llegaron a un acuerdo. La AR/VP solicita a todas las partes a que el acuerdo se implemente de forma íntegra y sin demora.

La UE trata con frecuencia cuestiones relacionadas con las condiciones de los presos palestinos en las cárceles israelíes en sus reuniones bilaterales con Israel. La AR/VP está especialmente preocupada por el uso excesivo, por parte de Israel, de la detención administrativa. Los detenidos tienen derecho a ser informados acerca de los motivos de su detención y a recibir un juicio justo sin dilación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004948/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Hunger strike by 1 500 Palestinian prisoners: arbitrary mass administrative detentions by Israel and subhuman conditions of Palestinian prisoners

According to official figures, around 1 500 Palestinian prisoners are currently on hunger strike to protest against the conditions they have to endure and against the widespread use of administrative detention by Israel. Most of the Palestinian prisoners started the hunger strike on 17 April 2012, although several began the protest earlier. Thus, Palestinian prisoners such as Bilal Diab, Tha'er Halahlah, Hassan Safadi and Omar Abu Shalal have not eaten for more than 70 days, putting their lives in grave danger.

There are currently more than 4 500 Palestinian citizens held in Israeli prisons, 300 of whom are under administrative detention, a military practice which allows the authorities to detain people indefinitely, without there being charges or evidence against them and without any trial taking place. Furthermore, according to a recent study by an Israeli organisation, around 20% (40% in the case of men) of Palestinians living in the occupied territories have been arrested at some point in their life.

The main demands of the Palestinians on hunger strike are the basic rights of any democratic system supposed to defend and uphold human rights: an end to the subhuman conditions inflicted on prisoners (psychological torture, harassment, denying visits to family members and arbitrarily investigating them, brutal isolation regimes) and an end to administrative detentions.

Considering that administrative detentions and the subhuman conditions imposed on Palestinian prisoners mean that Israel is in breach of international law, including the Geneva Conventions, and clearly demonstrate the Israeli authorities' scant regard for human rights and basic democratic principles:

— Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to make a public statement to put pressure on the Israeli Government and demand that it put an end to administrative detentions and improve the conditions endured by Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons?

— Has the Vice-President/High Representative conveyed to the Israeli Government her concern for the plight of these Palestinian prisoners whose lives are in grave danger?

— Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider the Israeli authorities to be in breach of Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2012)

The HR/VP and EU Heads of Mission in Jerusalem have made a number of statements on the conditions of detention of Palestinians in Israeli prisons and the excessive use by Israel of the practice of administrative detention against the background of the recent hunger strikes.

The HR/VP stated on 14 May 2012:

'In the course of our discussions we have also looked at the hunger strike by Palestinian prisoners. We have been following this issue very closely and have remained engaged, including through our Delegation, in the ongoing efforts to find a solution. Our Heads of Missions already issued a statement on this issue last week.

We are very concerned about the critical health condition of the Palestinians held in Israeli administrative detention who have been on hunger strike for more than two months. There are positive signals about a possible solution and I urge Israel and all sides to do everything possible to find an immediate solution to the current situation and prevent any a loss of life.'

An agreement was reached between the Israeli authorities and prisoner representatives on 14 May 2012. The HR/VP has called for the full and speedy implementation of the agreement by all sides.

The EU regularly raises questions relating to the condition of Palestinians detained in Israeli prisons in its bi-lateral meetings with Israel. The HR/VP is particularly concerned at Israel's excessive recourse to administrative detention. All detainees have the right to be informed of the reasons for their detention and be subject to a fair trial without delay.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004949/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Grano OGM

In Inghilterra il «Rothamsted Research», centro di ricerca sull'agricoltura, ha annunciato che sta studiando un grano OGM in grado di secernere una sostanza capace di tenere lontani gli afidi in modo tale da poter evitare l'uso dei pesticidi. Dubbi sono stati sollevati da associazioni ambientaliste e contrarie all'uso di OGM, in quanto non si può ancora sapere se gli alimenti preparati con questo grano saranno completamente sicuri per l'uomo e non si può del tutto escludere che si debba comunque ricorrere all'uso di pesticidi.

Può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza di questa nuova sperimentazione?

Ritiene che questo grano modificato possa eventualmente mettere in pericolo la salute dei consumatori europei?

Ritiene opportuno commissionare all'AESA uno studio parallelo su questo prodotto?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza degli esperimenti sul grano OGM cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputata: ha ricevuto tale informazione tramite la notifica obbligatoria di tale esperimento di OGM sul campo inviata dal Regno Unito agli altri Stati membri dell'UE e alla Commissione conformemente all'articolo 11 della direttiva 2001/18/CE ([1]). Tutte le notifiche di sperimentazioni di OGM sul campo sono registrate in una base dati pubblicamente accessibile ospitata dalla Commissione: http://gmoinfo.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

Conformemente alla notifica presentata dal Regno Unito, gli esperimenti in corso sul grano OGM in oggetto si limitano allo studio della capacità delle piante OGM di respingere gli insetti. Nelle autorizzazioni alla sperimentazione si assicura che le colture GM non entrino nella filiera alimentare.

Se colui che sviluppa la coltura intende commercializzare in futuro il grano GM in questione per una coltivazione commerciale e/o per un uso quale alimento e mangime nell'UE, esso deve prima presentare domanda di autorizzazione in forza del regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003 ([2]) per gli usi a mo' di alimenti e mangimi e/o per la coltivazione, ovvero in forza della direttiva 2001/18/CE esclusivamente per la coltivazione. In tale contesto, i rischi risultanti dalla coltivazione di grano GM e dei suoi successivi usi quali alimento e mangime per la salute umana e animale e per l'ambiente sarebbero attentamente valutati dagli Stati membri relatori e/o dall'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA).

([1]) Direttiva 2001/18/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 12 marzo 2001, sull'emissione deliberata nell'ambiente di organismi geneticamente modificati; GU L 106 del 17.4.2001.
([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003 relativo agli alimenti e ai mangimi geneticamente modificati; GU L 268 del 18.10.2033.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004949/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: GM wheat

In England, Rothamsted Research, an agricultural research centre, has announced that it is studying a type of GM wheat which can secrete a substance capable of repelling aphids, thus avoiding the use of pesticides. Doubts have been raised by environmental and anti-GM associations, because it is not yet known whether foodstuffs prepared with this wheat will be completely safe for humans. There is also the possibility that pesticides may still have to be used.

Can the Commission state whether it is aware of these new experiments?

Does it think this modified wheat could possibly endanger the health of European consumers?

Would it commission a parallel study on this product from the European Food Safety Authority?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the experiments on GM wheat referred to by the Honourable Member via the compulsory notification of this GMO field trial by the United Kingdom to the other EU Member States and the Commission, in accordance with Article 11 of Directive 2001/18/EC ([1]) on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms. All notifications of GMO field trials are registered in a publicly available database hosted by the Commission: http://gmoinfo.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

According to the notification made by the United Kingdom, the ongoing experiments on the concerned GM wheat are limited to studying the efficacy of GM plant to repel insects. In experimental permits, it is ensured that the GM crops do not enter into the food chain.

Should the developer of the crop aim to commercialise in the future the concerned GM wheat for commercial cultivation and/or for food and feed use in the EU, it shall first submit an application for an authorisation under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 ([2]) for food and feed uses and/or for cultivation, or under Directive 2001/18/EC for cultivation only. In this context, the risks resulting from the cultivation of the GM wheat, and from its subsequent use as food and feed, on human and animal health, and on the environment, would be thoroughly evaluated by the rapporteur Member States and/or the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

([1]) Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms into the environment, OJ L 106, 17.4.2001.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed, OJ L 268, 18.10.2033.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004950/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 maggio 2012)

Oggetto: Tinset ritirato dal mercato per motivi cautelativi

Il farmaco Tinset nella formulazione in gocce in soluzione al 2,5 % è stato ritirato dal mercato dalla stessa casa farmaceutica a causa di una riscontrata instabilità nella formulazione, non del principio attivo, ma del conservante del medicinale stesso. Altra misura posta in essere è stata quella di modificare il sistema di prescrizione del farmaco che passa dalla ricetta ripetibile a quella non ripetibile.

La casa produttrice sostiene che il ritiro di tali lotti sia meramente a scopo cautelativo e non presenti gravi rischi per la salute.

Può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza del ritiro di questo farmaco dal mercato?

Ritiene che effettivamente non vi siano rischi per i consumatori?

Può indicare se il ritiro di tale prodotto è avvenuto solo in Italia o ha riguardato anche altri Stati membri?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(3 luglio 2012)

Il farmaco Tinset menzionato dall'onorevole parlamentare è un medicinale non autorizzato a livello dell'UE, mentre è autorizzato a livello nazionale in taluni Stati membri.

Secondo le informazioni fornite dagli Stati membri, l'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio del Tinset è stata revocata in alcuni Stati membri su richiesta del titolare della stessa.

Per quanto riguarda l'Italia, la Commissione è stata informata che l'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio per la formulazione «0,25 % gocce orali sospensione» era stata revocata nel marzo 2010, in seguito a vari eventi di sovradosaggio dovuti principalmente alla presenza in commercio di due confezioni con la stessa formulazione (gocce orali) ma a differenti concentrazioni. Nel frattempo, il foglio illustrativo del prodotto con diversa concentrazione è stato modificato al fine di ridurre al minimo il rischio di errore medico e di somministrazione in dose eccessiva.

La legislazione dell'Unione sui medicinali ([1]) stabilisce che la farmacovigilanza dei prodotti autorizzati a livello nazionale compete alle autorità nazionali. Pertanto, la Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare queste ultime per ulteriori informazioni.

([1]) Direttiva 2001/83/CE (GU L 311 del 28.11.2001).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004950/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Tinset taken off the market as a precautionary measure

The drug Tinset, in 2.5% solution drop format, has been taken off the market by the manufacturing pharmaceutical company because of an instability detected in the formulation, not of the active ingredient, but of the medicine's preservative. Another measure implemented was to modify the prescription system for the drug, which has now been changed from a repeatable to non-repeatable prescription.

The company which produces it maintains that withdrawing these batches is merely a precautionary measure and that there is no serious health risk.

Can the Commission state if it is aware of the fact that this drug has been withdrawn from the market?

Does it believe that there are no risks for consumers?

Can it indicate whether this product has only been withdrawn in Italy, or in other Member States as well?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The medicinal product Tinset, mentioned by the Honourable Member, is a medicinal product which is not authorised at EU level but at national level in certain Member States.

According to information received from Member States the marketing authorisation of Tinset has been withdrawn in some Member States at the request of the marketing authorisation holder.

Regarding Italy, the Commission received the information that the marketing authorisation for the dosage of 0.25% of oral drops had been revoked in March 2010; due to the occurrence of several cases of over dosage related mainly to the co-existence of two different dosages in oral drops. Meanwhile the package information for the other dosage was reviewed in order to minimise the risk of medical error and over dosage.

The EU legislation ([1]) on medicinal products provides that national authorities are responsible for the supervision of nationally authorised medicinal products. Therefore the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to national authorities for further information.

([1]) Directive 2001/83/EC, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004956/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Quotas for Commission staff

Can the Commission explain in detail why there were quotas used to fill administrative positions in the Commission with staff from the new Member States several years ago, and yet this kind of consideration is not applied when hiring civil servants from the older Member States?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

According to the first paragraph of Article 27 of the Staff Regulations: 'Recruitment shall be directed to securing for the institution the services of officials of the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity, recruited on the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States of the Communities'. This geographical balance objective has to be considered together with the limits provided for in the second paragraph of the same Article which establishes that 'No posts shall be reserved for nationals of any specific Member State', thus limiting the Commission discretionary powers on the subject. The General Court's interpretation of this rule is that, under the Staff Regulations, nationality considerations may be invoked only to distinguish between candidates whose qualifications are equivalent. This means that special measures directly linking recruitment and nationality must remain exceptional as was the case following the accession of new Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004958/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Geographical imbalance of Commission staff

In a speech of 10 May 2012 ([1]), the Commission Vice-President responsible for interinstitutional relations and administration, Maroš Šefočovič, said that 'in terms of numbers of staff per citizen' the EU civil service 'is tiny compared to most national administrations'.

As the small size of the EU civil service often leads to inadequate representation of some EU Member States (e.g. the UK), can the Commission explain in detail how it plans to rectify the geographical imbalance now existing in the EU civil service in the future?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

According to the second paragraph of Article 27 of the Staff Regulations, 'No posts shall be reserved for nationals of any specific Member State'. The perceived inadequate representation of some Member States may have different explanations, including the lack of interest of the concerned citizens, lack of information of the citizens of a given Member State, the employment conditions offered by the institutions to staff and their families, the location of the seats of the various institutions and agencies or the lack of knowledge of languages.

The Commission has proposed an additional paragraph to Article 27 of the Staff Regulations in order to address possible geographical imbalances which reads: 'The principle of the equality of Union's citizens shall allow each institution to adopt corrective measures following the observation of a long lasting and significant imbalance between nationalities among officials which is not justified by objective criteria. These corrective measures shall never result in recruitment criteria other than those based on merit. Before such corrective measures are adopted, the appointing authority of the institution concerned shall adopt general provisions for giving effect to this paragraph in accordance with Article 110. After a five-year period starting on 1 January 2013, the Commission shall report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the preceding paragraph.'

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/12/349&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004959/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Neutrality of Commission staff

In a speech on 10 May 2012 ([1]), the Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Interinstitutional Relations and Administration, Maroš Šefčovič, stated that the European civil service is supposedly 'independent' and 'neutral'. Yet there are roughly 500 more civil servants at the administrative level of the Commission from Belgium than from the UK.

Can the Commission please explain how it is still 'independent' and 'neutral' when the Commission staff lacks geographical diversity?

Question for written answer E-004973/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Number of Commission staff

Can the Commission please explain why there are 1 332 Commission officials from France at administrator level and only 734 from the United Kingdom at the same level, when the two countries have comparable populations?

Joint answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

The independency and neutrality of Commission staff are laid down in the rights and obligations of all officials as in the staff regulations and notably in Article 11 thereof which states: 'An official shall carry out his duties and conduct himself solely with the interests of the Union in mind; he shall neither seek nor take instructions from any government, authority, organisation or person outside his institution. He shall carry out the duties assigned to him objectively, impartially and in keeping with his duty of loyalty to the Union'.

It is precisely because nationality does not influence the conduct of any individual official that the number of officials from a given Member State has no impact on the independency and neutrality of the EU civil service.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/12/349&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004960/12
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Counterfeit and faulty medicines

The counterfeiting of medicinal products is an increasing concern for patients, the industry, and EU and national policy-makers. The World Health Organisation estimates that up to 10% of all medicines available globally are fake.

1. What efforts is the Commission undertaking to protect the European Union against the import of counterfeit or faulty medicines from third countries?

2. Has the Commission carried out any assessment or analysis of the point of origin of counterfeit medicines? If so, what were its conclusions?

3. Has the Commission engaged in bilateral, high-level dialogue with these countries directly, or via international organisations, to take concerted action against the threat posed by faulty drugs?

4. How is the Commission supporting Member States in helping to stop the parallel trade of counterfeit medicines moving freely within the European Union?

5. Does the Commission support third countries with technical assistance to stop the export of faulty medicines to the EU?

6. How is the Commission tackling the sale of illegal medicines over the Internet?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

Concerning questions one, three and four the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007509/2011 ([1]).

Concerning question two the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011871/2011([1]).

Developing countries are particularly exposed to the threats posed by falsified medicines, especially their most vulnerable populations. It is against this background that the Commission is currently considering — subject to the financing of the Instrument for Stability — setting up a pilot action under the Instrument for Stability addressing the trafficking in falsified medicine starting with Ghana, Senegal, Jordan and Morocco. The possible action aims to provide technical assistance through EU Member States experts to strengthening the legal framework (mainly though the MEDICRIME Convention) as well as capacities to detect and analyse suspicious medicines and finally police investigation and criminal justice capacity to disrupt and dismantle the globalised criminal networks.

Concerning question six the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-003261/2012([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004961/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Política de Pescas

De acordo com a imprensa portuguesa, o relatório da News Economic Foundation e da OCEAN2012 afirma que Portugal pesca somente cerca de um quarto do peixe que consome.

O relatório conclui, também, que Portugal é dos países da UE mais dependentes de pescado importado e que, este ano, já deixou de ser autossuficiente a partir do dia 30 de março (quando em 2011 esta data era 26 de abril). Portugal tem, assim, menor capacidade para suprir as suas necessidades de consumo de peixe com capturas próprias em águas da UE e fica dependente de capturas não comunitárias para fornecer três quartos do seu consumo.

Tal é tanto mais estranho, quanto é certo que Portugal possui a maior zona económica exclusiva da Europa.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Não considera a Comissão, que tendo em conta a dimensão do mar português, a política de pescas deveria reforçar a capacidade e a quantidade de atividades pesqueiras por este país?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(25 de junho de 2012)

A dependência de peixe importado aumentou em toda a Europa nas últimas décadas. Em média, dois terços do peixe consumido provêm hoje de importações.

Um dos objetivos fundamentais da reforma da política comum das pescas (PCP) consiste em maximizar a exploração dos recursos haliêuticos de forma sustentável. A sua manutenção a níveis que assegurem o rendimento máximo sustentável (RMS) não só aumentará as possibilidades de pesca como a oferta nos mercados. A aquicultura contribui, de certo modo, para satisfazer a procura e a PCP apoia fortemente o desenvolvimento deste setor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004961/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Fisheries policy

According to a report by the New Economics Foundation and OCEAN2012, quoted in the Portuguese press, Portugal catches only about a quarter of the fish that it consumes.

The report concludes from the above that Portugal is one of the EU countries most dependent on imported fish and that it ceased to be self-sufficient from 30 March 2012 (whereas the corresponding date in 2011 was 26 April). Portugal therefore has insufficient capacity to meet its fish consumption needs from its own catches in EU waters and depends on non-EU catches for three quarters of its consumption.

This is particularly strange, given that Portugal has the largest exclusive economic zone in Europe.

— Does the Commission not agree that, given the size of Portuguese territorial waters, the fisheries policy should increase Portugal's capacity and the scale of its fishing activities?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2012)

Dependence on imported fish has increased throughout Europe in the last decades. Two thirds of fish consumed derive from imported sources today on average.

One of the core objectives for the reform of the common fisheries policy (CFP) is to maximise exploitation of fishery resources in a sustainable way. Fishing stocks at levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield (MSY) will provide fishermen with more fish and supply the markets. To some extent, aquaculture can help satisfying demand and the CFP strongly supports the development of this sector.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004962/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Agricultura com menos ajudas

Segundo o jornal espanhol «El Mundo», a UE está a estudar a possibilidade de atribuir menos ajudas aos agricultores europeus e canalizá-las para a promoção dos produtos agrícolas.

Segundo o mesmo jornal, o comissário da agricultura quer uma redução dos pagamentos diretos a todos os Estados-Membros para, desta forma, dar a conhecer os produtos a países terceiros, de forma a poder competir com rivais como os Estados Unidos da América.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Confirma a referida intenção?

— Não considera que os agricultores vivem momentos de enormes dificuldades, e que qualquer redução, por menor que seja, poderá vir a prejudicar ainda mais um setor, já de si, tão carente de ajudas?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(25 de junho de 2012)

Com o lançamento do «Livro Verde sobre a Política de informação e promoção dos produtos agrícolas» ([1]) da Comissão, em julho de 2011, deu-se início a um debate aprofundado sobre formas de reforçar a política de promoção da agricultura na Europa.

Em março de 2012, a Comissão apresentou a Comunicação «Informação e promoção dos produtos agrícolas: uma estratégia com grande valor acrescentado europeu para promover os sabores da Europa» ([2]). Pretende-se assim aumentar o valor acrescentado do setor agroalimentar e a sua contribuição para a economia europeia, avançando para uma política de promoção europeia e global mais centrada nos aspetos comerciais do setor.

A Comissão pretende apresentar propostas legislativas sobre a futura política de promoção, em finais de 2012. Tais propostas basear-se-ão numa avaliação de impacto exaustiva. Neste sentido, estão em análise várias opções de reforma, tendo igualmente em consideração os aspetos orçamentais.

Os meios orçamentais disponíveis para a futura política de promoção devem necessariamente ser vistos no contexto das propostas da Comissão sobre o quadro financeiro plurianual 2014/2020, em especial, os montantes propostos no âmbito do Título 2 da Política Agrícola Comum ([3]). Estas últimas propostas refletem igualmente a importância permanente que a Comissão atribui aos pagamentos diretos aos agricultores como instrumento essencial de apoio ao rendimento dos mesmos.

([1]) COM(2011)436.
([2]) COM(2012)148.
([3]) COM(2011)500.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004962/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Agriculture with fewer subsidies

It has been reported in the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo* that the EU is considering the possibility of giving fewer subsidies to European farmers and instead will be channelling aid into promoting agricultural products.

According to *El Mundo*, the Agriculture Commissioner wants to reduce direct payments to all Member States in order to focus on publicising products in non-member countries and in that way enable the EU to compete with the United States and other rivals.

— Can the Commission confirm the above intention?

— Does it not consider that farmers are living through very difficult times and that any reduction, however small, could further undermine a sector already lacking in support?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2012)

With a view to reinforcing the promotion policy for European agriculture, in-depth discussions were launched in July 2011 with the Commission's 'Green Paper on information provision and promotion measures for agricultural products' ([1]).

In March 2012, the Commission presented the 'Communication on promotion measures and information provision for agricultural products: a reinforced value-added European strategy for promoting the tastes of Europe' ([2]). This aims at increasing added value of the agri-food sector and its contribution to the European economy by moving towards a European and global promotion policy more focused on commercial aspects of the sector.

The Commission intends to present legislative proposals on the future promotion policy towards the end of 2012. These proposals will be based on a comprehensive impact assessment. In this regard, various reform options are being analysed, taking into account also the budgetary aspects.

The budgetary means available for the future promotion policy should necessarily be seen in the context of the Commission's proposals for the multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020, in particular the amounts proposed under Heading 2 for the common agricultural policy ([3]). The latter proposals reflect also the continued importance that the Commission attaches to the direct payments to farmers as an essential tool to support farmers' income.

([1]) COM(2011)436.
([2]) COM(2012)148.
([3]) COM(2011)500.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004963/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Acidentes de viação

Segundo um estudo realizado por investigadores da Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (UAL), o valor médio anual do custo económico e social dos acidentes de viação é cerca de 2 500 milhões de euros, o que significa cerca de 1,54 %, em média, do PIB português em 2010.

Para este valor contribuíram os cerca de 35 % de acidentes com vítimas mortais, 20 % com feridos graves e 45 % respeitantes a desastres com feridos ligeiros.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento dos valores correspondentes, no plano de toda a União Europeia?

— Existe alguma política integrada na União Europeia para a redução desta sinistralidade no nosso espaço a 27?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(3 de julho de 2012)

Em 2008, os acidentes de viação tiveram um custo social total estimado de cerca de 140 mil milhões de euros (60 mil milhões de euros para as vítimas mortais e 80 mil milhões de euros para os feridos na estrada), o que representa cerca de 1,12 % do PIB da UE. Os custos sociais baseiam-se no valor de uma vida estatística calculada pelo estudo Heatco (6.° Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico).

Em 20 de julho de 2010, a Comissão adotou uma comunicação com orientações para a política de segurança rodoviária de 2011 a 2020 ([1]), que estabelece um quadro geral para a implementação de iniciativas concretas no plano europeu, nacional, regional e local. Esta comunicação fixa uma meta comum a toda a UE: reduzir para metade o número de vítimas mortais de acidentes nas estradas europeias até 2020.

Para tal, são propostos sete objetivos estratégicos, que abarcam todos os aspetos ligados à segurança rodoviária, a saber:

— Objetivo n.° 1: Melhorar a educação e a formação dos utentes da estrada

— Objetivo n.° 2: Intensificar o controlo do cumprimento do código da estrada

— Objetivo n.° 3: Uma infraestrutura rodoviária mais segura

— Objetivo n.° 4: Veículos mais seguros

— Objetivo n.° 5: Promover a utilização de tecnologias modernas para reforçar a segurança rodoviária

— Objetivo n.° 6: Melhorar os serviços de emergência e a pós-assistência aos feridos

— Objetivo n.° 7: Proteção dos utentes vulneráveis da via pública

Para aplicar as orientações políticas para o período de 2011/2020, a Comissão tomou ou proporá medidas adequadas, tendo em conta os princípios da proporcionalidade e da responsabilidade partilhada.

Os dados sobre acidentes de viação na Europa e informações pormenorizadas sobre a política e as iniciativas da UE no domínio da segurança rodoviária podem ser consultados no sítio Web dedicado a esta matéria, no seguinte endereço: (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/index_pt.htm).

([1]) COM(2010)389 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004963/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Road accidents

According to a study by researchers from the Autonomous University of Lisbon (UAL), the average annual economic and social cost of road accidents is approximately EUR 2 500 million, equivalent to an average of 1.54% of Portugal's GDP in 2010.

This figure can be approximately broken down into 35% for accidents involving fatalities, 20% involving serious injuries and 45% involving minor injuries.

— Does the Commission know what the corresponding figures are for the European Union as a whole?

— Does the EU have an integrated policy to reduce accidents in the 27 Member States?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The estimated total social cost due to road crashes was around 140 billion Euro in 2008 (60 billion Euro for road fatalities and 80 billion Euro for road injuries), representing approximately 1.12% of the EU GDP. The social cost is based on the value of a statistical life calculated by the HEATCO study (6th Framework Programme for Research and Technological development).

The Commission adopted on 20 of July 2010 a communication on the policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020 ([1]) which provides a general framework under which, at European, national, regional or local levels, concrete initiatives could be taken. It includes a common EU target for halving the number of deaths on European roads by 50% by 2020.

Seven strategic objectives are proposed with a view to achieve this target, encompassing all the aspects of road safety namely:

— Objective 1 Improvement education and training of road users;

— Objective 2 increase enforcement of road rules;

— Objective 3 safer road and infrastructure;

— Objective 4 safer vehicles;

— Objective 5 promote the use of modern technologies to increase road safety;

— Objective 6 improve emergency and post injuries services; and

— Objective 7 Protect vulnerable road users.

In view of implementing the policy orientation 2011-2020, appropriate actions have been undertaken or will be proposed by the Commission, taking into account the proportionality and shared responsibility principles.

Data related to road traffic accidents within Europe and detailed information on the EU road safety policy and initiatives can be found on the dedicated website: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/index_en.htm

([1]) COM(2010) 389 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004964/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Aproveitar os desperdícios

Em Lisboa está a decorrer uma campanha com o nome «Movimento Zero Desperdício». O projeto tem o alto patrocínio da Presidência da República e quer «aproveitar os incontáveis desperdícios de bens, produtos e recursos, existentes um pouco por todo o país», isto é, «refeições ou outros bens alimentares que não tenham sido servidos e que, apesar de estarem em boas condições, não possam ser vendidos. Produtos cujo prazo de validade está a chegar ao fim ou que não foram expostos nem entraram em contacto com o público».

Atualmente vários países da Europa atravessam momentos de grande dificuldade económica e financeira.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento desta campanha?

— Pondera alguma iniciativa equivalente, no âmbito da União Europeia?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2012)

A Comissão tem conhecimento da campanha portuguesa para aproveitar alimentos desperdiçados, «*Movimento Zero Desperdício*», assim como de várias outras campanhas semelhantes em outros Estados-Membros, como as recentes campanhas «*Zu gut für die tonne*» [1] (Alemanha), «*Love Food Hate Waste*» [2] (UK), «*Lebensmittel sind kostbar*» [3] (Áustria), etc. A Comissão acolhe estas iniciativas de forma muito favorável.

No que se refere à sensibilização da opinião pública sobre o desperdício de alimentos, o valor acrescentado da UE reside na viabilização de trocas de boas práticas nos Estados-Membros. A Comissão desenvolve igualmente iniciativas de comunicação em todas as línguas da UE sobre como reduzir o desperdício de alimentos e clarificar o significado de expressões como «consumir de preferência antes de» nas datas dos rótulos dos alimentos e a diferença entre os prazos de validade «consumir de preferência antes de» ou «consumir de preferência antes do fim de» e «consumir até».

Como os alimentos são desperdiçados a todos os níveis da cadeia alimentar, a Comissão está a analisar com todos os atores relevantes, Estados-Membros e peritos, a forma de minimizar o desperdício de alimentos ao longo de toda a cadeia alimentar sem pôr em risco a segurança dos alimentos. O objetivo é definir as ações mais adequadas ao nível da UE para complementar as ações levadas a cabo aos níveis nacional e local. Os resultados da análise serão disponibilizados para efeitos de elaboração de medidas políticas pela Comissão, no decurso de 2013.

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[1] (http://www.zugutfuerdietonne.de/).
[2] (http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/).
[3] (http://lebensmittel-sind-kostbar.at/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004964/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Making use of waste

A campaign is currently underway in Lisbon called the 'Zero Waste Movement'. The project has the full support of the Presidency of the Republic and is aimed at 'making good use of the vast amounts of wasted goods, products and resources found more or less all over the country', in other words, 'meals or other foodstuffs that have not been served and cannot be sold, despite being in good condition; products whose shelf life is coming to an end, or which have not been displayed or brought into contact with the public'.

Several European countries are currently experiencing great economic and financial difficulty.

Is the Commission aware of this campaign?

Is it considering a similar initiative at European level?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2012)

The Commission is aware of the Portuguese food waste campaign 'Movimento Zero Desperdicio' as well as of a number of food waste campaigns in other Member States such as the recent campaign 'Zu gut für die tonne' ([1]) (Germany), 'Love Food Hate Waste' ([2]) (UK), 'Lebensmittel sind kostbar' ([3]) (Austria), etc. The Commission welcomes these initiatives.

Concerning awareness raising on food waste, the EU added value lies in the facilitation of exchange of good practices in the Member States. The Commission is also working on communication initiatives in all EU languages on how to reduce food waste and to clarify the meaning of 'best before' dates on food labels and the difference between 'best before' and 'use by' dates.

Since food is wasted at all the levels of the food chain, the Commission is analysing with relevant stakeholders, Member States and experts how to minimise food waste throughout the entire food chain without compromising food safety. The aim is to define the most appropriate actions at EU level to complement the actions carried out at national and local level. The results of the analysis will be available for Commission policy formation in the course of 2013.

([1]) http://www.zugutfuerdietonne.de/.
([2]) http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/.
([3]) http://lebensmittel-sind-kostbar.at/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004965/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Privatizações na Bolívia

Segundo notícias veiculadas pela comunicação social, o Presidente da Bolívia, Evo Morales, nacionalizou a empresa Transportadora de Electricidad (TDE), gerida pela Red Eléctrica International, uma filial do grupo espanhol Red Eléctrica Corporación.

O chefe de estado boliviano aproveitou as comemorações do Dia do Trabalhador para anunciar privatizações de empresas privadas, principalmente nos setores mineiro, metalúrgico e energético.

Para tal, ordenou ao exército que ocupasse as instalações da empresa de distribuição de eletricidade e tomasse o controlo da direção e da administração.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Estão previstas sanções a adotar pela Comissão Europeia, em relação à referida decisão da Bolívia em nacionalizar a filial espanhola da empresa de distribuição de eletricidade?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(9 de julho de 2012)

A Comissão não está a considerar a possibilidade de impor sanções em resposta à decisão da Bolívia de nacionalizar a empresa Transportadora de Electricidad (TDE), da Red Electrica Española (REE). As expropriações são decisões soberanas que não são necessariamente ilícitas ou contrárias ao direito internacional, desde que não sejam discriminatórias, prossigam um objetivo legítimo de política pública e deem lugar a uma indemnização rápida, adequada e efetiva. O Governo da Bolívia garantiu que seria paga uma indemnização adequada à REE, e que, na sequência de uma avaliação independente, faria uma oferta no prazo de 180 dias. A REE manifestou a sua vontade de chegar a um acordo amigável com o Governo da Bolívia para a fixação de um preço justo.

A proteção dos investimentos europeus na Bolívia é regida pelos dez tratados bilaterais de investimento entre este país e os Estados-Membros. A Bolívia retirou-se do Centro Internacional para a Resolução de Diferendos Relativos a Investimentos (CIRDI) do Banco Mundial, em 2007, e o seu Tratado Bilateral de Investimento com Espanha foi denunciado em janeiro de 2012, com efeitos a partir de julho de 2012. No entanto, a proteção dos atuais investimentos, incluindo o da REE, abrange um período de 10 anos após a cessação do Tratado. A arbitragem do CIRDI já não é uma opção devido à retirada da Bolívia, mas o Tratado Bilateral de Investimento com Espanha prevê a possibilidade de recurso a um painel *ad hoc* para arbitrar o diferendo, em conformidade com as regras da Comissão das Nações Unidas para o Direito Comercial Internacional (Cnudci).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004965/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Nationalisation in Bolivia

According to reports in the media, the President of Bolivia, Evo Morales, has nationalised the company Transportadora de Electricidad (TDE), managed by Red Eléctrica International, a subsidiary of the Spanish group Red Eléctrica Corporación.

The Bolivian Head of State used Labour Day celebrations to announce the nationalisation of private companies, mainly in the mining, metallurgical and energy sectors.

To this end, he ordered the army to occupy the premises of TDE and take control of its management and administration.

Can the Commission answer the following:

— Are there plans by the European Commission to impose sanctions in response to the decision by Bolivia to nationalise the Spanish subsidiary of this electricity distribution company?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

The Commission is not considering imposing sanctions in response to the decision by Bolivia to nationalise the company Transportadora de Electricidad (TDE) from Red Electrica Española (REE). Expropriations are sovereign decisions that are not necessarily unlawful or contrary to international law, as long as it is non-discriminatory, pursues a legitimate objective of public policy and there is prompt, adequate and effective compensation. The Bolivian Government has given assurances that adequate compensation will be paid to REE and that, following an independent valuation, an offer would be made within 180 days. REE has expressed its willingness to reach a friendly agreement with the Bolivian Government to set a fair price.

The protection of European investments in Bolivia is governed by its ten Bilateral Investment Treaties with Member States. Bolivia withdrew from the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) of the World Bank in 2007, and its Bilateral Investment Treaty with Spain was denounced in January 2012 with effect from July 2012. However, protection of existing investments, including the one by REE, extends for 10 years after termination of the Treaty. Even if ICSID arbitration is not an option anymore due to Bolivia's withdrawal, the Spanish BIT foresees the possibility to appeal to an ad-hoc arbitration panel under UNCITRAL rules.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004966/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Investigadores portugueses desenvolveram método de identificação de castas

Investigadores da Universidade de Vila Real desenvolveram um método de identificação de castas recorrendo à extração de ADN do vinho de uma garrafa, no mosto no lagar, ou ainda na videira.

Este método permite confirmar se o rótulo corresponde ao que está no interior da garrafa de vinho, detetando falsificações ou fraudes, principalmente no vinho do Porto, produto que é alvo de muitas falsificações.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento deste novo método de identificação de castas, que revela evidentes vantagens na deteção de falsificações ou fraudes?

— Justifica-se ou não o incremento deste novo método e o apoio a esta investigação?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(3 de julho de 2012)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do método referido pelo Senhor Deputado, mas não se encontra em posição de responder à pergunta, devido à escassez de informações divulgadas pelos investigadores portugueses.

Justifica-se de certo modo o incremento da utilização do método, inserido nas metodologias que garantem a autenticidade dos vinhos. O vinho é um produto de valor acrescentado e as tendências de consumo apontam para a necessidade crescente de comprovar que os produtos alimentares que o consumidor adquire correspondem à descrição que ostentam. No que respeita ao apoio à investigação, nomeadamente aos apoios financeiros da Comissão, em geral aplicam-se normas da UE (por exemplo, do 7.° PQ). Relativamente a esta área específica, a Comissão tem em conta as novas tendências de consumo em matéria de autenticidade dos produtos alimentares, e este ponto concreto pode ser proposto para financiamento ao abrigo do programa de trabalho de 2013 (Orientações para 2013 — Alimentação, agricultura e pescas e biotecnologias: *Knowledge based Bioeconomy* (KBBE.2013.2.4-01) — *Assuring quality and authenticity in the food chain* ([1])).

([1]) (http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documentation).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004966/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Portuguese researchers have developed a method of identifying wines

Researchers at the University of Vila Real have developed a method to identify wine using DNA extracted from a bottle of wine, a wine press or even from the vine.

This method will permit verification that the label matches the contents of the wine bottle, and will detect forgeries or fraud, especially in port, a product that is the target of many forgeries.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

— Is it aware of this new method of identifying wines, which shows obvious advantages in the detection of forgery or fraud?

— Is there justification for increasing the use of this new method and providing support for this research?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

The Commission has read about the method mentioned by the Honourable Member but is not in a position to answer the question due to the limited information released by the Portuguese researchers.

There is some justification for increasing the use of this method as part of the methodologies assuring the authenticity of wines. Wine is an added-value product and consumers' trends have shown that there is an increasing need for reassurance that food purchased by consumers matches its description. As regards the support for research, in general, for any funding support by the Commission, standard EU rules apply, for example FP7 ones. In relation to this particular area, the Commission has taken into account the new consumer trends on food authenticity and the specific topic may be proposed for funding under Work Programme 2013 (2013 Orientation Paper on Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology: Knowledge based Bioeconomy (KBBE.2013.2.4-01) — Assuring quality and authenticity in the food chain ([1])).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documentation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004967/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: A PAC foi responsável pela perda de peso da Europa na produção de vinha registada entre 2005 e 2010

Segundo um estudo apresentado pela ViniPortugal, que compara quer a produção de vinho quer as áreas de vinha em todos os continentes, é referido que a Europa tem estado a perder peso em termos de área de cultivo da vinha, tendo passado de 66,6 % da produção mundial em 1996 para 57,4 % em 2010. Esta performance explica-se pelas medidas adotadas no âmbito da Política Agrícola Comum, que incentivaram o arranque desta produção vinícola.

Em contrapartida, a Ásia produz hoje mais vinha do que em 1995, sendo o segundo maior produtor, logo a seguir à Europa. Portugal reduziu a sua área de cultivo de 250 mil hectares para 243 mil, representando 3,2 % da vinha mundial, e ficando atrás de países como a Turquia, a China, os EUA e o Irão, mas posicionando-se à frente da Argentina e Roménia. Entre os 12 países que lideram o ranking dos maiores produtores, apenas a Argentina, a China, a África do Sul e o Chile produziram mais hectolitros de vinho no mesmo intervalo de tempo.

O consumo de vinho tem vindo a decrescer na Europa, com um recuo de 7,2 pontos percentuais entre 2005 e 2010. Apesar de tudo, este ainda é de longe o continente que mais vinho consome, com 64,9 % do total.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento do referido estudo?

— Sabendo que o setor vinícola tem um papel importantíssimo para as economias de países como Portugal, Espanha, Itália e França, constituindo uma importante fonte de riqueza relativamente às exportações nacionais e comunitárias, como tenciona reverter esta situação na nova PAC que agora se discute?

— Mediante o cenário descrito, de recuo no consumo de vinho na Europa de 7,2 pontos percentuais entre 2005 e 2010, mediante o aumento de plantação de mais vinha em países Asiáticos, Chile, África do Sul e Argentina, e ainda mediante o forte apoio estatal que estes países oferecem para divulgação dos seus vinhos, pondera atribuir alguma ajuda financeira para divulgação dos vinhos da UE no espaço comunitário?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(25 de junho de 2012)

Diversos estudos, tal como o estudo referido, apresentado pela ViniPortugal ([1]), assinalam que o setor vitivinícola europeu está a perder área de cultivo e a sua parte de mercado. No entanto, após muitos anos de desequilíbrio do mercado e consequente aumento das existências, os preços do vinho estão finalmente a recuperar, em parte devido a uma melhor adaptação da oferta à procura.

Esta situação favorável atual do mercado deve-se, em certa medida, à aplicação da reforma do setor vitivinícola de 2008. A reforma tinha por principais objetivos o aumento da competitividade do setor vitivinícola da UE e uma melhor adaptação da oferta à procura nacional e internacional, tanto quantitativa como qualitativamente, permitindo, assim, recuperar as partes de mercado que tinham sido progressivamente perdidas na última década nos mercados da UE e de países terceiros.

A PAC continuará a apoiar financeiramente medidas estruturais favoráveis ao setor, nomeadamente a promoção do vinho em países terceiros. Os programas de apoio nacionais ao abrigo do Regulamento (UE) n.° 555/2008 ([2]) preveem, para 2012, um orçamento de 205 milhões de euros, dos quais 15 milhões de euros serão utilizados pelo governo português para promover vinhos portugueses.

Quanto à promoção na UE, o regime de promoção horizontal para os produtos agrícolas prevê medidas específicas para o setor.

([1]) 13th Global Study — International Wine and Spirits, acesso restrito aos membros da ViniPortugal.
([2]) JO L 170 de 30.6.2008, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004967/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: The CAP was responsible for the drop in Europe's wine production between 2005 and 2010

According to a study by ViniPortugal, comparing both wine production and wine regions in every continent, Europe has lost ground in terms of vine cultivation, dropping from 66.6% of world production in 1996 to 57.4% in 2010. This result can be attributed to the measures adopted under the CAP, to encourage the grubbing-up of vines.

In contrast, Asia now produces more wine than it did in 1995, becoming the second-largest producer, after Europe. Portugal reduced its cultivation area from 250 000 to 243 000 hectares, representing 3.2% of the world's vines, falling behind countries such as Turkey, China, the United States and Iran, but ahead of Argentina and Romania. Among the 12 leading wine-producing countries, only Argentina, China, South Africa and Chile produced more hectolitres of wine during the same time period.

Wine consumption has fallen in Europe, with a drop of 7.2 percentage points between 2005 and 2010. Nevertheless, it is still by far the continent with the highest wine consumption, with 64.9% of the total.

— Is the Commission aware of this study?

— Bearing in mind that the wine industry plays an extremely important role in the economies of countries such as Portugal, Spain, Italy and France, with domestic and EU exports providing an important source of income, how does it intend to reverse this situation in the new CAP currently being discussed?

— In view of the above, the 7.2 percentage-point drop in European wine consumption between 2005 and 2010, increased vine cultivation in Asian countries, Chile, South Africa and Argentina, and strong state support given in these countries to promote their wines, does it plan to allocate any financial support to promote EU wines within the EU?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2012)

Several studies, like the ViniPortugal study mentioned ([1]), point out that Europe's wine sector is loosing cultivation area and market share. However, after many years of market imbalance and by consequence increase of stocks, wine prices are finally recovering partly due to better adaptation of supply to demand.

This current positive market situation is to a certain extent due to the implementation of the wine reform of 2008. The key objectives were to improve the competitiveness of the EU wine sector and to better adapt supply to domestic and international demands both quantitatively and qualitatively. The purpose is to regain market shares in the EU and third country markets, which had been progressively lost in the past decade.

The CAP will continue to financially support structural measures in favour of the sector, including for the wine promotion in third countries. The National Support Programmes under Regulation (EU) No 555/2009 ([2]) foresee a 2012 budget of EUR 205 million, of which EUR 15 million will be used by Portuguese Government in order to promote Portuguese wines.

As regards promotion in the EU, specific measures on wine areas are available under the horizontal promotion scheme for agricultural products.

([1]) 13th Global Study — International Wine and Spirits, access restricted to Members of ViniPortugal.
([2]) OJ L 164, 26.6.2009 p. 37.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004968/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Suspensão de medicamentos fabricados na Índia

Segundo notícia veiculada pelo Jornal de Notícias, «a suspensão de sete medicamentos após uma inspeção do Infarmed numa fábrica na Índia deverá ser seguida por igual medida nos países do espaço europeu, a quem já foi comunicado o resultado desta ação».

Em causa, estarão dois medicamentos antiepiléticos e anticonvulsionantes e cinco anti-inflamatórios não-esteroides, cujos lotes à venda em Portugal não podem ser comercializados.

Em resultado da inspeção do Infarmed, todos os lotes de sete medicamentos que utilizaram substâncias ativas produzidas numa fábrica na Índia, onde foram detetadas falhas quanto às «boas práticas de fabrico», vão ser retirados de circulação.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento desta situação?

— Qual o parecer da Comissão sobre esta matéria?

— Poderá esta suspensão vir a ser alargada aos restantes países da UE?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(10 de julho de 2012)

A legislação da UE relativa aos medicamentos estabelece que os Estados-Membros podem realizar inspeções em países terceiros para determinar se as substâncias ativas são produzidas de acordo com as boas práticas de fabrico (BPF). A realização das inspeções é da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros.

Os resultados de inspeções como a conduzida pelo Infarmed e referida pelo Senhor Deputado podem revelar uma não conformidade com as normas das BPF e resultar numa suspensão da autorização de introdução no mercado dos medicamentos em causa. A informação sobre essa não conformidade com as BPF é transmitida a todos os Estados-Membros e à Agência Europeia de Medicamentos, para que as autoridades competentes adotem as medidas apropriadas em relação à autorização de introdução no mercado dos medicamentos visados e à sua disponibilidade no mercado. Essa informação é igualmente registada na base de dados EudraGMP ([1]).

A Comissão considera que é necessário reforçar o controlo das BPF em matéria de substâncias ativas, a fim de proteger a saúde pública. Para o efeito, a União Europeia adotou recentemente novas regras sobre a qualidade das substâncias ativas ([2]). As medidas de execução dessas novas regras permitirão garantir de forma mais adequada que todas as substâncias ativas importadas de países terceiros respeitam as BPF.

([1]) (http://eudragmp.ema.europa.eu/inspections/selectLanguage.do).
([2]) Diretiva 2011/62/UE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 8 de junho de 2011, que altera a Diretiva 2001/83/CE que estabelece um código comunitário relativo aos medicamentos para uso humano, para impedir a introdução na cadeia de abastecimento legal de medicamentos falsificados (JO L 174 de 1.7.2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004968/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Suspension of marketing authorisations for medicines manufactured in India

According to an article published in the *Jornal de Notícias* newspaper, the suspension of the marketing authorisations for seven drugs, after an inspection of a factory in India by the Portuguese National Authority of Medicines and Health Products (INFARMED), is to be followed by similar action in European Union Member States, which have already been informed of the findings of the inspection.

The medicines concerned are two anticonvulsant anti-epileptic drugs and five non-steroidal anti-inflammatories: the batches intended for sale in Portugal can no longer be marketed.

As a result of the INFARMED inspection, all batches of the seven drugs made from active substances produced in a factory in India, which was found wanting in terms of 'good manufacturing practice', will be withdrawn from circulation.

— Is the Commission aware of this situation?

— What is the Commission's view on the matter?

— Will the suspension likewise be enforced in other EU countries?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

EU legislation on pharmaceuticals lays down that Member States may conduct inspections in third countries to ascertain that active substances are produced in compliance with good manufacturing practices (GMP). Performing an inspection is a responsibility of the Member States.

The results of inspections such as that conducted by INFARMED and mentioned by the Honourable Member in his question, may show non-compliance to GMP standards and lead to the suspension of the marketing authorisation of the medicinal products concerned. Information on non-compliance with GMP is distributed to all Member States and the European Medicines Agency to ensure that the authorities concerned take the appropriate measures on the marketing authorisation of the products concerned and on their availibility on the market. This information is also entered in the EudraGMP database ([1]).

The Commission believes that there is a need to strengthen the supervision of GMP for active substances to protect public health. To this end, the European Union has recently adopted new rules for the quality of active substances ([2]). The measures implementing these new rules will further ensure that all active substances imported from third countries are in compliance with GMP.

([1]) http://eudragmp.ema.europa.eu/.
([2]) Directive 2011/62/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2011 amending Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, as regards the prevention of the entry into the legal supply chain of falsified medicinal products (OJ L174, 1.7.2011).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004969/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Tokia Saïfi (PPE)
(15 mai 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Précision des critères de la nouvelle approche «plus pour plus»

La Commission vient d'adopter, le 15 mai 2012, ses rapports de suivi sur l'état d'avancement des relations entre l'Union européenne et douze pays du voisinage (Ukraine, Moldavie, Azerbaïdjan, Arménie, Géorgie, Maroc, Tunisie, Israël, Territoires palestiniens, Liban, Égypte et Jordanie).

— Dans la mesure où les critères de la nouvelle approche «plus pour plus», adoptée dans la communication conjointe du 25 mai 2011, n'ont toujours pas été détaillés, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante peut-elle indiquer si les recommandations formulées dans ces rapports constituent la base de l'application de cette nouvelle approche?

— Si oui, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante considère-t-elle que des critères généraux peuvent être empiriquement déduits de ces conclusions? Peut-elle en donner des exemples?

— Si non, peut-elle préciser sur quelle(s) base(s) la nouvelle approche sera mise en œuvre dans le cadre de la PEV? Pense-t-elle pouvoir rapidement définir et présenter des critères clairs, mesurables et réalisables pour la mise en œuvre de cette nouvelle approche?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(13 août 2012)

L'approche «plus pour plus» doit s'appliquer à toutes les mesures d'incitation proposées par l'UE, aussi bien aux initiatives stratégiques qu'à l'aide financière. Cependant, les mesures visant à faire face aux crises, l'appui à la société civile, la coopération entre les autorités locales et les contacts interpersonnels ne sont pas concernés par ce modèle.

Conformément à la communication conjointe de 2011 ([1]), les progrès réalisés par les partenaires en matière de démocratisation sont évalués au regard des critères suivants:

— des élections démocratiques et crédibles, organisées conformément aux normes internationales;

— la liberté d'association, d'expression et de réunion des citoyens;

— la liberté de la presse et des médias;

— l'administration de l'État de droit par un pouvoir judiciaire indépendant et le droit des citoyens à un procès équitable;

— la lutte contre la corruption;

— la réforme du secteur de la sécurité et du maintien de l'ordre (y compris la police) et le contrôle démocratique des forces armées et de sécurité;

— le respect d'autres Droits de l'homme ([2]).

Les progrès sont mesurés à l'aune des conventions et des normes internationales et appréciés dans les rapports annuels par pays.

Toutefois, ces critères ne peuvent pas être les seuls à déterminer l'engagement de l'UE; une vision globale des relations avec les partenaires est nécessaire. La coopération politique et en matière de sécurité doit être intensifiée au regard de la sécurité énergétique, des défis et menaces transfrontaliers ainsi que de l'instabilité et des conflits dans la région, tout en tenant compte des besoins et des capacités d'absorption de chaque pays partenaire.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0303:FIN:fr:PDF.
([2]) Abolition de la peine de mort, liberté de culte, non-discrimination fondée sur le sexe ou l'orientation sexuelle, non-discrimination envers les minorités, droits de l'enfant, abolition de la torture et des châtiments dégradants.

L'évaluation des progrès d'un pays en termes de démocratie durable ne peut être un exercice à court terme; cela requiert un certain discernement politique et dans certains cas une vision à long terme.

En février 2012, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante et le commissaire européen chargé de l'élargissement et de la politique de voisinage ont décrit sommairement cette approche dans une lettre conjointe adressée aux ministres des affaires étrangères de l'UE et au président de la commission AFET.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004969/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Tokia Saïfi (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Details of the criteria of the new 'more-for-more' approach

On 15 May 2012, the Commission adopted its monitoring reports on the status of relations between the European Union and 12 neighbouring countries (Ukraine, Moldavia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Morocco, Tunisia, Israel, Palestinian Territories, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan).

— Insofar as the criteria of the 'more-for-more' approach, adopted in the Joint Communication of 25 May 2011, have still not been specified, can the Vice-President/High Representative say whether the recommendations formulated in these reports provide the basis for the application of this new approach?

— If so, does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that general criteria can be empirically deduced from these conclusions? Can she give some examples?

— If not, can she specify on what basis/bases the new approach will be implemented within the European Neighbourhood Policy? Does she think she will be able to quickly define and present clear, measurable and attainable criteria for the implementation of this new approach?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2012)

The 'more for more' approach should apply to all incentives proposed by the EU, both policy developments and financial assistance. However, measures to address crises, support to civil society, cooperation among local authorities and people-to-people contacts fall outside this paradigm.

In line with 2011's Joint Communication ([1]), partners' democratisation progress is assessed against the following criteria:

— democratic and credible elections held in line with international standards;

— citizens' freedom of association, expression and assembly;

— a free press and media;

— the rule of law, administered by an independent judiciary, and citizens' right to a fairtrial;

— the fight against corruption;

— reform of security and law enforcement sectors (including the police) and democraticcontrol over armed and security forces;

— the respect of other human rights ([2]).

Progress is measured against international conventions and norms and assessed in annual country reports.

However, these cannot be the only determining criteria of EU engagement; a holistic view of relations with partners is needed. Political and security cooperation must be intensified on energy security, cross-border challenges and threats, and instability and conflict in the region, while taking into account each partner country's needs and absorption capacity.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0303:FIN:en:PDF.
([2]) Abolition of capital punishment; freedom of religion; non-discrimination on the basis of gender or sexual orientation; non-discrimination of minorities; rights of the child; abolition of torture and degrading punishments.

The assessment of progress along the path to sustainable democracy cannot be a short-term exercise but will require political judgment and in some cases a long-term perspective.

The High Representative/Vice-President and the Member of the Commission for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy outlined this approach in a joint letter to EU Foreign Ministers and the Chairman of the AFET committee in February 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004971/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Alleged mistreatment of the Hindu minority in Sindh Province, Pakistan

A constituent has recently brought to my attention a report which alleges that there have been increasing incidences of human rights abuses perpetrated against Pakistan's Hindu minority, and particularly against Hindu women. The report refers to allegations of forced conversion of men and women to Islam, and to forced marriages, which are alleged to be occurring at the rate of up to 25 per month in some parts of Sindh Province, where the majority of Pakistani Hindus reside.

The report also alleges that the Sindhi Hindu population is subjected to arbitrary arrests, internal displacement, lack of adequate political representation, inequality in access to social welfare provisions (such as being denied emergency aid supplies following the devastating Pakistani floods of September 2010) and even enforced 'bonded labour'.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative give her assessment of the situation of the Hindu minority within Pakistan's Sindh Province, and — in light of the allegations above — can she outline the work that the EU is undertaking with the Pakistani authorities to promote human rights, in line with the Constitution of Pakistan and the country's international legal obligations, both in Sindh Province and elsewhere in Pakistan?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

The EU follows closely the situation of religious minorities in Pakistan. This concerns not only Hindus. It should be noted that Pakistan's constitution provides for freedom of religion and requires the state to safeguard the rights of minorities.

The EU is in regular contact with groups representing minorities and consistently raises the issue of the rights of religious minorities in the EU-Pakistan human rights dialogue and in all high-level and senior officials' meetings with Pakistan ([1]).

Dialogue will be intensified following a recently agreed Engagement Plan with Pakistan. The EU has insisted that individual and minority rights be respected.

The HR/VP is aware of allegations of inequality regarding access to aid. However, the provision of humanitarian aid by the Commission is based on compliance with the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. The Commission only funds humanitarian partners who have been vetted and have an established, contractual relationship. Several control mechanisms are in place to check that the aid is reaching the most vulnerable populations.

It currently funds programmes to support education sector reforms in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh with the aim of improving access to education for all children, irrespective of their religion, ethnicity or gender. The programmes also aim to improve the quality of teaching, including the promotion of tolerance and knowledge about other religions. Within a new programme under formulation, the Commission will work with federal and provincial insititutions to improve their capacities in promoting and protecting human rights, including those of religious minorities.

([1]) In 2012, the issue has been raised in four political dialogues, including the visit by the HR/VP to Islamabad on 5 June 2012. The EU Delegation and EU ambassadors in Islamabad raise specific cases with Pakistani authorities in bilateral contacts. The Foreign Affairs Council has referred to this issue on a number of occasions, most recently in its conclusions of 25 June.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004975/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — The case of Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja of Bahrain

I have been contacted by a constituent regarding the case of Mr Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, who has been sentenced to life imprisonment by a court in Bahrain. In 2011, he and his co-defendants were charged with attempting to depose the monarchy by force and liaising with terrorists.

Subsequent to the trial, an international human rights organisation has raised questions regarding the quality and credibility of the evidence used to convict Mr Al-Khawaja, who started a hunger strike in February 2012 in protest at his sentence.

Allegations have been made that Mr Al-Khawaja has been subject to beatings and torture while in custody.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this case, and are the EAS and the EU Member States satisfied that this case was tried in accordance with the dictates of legal due process and in a manner consistent with international legal norms?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2012)

The EU has followed very closely the case of Mr Abdulhadi Al Khawaja and several other Bahraini citizens who were arrested and tried as a consequence of the unrest last year. A number of statements were issued by the High Representative/Vice-President Ashton since February 2011 and EU representatives have attended the hearings in Bahraini courts whenever possible. HR/VP has had several direct contacts with senior Bahraini counterparts, and the EEAS Managing Director for the Middle East recently requested, and was granted, a visit with Mr Al Kawaja in prison in Manama.

The EU has asked on several occasions that the Bahraini authorities investigate all allegations of human rights violations and abuses in detention. This should be an integral part of their implementation of the recommendations of the report issued last November by the Bahraini Independent Commission of Inquiry set up by King Hamad in June 2011. The EU attaches great importance to the implementation of these recommendations not least as a prerequisite for genuine national reconciliation.

The EU was pleased to learn recently that Mr Abdulhadi Al Khawaja had decided to end the hunger strike he had started on 8 February 2012. On 30 April the Court of Cassation in Bahrain announced its decision to review the conviction of 21 activists in a civilian court. This is in line with recommendations from the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry. The first hearing took place on 29 May.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004976/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Sales of LPG cars in the EU single market

I have been contacted by a constituent who wishes to purchase an LPG-fuelled VW Golf Plus car. Unfortunately, he has been told that while Volkswagen sells this model of car in other EU Member States, they do not sell it in the UK.

Can the Commission clarify if:

1. an EU-based company is permitted to offer a product in some countries but not in others?

2. Volkswagen is in breach of any EC laws and, if so, what action it plans to take?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

An EU-based company is free to choose in which Member States to enter the market and whether to offer a product in some Member States but not in others. This applies also to vehicle manufacturers. What the vehicle manufacturer may not do is limiting the sale of its vehicles to individuals from certain Member States or to individuals who intend to register the vehicle in the Member State of the sale. Buying a vehicle in another Member State may allow European citizens to benefit from the price differences for comparable vehicles offered in different Member States (cf. the price report published regularly: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/motor_vehicles/prices/report.html).

A vehicle manufacturer who sells a certain model in certain Member States only is thus not in breach of EC law.

With regard to LPG-vehicles in general and without specific reference to the model mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Commission would like to point out the following: LPG-vehicles may be EU type approved as LPG-vehicles. Frequently, however, such vehicles carry a EU type approval for gasoline vehicles (vehicles with positive ignition). The LPG-installation is then retrofitted to the vehicle, and the retrofitted installation carries a national approval. This is at the choice of the manufacturer. In the latter case, vehicles can only be registered without additional burden in the Member State who granted the national approval, and the vehicle manufacturer will for that reason normally only sell the vehicle in that Member State.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004977/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Commission staff and the Rio+20 Conference to be held 20-22 June 2012

Could the Commission please provide details of how many staff members it intends to send to the Rio+20 Conference to be held 20-22 June 2012, including all officials from all Commission directorates-general and cabinets, and including temporary and contract staff as well as staff posted in third countries?

Could the Commission also provide an estimate of the total mission costs of sending Commission staff to the Rio+20 Conference?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

The Rio+20 conference ([1]) marks 20 anniversary of the first 'Earth Summit' in Rio 1992 and together with the Johannesburg Summit in 2002 confirms a regular 10-year long cycle in which global sustainable development is reviewed at the Heads of State level. The two themes of the Conference are the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication (GESDPE) and the institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD). The composition of the delegation reflects the Commission's role in negotiations on conference outcome and the role of the Commission's representatives in organising and representing the EU in conference's main events and side events promoting European policies and interests at different stages of the conference from 13 to 23 June 2012. The themes covered by Commission representatives include environment, climate change, development and cooperation, humanitarian aid and disaster response, energy, oceans and fisheries, transport, agriculture, enterprise, trade, and science and innovation.

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that the overall size of the Commission's delegation is currently foreseen to be 61 persons (including President Barroso and members of his Cabinet, Commissioners and staff from their Cabinets, and staff from all different Directorate Generals).

The current estimate of mission costs of participation is around EUR 590 000, based on estimates of current rates and minimum occupancy periods. The Commission expects the final amount to go down, since the Brazilian Government recently responded to repeated calls to influence the high cost of participation and announced an agreement with the hotels to reduce hotel prices and allowed for more flexible booking periods.

([1]) United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004978/12
aan de Commissie
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(15 mei 2012)

Betreft: Kwaliteit van stookolie

In Nederland bunkeren jaarlijks meer dan 22 000 schepen stookolie als scheepsbrandstof. Stookolie is een restproduct — residual fuel oil (rfo) — dat overblijft na raffinage van ruwe olie. Om de residuale oliestroom op specificatie te brengen, wordt ze doorgaans gemengd met andere componenten, blendmateriaal of „cutter stock" genaamd.

De prijs van cutter stocks ligt hoger dan die van residuen. Er is dus een drijfveer om zo min mogelijk blendmateriaal toe te passen. Om geld te besparen worden er naast blendmaterialen uit het raffinageproces ook veel andere componenten als blendmateriaal gebruikt, zoals reststromen (afval) van andere industriële processen en de afvaloliebranche. Deze stoffen staan op de Europese afvalstoffenlijst vaak aangemerkt als gevaarlijk. Ook zijn de stoffen vaak moeilijk te traceren. Al met al een zeer onwenselijke gang van zaken die zeer schadelijk is voor mens en milieu.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de hierboven geschetste problematiek?

2. Op basis van welke bestaande Europese regelgeving zou dit probleem kunnen worden aangepakt? (Europese verordening overbrenging afvalstoffen, Marpol bijlage VI)

3. Welke rol ziet de Commissie voor zichzelf weggelegd?

4. Ziet de Commissie een noodzaak voor onderzoek naar representatieve chemische en fysische kenmerken van scheepsbrandstoffen en de wenselijkheid deze kenmerken mede in de wetgeving op te laten nemen?

5. Is de Commissie bereid de lidstaten aan te sporen om bijlage VI van Marpol 73/78 in hun wetgeving te implementeren, zoals Nederland al heeft gedaan in 2010 met de implementatie daarvan in de „wet voorkoming verontreiniging door schepen"?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(21 juni 2012)

1. De Commissie is op de hoogte van de beschreven problemen.

2. In artikel 18 van Richtlijn 2008/98/EG betreffende afvalstoffen ([1]) is het volgende bepaald: „De lidstaten nemen de nodige maatregelen om ervoor te zorgen dat gevaarlijke afvalstoffen niet worden gemengd met andere categorieën gevaarlijke afvalstoffen, noch met andere afvalstoffen, stoffen of materialen. Onder mengen wordt ook het verdunnen van gevaarlijke stoffen verstaan". Daarnaast is in artikel 13 bepaald dat de lidstaten de nodige maatregelen nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat het afvalstoffenbeheer geen gevaar oplevert voor de gezondheid van de mens en geen nadelige gevolgen heeft voor het milieu. In artikel 13 van Verordening (EG) nr. 1013/2006 betreffende de overbrenging van afvalstoffen ([2]) is voorts bepaald dat overbrengingen van afvalstoffen van een lidstaat naar een andere lidstaat onder de procedure van voorafgaande schriftelijke kennisgeving en toestemming vallen. Krachtens artikel 36 is de overbrenging van gevaarlijke afvalstoffen van de EU naar ontwikkelingslanden verboden.

3. De lidstaten zijn verantwoordelijk voor de uitvoering van de EU-wetgeving. De Commissie blijft de uitvoering van de EU-wetgeving volgen. Zodra de Commissie kennis krijgt van gevallen van onwettig afvalbeheer, neemt zij passende maatregelen.

([1]) PB L 312 van 22.11.2008.
([2]) PB L 190 van 12.7.2006.

4. De Internationale Organisatie voor Normalisatie (ISO) heeft met de steun van de Internationale Maritieme Organisatie (IMO) de norm ISO-8217:2010 ontwikkeld waarin specificaties voor destillaatscheepsbrandstoffen en residuale scheepsbrandstoffen zijn vastgesteld. De Commissie is niet van plan onderzoeken naar de chemische en fysische kenmerken van scheepsbrandstoffen op te zetten teneinde de onlangs aangenomen ISO-norm 8217 te herzien.

5. De Commissie is voornemens de herziene bepalingen inzake zwavel van bijlage VI bij het MARPOL-verdrag van de IMO in de EU-wetgeving op te nemen door Richtlijn 1999/32/EG ([3]) te wijzigen.

([3]) PB L 121 van 11.5.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004978/12
to the Commission
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: Quality of fuel oil

In the Netherlands more than 22 000 ships refuel with fuel oil as a power source. Fuel oil is a residual fuel oil (RFO) that is left over after crude oil is refined. In order to bring the residual oil flow up to specifications, it is generally mixed with other components — blending materials known as 'cutter stock'.

The price of cutter stock is higher than that of residues; hence the tendency to use as little cutter stock as possible. In order to save money, in addition to cutter stock from the refining process many other components are used as blending materials, such as residual flows (waste) from other industrial processes and the waste oil industry. These substances are included in the European list of waste products and are often regarded as hazardous. These substances are also often difficult to trace. All in all, this is a highly undesirable state of affairs which is extremely harmful to humans and the environment.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the problem outlined above?

2. Which existing European legislation could be used to tackle this problem? (EU Waste Shipment Regulation, Marpol Annex VI)

3. What role does the Commission envisage undertaking in this respect?

4. Does the Commission see a need to investigate representative chemical and physical characteristics of shipping fuels and the advisability of having these characteristics included in the legislation?

5. Is the Commission prepared to encourage Member States to transpose Annex VI of Marpol 73/78, as the Netherlands did in 2010 with the implementation of the 'law for the prevention of pollution from ships'?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the problems described.

2. Article 18 of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([1]) states that 'Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that hazardous waste is not mixed, either with other categories of hazardous waste or with other waste, substances or materials. Mixing shall include the dilution of hazardous substances'. In addition, Article 13 provides that Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that waste management is carried out without endangering human health and without harming the environment. In addition, Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 ([2]) on shipment of waste states that shipments of hazardous wastes from a Member State to another Member State shall be subject to the procedure of prior written notification and consent. Shipments of hazardous waste from the EU to developing countries are prohibited according to Article 36.

3. Member States are responsible for the implementation of EU legislation. The Commission will continue to monitor the implementation of EU legislation. Whenever the Commission becomes aware of cases of unlawful waste management, it takes action as appropriate.

4. The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) supported by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has developed the Standard ISO 8217:2010 specifying standards for distillate and residual marine fuels. The Commission has no plans to launch studies on the chemical and physical characteristics of marine fuels with an objective to revise the recently adopted ISO 8217 standard.

5. The Commission plans to introduce the revised sulphur provisions of the IMO's MARPOL Annex VI into EU legislation by amending Directive 1999/32/EC ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) OJ L 190, 12.7.2006.
([3]) OJ L 121, 11.5.1999.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004979/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(15 de maio de 2012)

Assunto: Nova agenda para o crescimento e o emprego

Tendo em conta que:

— É reconhecida a necessidade de conciliar as medidas de austeridade orçamental com as que visam implementar um novo crescimento económico e geração de emprego;

— Vários autores do «Pacto Orçamental» que deu origem ao novo tratado europeu de austeridade falam agora da necessidade de desenvolver um «Pacto para o Crescimento»;

— Mário Draghi, Presidente do Banco Central Europeu, replicou a expressão «Pacto para o Crescimento» usada pelo novo presidente de França, François Hollande, e Angela Merkel já referiu que estava de acordo com as intenções. Apesar das diferenças sobre o conteúdo desse pacto persistirem, o consenso na terminologia indica um esforço na preparação do terreno para uma nova narrativa económica;

— No dia 11 de maio de 2012, o Ministro Federal alemão dos Negócios Estrangeiros apresentou um plano de seis pontos para implementar um pacto de crescimento europeu;

— Recentemente, saíram notícias em vários órgãos de comunicação social referindo que a Comissão Europeia está a preparar um plano capaz de mobilizar 200 mil milhões de euros de investimentos públicos e privados para estimular o crescimento económico;

— O Banco Europeu de Investimento poderá ser o principal veículo de apoio para a renovada estratégia europeia, podendo assim apoiar a concessão de créditos aos Estados-Membros e às PME por forma a realizarem investimentos que gerem riqueza e criem emprego;

— O Presidente da Comissão Europeia já referiu que «quer ver no crescimento a mesma rapidez que foi colocada na austeridade», estando na altura de aprovar várias medidas já apresentadas pela CE.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Considera importante criar uma Agenda para o Crescimento e Emprego?

— Entende que existe disponibilidade dos Estados-Membros para evoluírem da fase de austeridade para uma nova fase de crescimento económico e geração de emprego?

— Quando entende que será possível aumentar o capital do BEI e colocar o dinheiro ao serviço da economia?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(31 de julho de 2012)

Na opinião da Comissão, o crescimento económico e o emprego são extremamente importantes para o êxito da economia social de mercado da Europa. Foi por esse motivo que a Comissão propôs, em 2010, a estratégia «Europa 2020» para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo que foi aprovada pelos membros do Conselho Europeu. Esta estratégia continua a ser a plataforma para novas iniciativas de crescimento. Na declaração relativa à celebração do dia da Europa ([1]) e na comunicação «Ação para a estabilidade, o crescimento e o emprego», de 30 de maio, a Comissão descreveu ações específicas adicionais necessárias para impulsionar o crescimento na atual conjuntura.

([1]) (http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_12160_en.htm).

A vontade dos Estados-Membros para alcançarem o crescimento e criarem postos de trabalho será, em grande parte, refletida na firmeza com que executarem as recomendações que lhes foram dirigidas no contexto do Semestre Europeu. Terão igualmente de decidir sobre o aumento do capital do Banco Europeu de Investimento. A Comissão fez essa sugestão como forma eficiente de conseguir um efeito multiplicador significativo num período de contenção dos orçamentos públicos e de limitação do crédito bancário na economia real.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004979/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(15 May 2012)

Subject: New agenda for growth and employment

Given that:

— The need to reconcile budgetary austerity measures with those implementing new economic growth and job creation has been recognised;

— Several authors of the Budgetary Pact that led to the new EU austerity treaty now talk about the need to develop a Growth Pact;

— Mário Draghi, President of the European Central Bank, repeated the term 'Growth Pact' used by the new French President, François Hollande, and Angela Merkel has already indicated that she was in agreement with its intentions;

— Despite continuing differences regarding the content of this pact, the consensus in terminology indicates an effort to prepare the ground for a new economic narrative;

— On 11 May 2012, the German Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs tabled a six-point plan for implementing a European growth pact;

— Recently, various media reported that the European Commission was drafting a plan to mobilise EUR 200 billion of public and private investment in order to stimulate economic growth;

— The European Investment Bank could be the main support vehicle for the renewed European strategy, thereby granting credit to Member States and SMEs in order to make investments which will generate wealth and create jobs;

— The President of the European Commission has already stated that he wants to see 'the same speed and determination in implementing our growth agenda as we have already shown in fiscal consolidation', as it is time to approve several measures already tabled by the Commission.

I ask the Commission:

— Does it believe it is important to create a growth and employment agenda?

— Does it believe that Member States are willing to move on from the austerity phase to a new phase of economic growth and job creation?

— When does it believe it will be possible to raise capital from the European Investment Bank and use the money to serve the economy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2012)

In the view of the Commission, economic growth and employment are of central importance to the success of Europe's social market economy. This is why the Commission in 2010 proposed its Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth, which was endorsed by the members of the European Council. This strategy remains the platform for any new growth initiative. The Commission has specified additional specific actions needed to boost growth at the current juncture, in its Schuman Day Statement ([1]) and in its 30 May Communication 'Action for Stability, Growth and Jobs'.

([1]) See http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_12160_en.htm

The willingness of Member States to achieve growth and create jobs will in good part be reflected in the forcefulness with which they implement the recommendations made to them in the context of the European Semester. They will also have to decide on any increase in the capital of the European Investment Bank. The Commission suggested this as an efficient way of achieving a significant multiplier effect at a time of constrained public budgets and constraints on bank credit for the real economy.

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